Royal Commission
on the Port of
London: Minutes
of Evidence
1902

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ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

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1901

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

ROYAL COMMISSION

ON THE

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PORT OF LONDON.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

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1902.

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ROYAL WARRANT DATED THE 21ST DAY OF JUNE, 1900.

VICTORIA R.,

Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith.

To Our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, Wilbraham, Earl Egerton; Our right trusty and well-beloved John, Baron Revelstoke; Our trusty and well-beloved Alfred Lyttelton, Esquire (commonly called the Honourable Alfred Lyttelton), one of Our Counsel learned in the Law; Our trusty and well-beloved Sir Robert Giffen, Knight Commander of our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Doctor of Laws; Our trusty and well-beloved Sir John Wolfe Wolfe-Barry, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Doctor of Laws, Fellow of the Royal Society; Our trusty and well-beloved Sir John Hext, Knight Commander of Our Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, Rear-Admiral on the Retired List of Our Navy; and Our trusty and well-beloved John Edward Ellis, Esquire; Greeting!

Whereas We have deemed it expedient that a Commission should forthwith issue to inquire into the present administration of the Port of London and the water approaches thereto; the adequacy of the accommodation provided for vessels, and the loading and unloading thereof; the system of charge for such accommodation and the arrangements for warehousing dutiable goods; and to report whether any change or improvement in regard to any of the above matters is necessary for the promotion of the trade of the port and the public interest:

Now know ye, that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability, have nominated, constituted, and appointed, and do by these Presents nominate, constitute, and appoint, you, the said Wilbraham, Earl Egerton; John, Baron Revelstoke; Alfred Lyttelton; Sir Robert Giffen; Sir John Wolfe Wolfe-Barry; Sir John Hext; and John Edward Ellis, to be Our Commissioners for the purposes of the said inquiry.

And for the better effecting the purposes of this Our Commission, We do by these Presents give and grant unto you, or any three or more of you, full power to call before you such persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this Our Commission; and also to call for, have access to, and examine all such books, documents, registers, and records as may afford you the fullest information on the subject; and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever.

And We do by these Presents authorise and empower you, or any three or more of you, to visit and personally inspect such places as you may deem it expedient so to inspect for the more effectual carrying out of the purposes aforesaid, and to employ such persons as you may think fit to assist you in conducting any inquiry which you may hold.

And We do by these Presents will and ordain that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you Our said Commissioners, or any three or more of you, may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof, and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment.

And we do further ordain that you or any three or more of you, have liberty to report your proceedings under this Our Commission from time to time if you shall judge it expedient so to do.

And Our further will and pleasure is that you do, with as little delay as possible, report to Us under your hands and seals, or under the hands and seals of any three or more of you, your opinion upon the matters herein submitted for your consideration.

Given at Our Court at Windsor, the twenty-first day of June, One thousand nine hundred, in the sixty-fourth year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's Command,

M. W. RIDLEY.

6334. Wt. 28947. 1000--8/02. Wy. & S.

ROYAL WARRANT DATED THE 4TH DAY OF MARCH, 1901.

EDWARD R.

Edward the Seventh, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, to all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting!

Whereas it pleased Her late Majesty from time to time to issue Royal Commissions of Inquiry for various purposes therein specified:

And whereas in the case of certain of these Commissions, namely, those known as—

The Historical Manuscripts Commission;
The Horse Breeding Commission;
The Local Taxation Commission;
The Port of London Commission;
The Salmon Fisheries Commission; and
The Sewage Disposal Commission;

the Commissioners appointed by Her late Majesty, or such of them as were then acting as Commissioners, were, at the late demise of the Crown, still engaged upon the business entrusted to them:

And whereas We deem it expedient that the said Commissioners should continue their labours in connection with the said inquiries notwithstanding the late demise of the Crown:

Now know ye that We, reposing great trust and confidence in the zeal, discretion, and ability of the present members of each of the said Commissions, do by these Presents authorize them to continue their labours, and do hereby in every essential particular ratify and confirm the terms of the said several Commissions.

And We do further ordain that the said Commissioners do report to Us under their hands and seals, or under the hands and seals of such of their number as may be specified in the said Commissions respectively, their opinion upon the matters presented for their consideration; and that any proceedings which they or any of them may have taken under and in pursuance of the said Commissions since the late demise of the Crown, and before the issue of these Presents, shall be deemed and adjudged to have been taken under and in virtue of this Our Commission.

Given at Our Court at Saint James's, the fourth day of March, one thousand nine hundred and one, in the first year of Our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

CHAS. T. RITCHIE.

ROYAL WARRANT DATED THE 6TH DAY OF MARCH, 1901.

EDWARD R.,

Edward the Seventh, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith.

To Our right trusty and well-beloved John, Baron Revelstoke; Our trusty and well-beloved William Robert Wellesley Peel, Esquire (commonly called the Honourable William Robert Wellesley Peel); Our trusty and well-beloved Alfred Lyttelton, Esquire (commonly called the Honourable Alfred Lyttelton), one of Our Counsel learned in the Law; Our trusty and well-beloved Sir Robert Giffen, Knight Commander of our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Doctor of Laws; Our trusty and well-beloved Sir John Wolfe Wolfe-Barry, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Doctor of Laws, Fellow of the Royal Society; Our trusty and well-beloved Sir John Hext, Knight Commander of Our Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, Rear-Admiral on the Retired List of Our Navy; and Our trusty and well-beloved John Edward Ellis, Esquire; Greeting!

Whereas it pleased Her late Majesty by Warrant bearing date the twenty-first day of June One thousand nine hundred to authorise and appoint certain noblemen and gentlemen therein named, or any three or more of them, to be Commissioners to inquire into the present administration of the Port of London and the water approaches thereto; the adequacy of the accommodation provided for vessels, and the loading and unloading thereof, the system of charge for such accommodation and the arrangements for warehousing dutiable goods; and to report whether any change or improvement in regard to any of the above matters is necessary for the promotion of the trade of the port and the public interest:

Now know ye, that We have revoked and determined, and do by these Presents revoke and determine, the said Warrant and every matter and thing therein contained.

And whereas We have deemed it expedient that a new Commission should issue for the purposes specified in the said Warrant, dated the twenty-first day of June One thousand nine hundred.

Further know ye, that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your ability and discretion, have appointed, and do by these Presents nominate, constitute, and appoint you, the said John, Baron Revelstoke; William Robert Wellesley Peel; Alfred Lyttelton; Sir Robert Giffen; Sir John Wolfe Wolfe-Barry; Sir John Hext; and John Edward Ellis, to be Our Commissioners for the purposes aforesaid.

And for the better effecting the purposes of this Our Commission, We do by these Presents give and grant unto you, or any three or more of you, full power to call before you such persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this Our Commission; and also to call for, have access to, and examine all such books, documents, registers, and records as may afford you the fullest information on the subject; and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever.

And We do by these Presents authorise and empower you, or any three or more of you, to visit and personally inspect such places as you may deem it expedient so to inspect for the more effectual carrying out of the purposes aforesaid, and to employ such persons as you may think fit to assist you in conducting any inquiry which you may hold.

And We do by these Presents will and ordain that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you Our said Commissioners, or any three or more of you, may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof, and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment.

And We do further ordain that you, or any three or more of you, have liberty to report your proceedings under this Our Commission from time to time if you shall judge it expedient so to do.

And Our further will and pleasure is that you do, with as little delay as possible, report to Us under your hands and seals, or under the hands and seals of any three or more of you, your opinion upon the matters herein submitted for your consideration.

Given at Our Court at Saint James's the sixth day of March, One thousand nine hundred and one, in the first year of Our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

CHAS. T. RITCHIE.

LIST OF WITNESSES ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

NAME.	Description.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Anderson, James George Skelton.	Manager of the Orient Steam Navigation Company.	27 Nov. 1900 - -	2077	97
Ardley, George Henry - -	Member of the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen of the Thames, and foreman lighterman to Messrs. Hinton and Horne, coal merchants.	24 June 1901 - -	10956	543
Ayers, George - - - -	Commodore Captain of the Thames Steamboat Company.	24 June 1901 - -	11479	557
Baggallay, Henry Charles -	Late engineer to the London and India Docks Company.	13 Nov. 1900 - -	771	37
		15 & 22 May 1901 -	6696	348
			7481	386
Bennett, John Wheeler - -	Senior partner in the firm of Wheeler, Bennett and Company, provision merchants.	17 June 1901 - -	9938	496
Binnie, Sir Alexander Richardson.	Engineer to the London County Council	11 Dec. 1900 - -	2995	141
		22 May 1901 - -	7750	399
Birrell, George - - - -	Fruit merchant - - - - - -	12 June 1901 - -	9410	475
Blackburn, Charles James -	Manager of the Wool Department of the Australian Mortgage, Land, and Finance Company, Limited.	5 June 1901 - -	8880	449
Blackwell, Thomas Francis -	Chairman of Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell, Limited, Oil and Italian Warehousemen.	10 June 1901 - -	9119	459
Brightman, Charles Edward -	Partner in the firm of Turner, Brightman and Company, Shipowners.	27 Nov. 1900 - -	2206	103
Broodbank, Joseph Guinness -	Secretary to the London and India Docks Company.	20 May 1901 - -	7010	366
Burton, Miles Kirk - - -	General Manager and Secretary of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.	25 & 26 March 1901	4477	220
			4700	236
Cannon, Stephen - - -	Managing Director of Cannon and Gage, Limited, Millers and Corn Merchants.	5 June 1901 - -	8836	447
Carbutt, Francis - - -	Director of Carbutt and Company, Limited, Rice Merchants and Millers.	10 June 1901 - -	8987	455
Cattarns, Richard - - -	Chairman of the Short Sea Traders' Association.	13 & 19 Dec. 1901 -	3395	170
			3423	175
Chaney, George William - -	Pilot - - - - - - - - -	25 March 1901 -	4458	219
Charleton, Charles - - -	Chairman of the Cement Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce.	15 November 1900 -	1272	64
Cobbett, George Talbot Burrows.	Proprietor of the firm of Cobbett and Company, Timber Merchants.	10 June 1901 - -	9227	464
Coke, Henry - - - -	Representing the London Chamber of Commerce.	15 November 1900 -	1285	64
Collingridge, Dr. William, M.A., LL.M.	Medical Officer of Health of the Port of London.	19 March 1901 -	3643	186
Coombe, Gordon - - -	Senior Partner in the firm of Gordon Coombe and Company, and Vice-Chairman of the Wharfingers', Warehousekeepers', and Granarykeepers' Association.	4 December 1900 -	2806	131
Crawford, Sir Homewood -	Solicitor to the Corporation of the City of London.	4 & 12 June 1901 -	8321	426
			9374	473
Crow, John Kent - - - -	Director and General Manager of Messrs. Wilkinson, Heywood, and Clark, Varnish and Colour Merchants.	10 June 1901 - -	9367	472
Daniels, William Baker - -	Acting Manager of the Wool Department of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited.	5 June 1901 - -	8892	450
Davies, Harry - - - -	Pilot - - - - - - - - -	25 March 1901 -	4234	215
Dawes, Sir Edwyn Sandys, K.C.M.G.	Senior partner of Gray, Dawes and Company, Shipowners, and Chairman of the New Zealand Shipping Company.	18 June 1901 - -	10,564	525
Deering, Richard - - - -	Managing Director of Messrs. James W. Cook and Company, Limited, Wharfingers and Bargeowners.	20 March 1901 -	3953	203
		24 June 1901 - -	10864	539

LIST OF WITNESSES ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY—*continued.*

NAME.	Description.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Dixon, John	Docks and Marine Superintendent at Southampton.	1 April 1901	5417	273
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Frederick Dixon, Bart., M.P.	Chairman of the Thames Conservancy	20 November 1900 1 April 1901 22 May 1901	1384 5566 7482	69 280 386
Duckham, Frederic Eliot	General Manager and Engineer of the Millwall Dock Company.	15 November 1900	976	49
Dunn, Frederick John	Traffic Superintendent of the North London Railway Company.	26 June 1901	11564	564
Elborough, Thomas	Managing Director of Lawes Chemical Manure Company, Limited.	12 June 1901	9499	478
Epps, Hahnemann	Director of James Epps and Company, Limited, Cocoa and Chocolate Merchants.	17 June 1901	10001	498
Falconer, David	Partner in the firm of Falconer and Company, Jute Merchants.	12 June 1901	9376	474
Farquharson, Alexander	Partner in the firm of Farquharson Brothers and Company, Timber Merchants.	12 June 1901	9688	484
Fielder, Charles James	Member of the firm of Fielder, Hickman and Company, Lightermen and Bargeowners.	20 March 1901 24 June 1901	4011 10920	206 542
Fleming, James	Surveyor General, His Majesty's Customs	8 November 1900	362	14
Garratt, Frederick Stone	Member of the firm of Robert Proctor and Sons, Corn Merchants.	17 June 1901	10049	500
Gaskell, James Stranack, M.I.C.E.	Engineer to the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.	27 November 1900	1867	89
Girdlestone, Francis Brooke	General Manager and Secretary of the Dock Estate of the Corporation of the City of Bristol.	25 & 26 Mar. 1901	4680 4704	230 236
Glass, John	Manager of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company.	19 March 1901	3588	184
Gomme, George Laurence	Clerk to the London County Council	11 & 13 Dec. 1900 22 May 1901	3165. 3273 7769	149, 163 400
Goodsir, George	Partner in the firm of William Weddel and Company, Frozen Meat Merchants.	10 June 1901	9351	471
Gosling, Harry	General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Watchmen of the River Thames.	24 June 1901	11124	547
Greig, James	Managing Director of the Free Trade Wharf Company, Limited.	19 March 1901	3528	181
Hardy, Thomas	Joint Manager of the London and India Docks Company.	15 May 1901 26 June 1901	6898 11657	359 570
Hart-Davis, Captain Henry Vaughan.	Partner in the firm of Hoare, Wilson and Company, Wharfingers.	4 December 1900	2564	121
Hayward, William James	Pilot	24 June 1901	11475	557
Henderson, John Young	Director of the firm of Henderson, Craig and Company, Limited, Wood Pulp Merchants.	17 June 1901	9982	497
Hill, Francis Charles	Managing Director of the London Smelting Company, and Director of W. W. and R. Johnson and Sons, Limited, Lead Merchants.	10 June, 1901	9175	462
Hill, William Becket	Director and Manager of Allan Brothers and Company, Shipowners.	29 November 1900	2249	105
Hughes, James	Solicitor to the Thames Conservancy	6 November 1900	159	7
Hume, Captain David Edward	Late Conservator of the River Humber	18 June 1901	10548	524
Humphery, James Arthur	Freeholder of New Hibernia and West Kent Wharves, and partner in the firm trading as the Proprietors of Hay's Wharf.	4 December 1900	2895	135
Hurtzig, Arthur Cameron	Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, and partner in the firm of Baker and Hurtzig, Civil Engineers.	24 June 1901	11498	558

LIST OF WITNESSES ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY—*continued.*

NAME.	Description.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Isaacs, Harry Michael	Managing Director of the firm of M. Isaacs and Sons, Limited, Fruit Merchants.	12 June 1901	9474	477
Jacob, Benjamin Joseph	Late senior partner in the firm of Benjamin Jacob and Sons, Lightermen and Steam Tug Owners, and Member of the Court of the Watermen's Company.	18 June 1901	10643	529
Jacobs, Thomas William, junior	Chairman of the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge-owners of the Port of London.	20 March 1901 6 May 1901	3702, 4066 5570	192, 208, 282
Jones, Alfred Lewis	Senior partner in the firm of Elder, Dempster and Company, Shipowners.	26 March 1901	4823	240
Kent, Charles Alston	Secretary to the Trinity House	8 November 1901	447	22
Kingsford, John	Member of the firm of William Kingsford and Son, Flour Merchants.	17 June 1901	10070	501
Lambert, Richard	Manager and Secretary of the Union Lighterage Company, Limited.	20 March 1901	3896	200
Leary, Ernest George	Member of the firm of C. Leary and Company, Wood Brokers.	10 June 1901	9193	463
Livesey, George	Chairman of the South Metropolitan Gas Company.	18 June 1901	10510	523
Mackenzie, Thomas Riach	General Manager and Secretary of the Clyde Navigation.	26 March 1901	5006	247
Major, Mark Buonaventura Featherstonehaugh.	Member of the firm of Major and Field, Wharfingers.	4 December 1901	2954	138
Malcolm, William Forrest	Chairman of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.	20 November 1900 22 May 1901	1737 7573	82 391
Matthews, John Ernest	Member of the firm of Matthews and Luff, Shipbrokers.	29 November 1900	2325	110
McEwan, John	Member of the firm of McMeekin and Company, Tea Merchants.	5 June 1901	8653	439
Messel, Dr. Rudolph	Managing Director of the firm of Spencer, Chapman, and Messel, Limited, Chemical Merchants.	12 June 1901	9855	490
Mills, Edward	Pilot	24 June 1901	11342	553
Moore, Henry Tait	Managing Director of Brooks' Wharf, and one of the proprietors of Bull Wharf.	4 December 1900	2726	127
More, Charles James	Engineer to the Thames Conservancy	6 & 20 Nov. 1900 1 April 1901	232, 1682 5459	10, 80, 275
Mundy, Eli	Pilot	25 March 1901	4360	217
Owen, Douglas	Secretary of the Alliance Marine and General Assurance Company, Limited.	26 March 1901 1 April 1901	5129 5181	256 260
Pembroke, Edward	Senior partner of Messrs. Galbraith, Pembroke and Company, Shipowners, and Chairman of the Shaw, Savill and Albion Shipping Company.	4 June 1901	8325	426
Penney, Stephen	Pilot	26 March 1901	4131	212
Philipson, Robert	Secretary to the Thames Conservancy	6 November 1900 22 May 1901	1 7542	1 389
Pogson, George Ambrose	British Vice-Consul at Hamburg	1 April 1901	5491	278
Powell, James	Partner in the firm of T. J. and T. Powell, Hide and Leather Merchants.	12 June 1901	9523	479
Rigden, Edwin	Pilot	25 March 1901	4306	216
Robinson, John Henry	Partner in the firm of J. and H. Robinson, Flour Millers.	5 & 17 June 1901	8719, 9904	444, 494,
Roffey, George	Partner in the firm of George Roffey and Sons, Corn Merchants.	17 June 1901	10014	498
Rogers, John Innes	Chairman of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce.	15 November 1900 5, 17 & 18 June 1901.	1158 8681, 10129, 10386	57 441, 504, 516
Rouse, George	Partner in the firm of R. J. Rouse and Company, Colonial Brokers.	12 June 1901	9588	481

LIST OF WITNESSES ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY—*continued.*

NAME.	Description.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Ryder, George Lisle, C.B.	Chairman of the Board of Customs	13 November 1900 26 June 1901	664 11547	31 562
Samuel, Alderman Sir Marcus	Chairman of the Special Committee of the Corporation of the City of London.	4 June 1901	7917	408
Sandford, Adolphus Lewis	Pilot	24 June 1901	11385	554
Sandford, William Henry	Pilot	25 March 1901	4385	217
Sargant, William	Chairman of the London Metal Exchange	10 June 1901	9134	460
Scott, Charles James Cater	Chairman of the London and India Docks Company.	8 November 1900 6, 8, 13, 15, 20 May 1901 4 June 1901	501 5580, 5662, 6068, 6602, 7008 7916	24 283, 305, 324, 343, 365 408
Smith, Henry Bellingham	Partner in the firm of Parker, Wellesley and Company, Dried Fruit Merchants.	12 June 1901	9875	491
Smith, Hugh Colin	Partner in the firm trading as the Proprietors of Hay's Wharf.	29 November 1900 18 June 1901	2524 10408	119 518
Smith, William Marten	Chairman of the Wharfingers', Warehouse-keepers' and Granary-keepers' Association.	29 November 1901	2445	116
Sommerfeld, Leopold Bernhard	Stone and Granite Merchants	17 June 1901	9909	494
Spencer, Richard Knowles	Director of the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited.	10 June 1901	8922	452
Spicer, Albert	Partner in the firm of James Spicer and Sons, Wholesale Stationers.	10 June 1901	9295	467
Stewart, John	Shipping Manager to the firm of Henry R. Merton and Company, Metal Merchants.	17 June 1901	9977	497
Sutherland, Sir Thomas, G.C.M.G.	Chairman and Managing-Director of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.	27 November 1900	1932	91
Tasker, Herbert Besant	Member of the firm of Tasker and Company, Flour Merchants.	17 June 1901	10107	503
Tate, Edwin	Member of the firm of Henry Tate and Sons, Limited, Sugar Refiners.	10 June 1901	9099	458
Tough, Robert Neal	Member of the firm of Tough and Henderson, Lightermen, Tug, and Barge Owners.	20 March 1900	4074	209
Trotter, John	Chairman of the Millwall Dock Company.	15 November 1900 20 May 1901 5 June 1901	1120 7036 8463	56 368 431
Urwin, Robert	Secretary to the Tyne Improvement Commissioners.	1 April 1901	5343	268
Vyvyan, Captain George Rawlinson.	Deputy Master of the Trinity House	5 June 1901	8466	431
Weber, Edward	Member of the firm of Anderson, Weber, and Smith, Wharfingers.	4 December 1900	2940	137
Wells, Rev. Harry Morland	Thames Embankment Owner	24 June 1901	11507	558
Whelon, Charles	Partner in the firm of George Simon and Whelon, Wine and Spirit Merchants.	18 June 1901	10399	517
Wight, Edgar	Senior Partner in the firm of Messrs. John Knill and Company, Wharfingers.	24 June 1901	11509	558
Williams Alfred Strover	Director of the Atlantic Transport and National Steamship Companies.	27 November 1900	2162	101
Williams, William Varco	Chairman of Samuel Williams and Sons, Limited, Lightermen and Bargeowners.	20 March 1901 6 May 1901	3826 5578	198 283
Wingent, Frederick	Managing Director of Wingent and Kimmins, Limited, Flour Millers.	5 June 1901	8850	448
Wood, Thomas McKinnon	Member of the Rivers Committee of the London County Council.	20 May 1901	7116	371
Woodward, Thomas Hopkins	Partner in the firm of Messrs. Henry Gray, Junior, Lightermen and Bargeowners.	18 June 1901	10524	523

LIST OF WITNESSES IN ORDER OF EXAMINATION.

Date.	Name.	Description.	Question.	Page.
First Day: 6 November 1900	Mr. Robert Philipson	Secretary to the Thames Conservancy	1	1
	Mr. James Hughes	Solicitor to the Thames Conservancy	159	7
	Mr. Charles James More	Engineer to the Thames Conservancy	232	10
Second Day: 8 November 1900	Mr. James Fleming	Surveyor General, Her Majesty's Customs	362	14
	Mr. Charles Alston Kent	Secretary to the Trinity House	447	22
	Mr. Charles James Cater Scott	Chairman of the London and India Docks Joint Committee.	501	24
Third Day: 13 November 1900	Mr. George Lisle Ryder, C.B.	Chairman of the Board of Customs	664	31
	Mr. Henry Charles Baggallay	Late Engineer to the London and India Docks Joint Committee.	771	37
Fourth Day: 15 November 1900	Mr. Frederic Eliot Duckham	General Manager and Engineer of the Millwall Dock Company.	976	49
	Mr. John Trotter	Chairman of the Millwall Dock Company	1120	56
	Mr. John Innes Rogers	Deputy Chairman of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce.	1158	57
	Mr. Charles Charleton	Chairman of the Cement Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce.	1272	64
	Mr. Henry Coke	Representing the London Chamber of Commerce.	1285	64
Fifth Day: 20 November 1900	Sir Frederick Dixon Dixon-Hartland, Bart., M.P.	Chairman of the Thames Conservancy	1384	69
	Mr. Charles James More	Engineer to the Thames Conservancy	1682	80
	Mr. William Forrest Malcolm	Chairman of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.	1737	82
Sixth Day: 27 November 1900	Mr. James Stranack Gaskell, M.I.C.E.	Engineer to the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.	1867	89
	Sir Thomas Sutherland, G.C.M.G.	Chairman and Managing Director of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.	1932	91
	Mr. James George Skelton Anderson.	Manager of the Orient Steam Navigation Company.	2077	97
	Mr. Alfred Strover Williams	Director of the Atlantic Transport and National Steamship Companies.	2162	101
	Mr. Charles Edward Brightman.	Partner in the firm of Turner, Brightman and Company, Shipowners.	2206	103
Seventh Day: 29 November 1900	Mr. William Becket Hill	Director and Manager of Allan Brothers and Company, Shipowners.	2249	105
	Mr. John Ernest Matthews	Member of the firm of Matthews and Luff, Shipbrokers.	2325	110
	Mr. William Marten Smith	Chairman of the Wharfingers', Warehousekeepers', and Granarykeepers' Association.	2445	116
	Mr. Hugh Colin Smith	Partner in the firm trading as the Proprietors of Hay's Wharf.	2524	119
Eighth Day: 4 December 1900	Captain Henry Vaughan Hart-Davis.	Partner in the firm of Hoare, Wilson and Company, Wharfingers.	2564	121
	Mr. Henry Tait Moore	Managing Director of Brooks' Wharf, and one of the Proprietors of Bull Wharf.	2726	127
	Mr. Gordon Coombe	Senior Partner in the firm of Gordon Coombe and Company, and Vice-Chairman of the Wharfingers', Warehousekeepers', and Granarykeepers' Association.	2806	131

LIST OF WITNESSES IN ORDER OF EXAMINATION—*continued.*

DATE.	Name.	Description.	Question.	Page.
EIGHTH DAY (*contd.*): 4 December 1900	Mr. James Arthur Humphery	Freeholder of New Hibernia and West Kent Wharves, and Partner in the firm trading as the Proprietors of Hay's Wharf.	2895	135
	Mr. Edward Weber	Member of the firm of Anderson, Weber and Smith, Wharfingers.	2940	137
	Mr. Mark Buonaventura Featherstonehaugh Major	Member of the firm of Major and Field, Wharfingers.	2954	138
NINTH DAY: 11 December 1900	Sir Alexander Richardson Binnie.	Engineer to the London County Council	2995	141
	Mr. George Laurence Gomme	Clerk to the London County Council	3165	149
TENTH DAY: 13 December 1900	Mr. George Laurence Gomme	Clerk to the London County Council	3273	163
	Mr. Richard Cattarns	Chairman of the Short Sea Traders' Association.	3395	170
ELEVENTH DAY: 19 March 1901	Mr. Richard Cattarns	Chairman of the Short Sea Traders' Association.	3423	175
	Mr. James Greig	Managing Director of the Free Trade Wharf Company, Limited.	3528	181
	Mr. John Glass	Manager of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company.	3588	184
	Dr. William Collingridge, M.A., LL.M.	Medical Officer of Health of the Port of London.	3643	186
TWELFTH DAY: 20 March 1901	Mr. Thomas William Jacobs, Junior.	Chairman of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners of the Port of London.	3702	192
	Mr. William Varco Williams	Chairman of Samuel Williams and Sons, Limited, Lightermen and Barge Owners.	3826	198
	Mr. Richard Lambert	Manager and Secretary of the Union Lighterage Company, Limited.	3896	200
	Mr. Richard Deering	Managing Director of Messrs. J. W. Cook and Company, Limited, Wharfingers and Bargeowners.	3953	203
	Mr. Charles James Fielder	Member of the Firm of Fielder, Hickman and Company, Lightermen and Barge Owners.	4011	206
	Mr. Thomas William Jacobs, Junior.	Chairman of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners of the Port of London.	4066	208
	Mr. Robert Neal Tough	Member of the Firm of Tough and Henderson, Lightermen, Tug and Barge Owners.	4074	209
THIRTEENTH DAY: 25 March 1901	Mr. Stephen Penney	Pilot	4131	212
	Mr. Harry Davies	Pilot	4234	215
	Mr. Edwin Rigden	Pilot	4306	216
	Mr. Eli Mundy	Pilot	4360	217
	Mr. William Henry Sandford	Pilot	4385	217
	Mr. George William Chaney	Pilot	4458	219
	Mr. Miles Kirk Burton	General Manager and Secretary of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.	4477	220
	Mr. Francis Brooke Girdlestone.	General Manager and Secretary of the Dock Estate of the Corporation of Bristol.	4680	230
FOURTEENTH DAY: 26 March 1901	Mr. Miles Kirk Burton	General Manager and Secretary of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.	4700	236

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	Mr. Alfred Lewis Jones	Senior Partner in the firm of Elder, Dempster and Company, Shipowners.	4823	240
	Mr. Thomas Riach Mackenzie	General Manager and Secretary of the Clyde Navigation.	5006	247
	Mr. Douglas Owen	Secretary of the Alliance Marine and General Assurance Company, Limited.	5129	256
FIFTEENTH DAY: 1 April 1901	Mr. Douglas Owen	Secretary of the Alliance Marine and General Assurance Company, Limited.	5181	260
	Mr. Robert Urwin	Secretary to the Tyne Improvement Commissioners.	5343	268
	Mr. John Dixon	Docks and Marine Superintendent at Southampton.	5417	273
	Mr. Charles James More	Engineer to the Thames Conservancy	5459	275
	Mr. George Ambrose Pogson	British Vice-Consul at Hamburg	5491	278
	Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Bart., M.P.	Chairman of the Thames Conservancy	5566	280
SIXTEENTH DAY; 6 May 1901	Mr. Thomas William Jacobs, Junior.	Chairman of the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge Owners of the Port of London.	5570	282
	Mr. William Varco Williams	Chairman of Samuel Williams and Sons, Limited, Lightermen and Barge Owners.	5578	283
	Mr. Charles James Cater Scott	Chairman of the London and India Docks Company.	5580	283
SEVENTEENTH DAY: 8 May 1901	Mr. Charles James Cater Scott	Chairman of the London and India Docks Company.	5662	305
EIGHTEENTH DAY: 13 May 1901	Mr. Charles James Cater Scott	Chairman of the London and India Docks Company.	6068	324
NINETEENTH DAY: 15 May 1901	Mr. Charles James Cater Scott	Chairman of the London and India Docks Company.	6602	343
	Mr. Henry Charles Baggallay	Late Engineer to the London and India Docks Company.	6696	348
	Mr. Thomas Hardy	Joint Manager of the London and India Docks Company.	6898	359
TWENTIETH DAY: 20 May 1901	Mr. Charles James Cater Scott	Chairman of the London and India Docks Company.	7008	365
	Mr. Joseph Guinness Broodbank.	Secretary to the London and India Docks Company.	7010	366
	Mr. John Trotter	Chairman of the Millwall Dock Company.	7036	368
	Mr. Thomas McKinnon Wood	Member of the Rivers Committee of the London County Council.	7116	371
TWENTY-FIRST DAY: 22 May 1901	Mr. Henry Charles Baggallay	Late Engineer to the London and India Docks Company.	7481	386
	Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Bart., M.P.	Chairman of the Thames Conservancy	7482	386
	Mr. Robert Philipson	Secretary to the Thames Conservancy	7542	389
	Mr. William Forrest Malcolm	Chairman of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.	7573	391
	Sir Alexander Richardson Binnie.	Engineer to the London County Council	7750	399
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	Alderman Sir Marcus Samuel	Chairman of the Special Committee of the Corporation of the City of London.	7917	408
	Sir Homewood Crawford	Solicitor to the Corporation of the City of London.	8321	426
	Mr. Edward Pembroke	Senior Partner of Messrs. Galbraith, Pembroke, and Company, Shipowners, and Chairman of the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Shipping Company.	8325	426
TWENTY-THIRD DAY: 5 June 1901	Mr. John Trotter	Chairman of the Millwall Dock Company.	8463	431
	Captain George Rawlinson Vyvyan.	Deputy Master of the Trinity House	8466	431
	Mr. John McEwan	Member of the firm of McMeekin and Company, Tea Merchants.	8653	439
	Mr. John Innes Rogers	Chairman of Joseph Travers and Sons, Limited, Colonial Produce Merchants.	8681	441
	Mr. John Henry Robinson	Partner in the firm of J. and H. Robinson, Flour Millers.	8719	444
	Mr. Stephen Cannon	Managing Director of Cannon and Gage, Limited, Millers and Corn Merchants.	8836	447
	Mr. Frederick Wingent	Managing Director of Wingent and Kimmins, Limited, Flour Millers.	8850	448
	Mr. Charles James Blackburn	Manager of the Wool Department of the Australian Mortgage, Land, and Finance Company, Limited.	8880	449
	Mr. William Baker Daniels	Acting Manager of the Wool Department of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited.	8892	450
TWENTY-FOURTH DAY: 10 June 1901	Mr. Richard Knowles Spencer	Director of the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited.	8922	452
	Mr. Francis Carbutt	Director of Carbutt and Company, Limited, Rice Merchants and Millers.	8987	455
	Mr. Edwin Tate	Member of the Firm of Henry Tate and Sons, Limited, Sugar Refiners.	9099	458
	Mr. Thomas Francis Blackwell	Chairman of Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell, Limited, Oil and Italian Warehousemen.	9119	459
	Mr. William Sargant	Chairman of the London Metal Exchange	9134	460
	Mr. Francis Charles Hill	Managing Director of the London Smelting Company, and Director of W. W. and R. Johnson & Sons, Limited, Lead Merchants.	9175	462
	Mr. Ernest George Leary	Member of the Firm of C. Leary and Company, Wood Brokers.	9193	463
	Mr. George Talbot Burrows Cobbett.	Proprietor of the Firm of Cobbett and Company, Timber Merchants.	9227	464
	Mr. Albert Spicer	Partner in the Firm of James Spicer and Sons, Wholesale Stationers.	9295	467
	Mr. George Goodsir	Partner in the Firm of William Weddel and Company, Frozen Meat Merchants.	9351	471
	Mr. John Kent Crow	Director and General Manager of Messrs. Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark, Varnish and Colour Merchants.	9367	472
TWENTY-FIFTH DAY: 12 June 1901	Sir Homewood Crawford	Solicitor to the Corporation of the City of London.	9374	473
	Mr. David Falconer	Partner in the Firm of Falconer and Company, Jute Merchants.	9376	474

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	Mr. Harry Michael Isaacs	Managing Director of the firm of M. Isaacs and Sons, Limited, Fruit Merchants.	9474	477
	Mr. Thomas Elborough	Managing Director of Lawes Chemical Manure Company, Limited.	9499	478
	Mr. James Powell	Partner in the firm of T. J. and T. Powell, Hide and Leather Merchants.	9523	479
	Mr. George Rouse	Partner in the firm of R. J. Rouse and Company, Colonial Brokers.	9588	481
	Mr. Alexander Farquharson	Partner in the firm of Farquharson Brothers and Company, Timber Merchants.	9688	484
	Dr. Rudolph Messel	Managing Director of the firm of Spencer Chapman and Messel, Limited, Chemical Merchants.	9855	490
	Mr. Henry Bellingham Smith	Partner in the firm of Parker, Wellesley and Company, Dried Fruit Merchants.	9875	491
TWENTY-SIXTH DAY: 17 June 1901	Mr. John Henry Robinson	Partner in the firm of J. and H. Robinson, Flour Millers.	9904	494
	Mr. Leopold Bernhard Sommerfeld.	Stone and Granite Merchants	9909	494
	Mr. John Wheeler Bennett	Senior Partner in the firm of Wheeler Bennett and Company, Provision Merchants.	9938	496
	Mr. John Stewart	Shipping Manager to the firm of Henry R. Merton and Company, Metal Merchants.	9977	497
	Mr. John Young Henderson	Director in the firm of Henderson, Craig and Company, Limited, Wood Pulp Merchants.	9982	497
	Mr. Hahnemann Epps	Director of James Epps and Company, Limited, Cocoa and Chocolate Merchants.	10001	498
	Mr. George Roffey	Partner in the Firm of George Roffey and Sons, Corn Merchants.	10014	498
	Mr. Frederick Stone Garratt	Member of the Firm of Robert Proctor and Sons, Corn Merchants.	10049	500
	Mr. John Kingsford	Member of the Firm of William Kingsford and Son, Flour Merchants.	10070	501
	Mr. Herbert Besant Tasker	Member of the Firm of Tasker and Company, Flour Merchants.	10107	503
	Mr. John Innes Rogers	Chairman of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce.	10129	504
TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY: 18 June 1901	Mr. John Innes Rogers	Chairman of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce.	10386	516
	Mr. Charles Whelon	Partner in the Firm of George Simon and Whelon, Wine and Spirit Merchants.	10399	517
	Mr. Hugh Colin Smith	Partner in the Firm trading as the Proprietors of Hay's Wharf.	10408	518
	Mr. George Livesey	Chairman of the South Metropolitan Gas Company.	10510	523
	Mr. Thomas Hopkins Woodward.	Partner in the Firm of Messrs. Henry Gray, Junior, Lightermen and Barge Owners.	10524	523
	Captain David Edward Hume	Late Conservator of the River Humber	10548	524
	Sir Edwyn Sandys Dawes, K.C.M.G.	Senior Partner of Gray, Dawes and Company, Shipowners; and Chairman of the New Zealand Shipping Company.	10564	525
	Mr. Benjamin Joseph Jacob	Late Senior Partner in the Firm of Benjamin Jacob and Sons, Lightermen and Steam Tug Owners, and Member of the Court of the Watermen's Company.	10643	529

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TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY: 24 June 1901	Mr. Richard Deering	Managing Director of Messrs. James W. Cook and Company, Limited, Wharfingers and Bargeowners.	10864	539
	Mr. Charles James Fielder	Member of the Firm of Fielder, Hickman and Company, Lightermen and Barge Owners.	10920	542
	Mr. George Henry Ardley	Member of the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen of the Thames, and Foreman Lighterman to Messrs. Hinton and Horne, Coal Merchants.	10956	543
	Mr. Harry Gosling	General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Watchmen of the River Thames.	11124	547
	Mr. Edward Mills	Pilot	11342	553
	Mr. Adolphus Lewis Sandford	Pilot	11385	554
	Mr. Walter James Hayward	Pilot	11475	557
	Mr. George Ayers	Commodore Captain of the Thames Steamboat Company.	11479	557
	Mr. Arthur Cameron Hurtzig	Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, and Partner in the Firm of Baker and Hurtzig, Civil Engineers.	11498	558
	Rev. Harry Morland Wells	Thames Embankment Owner	11507	558
	Mr. Edgar Wight	Senior Partner in the Firm of Messrs. John Knill and Company, Wharfingers.	11509	558
TWENTY-NINTH DAY: 26 June 1901	Mr. George Lisle Ryder, C.B.	Chairman of the Board of Customs	11547	562
	Mr. Frederick John Dunn	Traffic Superintendent of the North London Railway Company.	11564	564
	Mr. Thomas Hardy	Joint Manager of the London and India Docks Company.	11657	570

ADDRESSES OF COUNSEL.

THIRTIETH DAY: 1 July 1901	Mr. John Donohoe Fitzgerald, K.C.	Representing Commissioners of Sewers in Essex and Kent.	11743	573
	Mr. Claude Baggallay, K.C.	Representing the Promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill of 1901	11749	574
	Mr. Horace Edmund Avory, K.C.	Representing the Watermen and Lightermen's Company.	11750	576
	Mr. Frederic Francis Daldy	Representing the London County Council	11762	580
	Mr. Rowland Whitehead	Representing the London Chamber of Commerce.	11766	587
	Mr. Thomas Edward Scrutton, K.C.	Representing the Corporation of the City of London.	11767	592
THIRTY-FIRST DAY: 2 July 1901	Mr. Thomas Edward Scrutton, K.C.	Representing the Corporation of the City of London.	11769	595
	Mr. Joseph Shaw	Representing the North London Railway Company.	11788	602
	Mr. Ferdinand Philip Maximilian Schiller.	Representing the Short Sea Traders' Association.	11789	603
	Mr. Robert Williamson Harper	Representing the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.	11791	605
	Mr. James Cranstoun	Representing the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.	11794	610
	Mr. Claude Baggallay, K.C.	Representing the Thames Conservancy .	11800	613
	Mr. John Hutton Balfour Browne, K.C.	Representing the London and India Dock Company.	11830	618
	Mr. John Charles Lewis Coward, K.C.	Representing the Millwall Dock Company.	11833	624
	Mr. Herman William Loehnis	Representing the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.	11834	625

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

ROYAL COMMISSION

ON THE

PORT OF LONDON,

AT THE

SURVEYORS' INSTITUTION, GT. GEORGE STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

FIRST DAY.

Tuesday, 6th November, 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The EARL EGERTON OF TATTON (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) Would your Lordship allow me to intervene for a moment before the examination of the witnesses begins. I represent the Corporation of London. We are very anxious to afford every possible assistance to the Commission, but we are in some doubt as to the order of procedure, and whether it is the intention of the Commissioners to allow any cross-examination of witnesses; or how the evidence is to be taken.

(*Chairman.*) I believe the Secretary has been in communication with you, and given you all the information which it is at present in the power of the Commission to give.

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) He has not afforded me information as to whether any cross-examination of witnesses would be allowed.

(*Chairman.*) This is not the time to raise that question.

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) I am obliged to you, my Lord.

Mr. ROBERT PHILIPSON called and examined.

Mr. R. Philipson.

6 Nov. 1900.

1. (*Chairman.*) You are the Secretary of the Conservators of the River Thames, and you have held that appointment since March last?—Yes.

2. Previously you held the post of Assistant Secretary to the Tyne Improvement Commissioners?—Yes.

3. Will you kindly read your statement of evidence consecutively?—The Conservators of the River Thames were incorporated by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1857 (20 & 21 Vict. cap. cxlvii.), and their jurisdiction extended from Staines in the County of Middlesex to Yantlet Creek in the County of Kent, and over the shores of the river so far as the tide flows and reflows between high and low watermark at ordinary tides. Prior to that date the Mayor and Commonalty and Citizens of the City of London from time immemorial had and had exercised the conservation of the River Thames from Staines down to Yantlet Creek, and claimed to exercise rights of ownership in the bed and soil of the river within those limits. In February, 1844, Her Majesty's Attorney-General exhibited an information in the High Court of Chancery against the Corporation for the purpose of establishing the right of the Crown to the bed and shores of the river within the flux and reflux of the tide, and also to certain encroachments which had up to then been made on such shores. With a view to putting an end to the litigation, the Corporation acknowledged the title of the Crown, and an agreement was entered into on the 18th December, 1856, by the Corporation and a Commissioner of Her Majesty's Woods and Forests, whereby the Commissioner agreed to grant and convey, as from the 1st March, 1857, to the Corporation and their successors, as Conservators of the River Thames, the title and interest of the Crown to the bed and shores of the river. The agreement, however, expressly excluded bed and shores in front of or adjacent to Crown property, or property of a Government Department, and further provided, *inter alia*, that no license should be granted for any work in the river without valuation, and that one third of the revenue derived from such licenses should be paid to the Crown, and the remainder applied to the improvement of the navigation. Pursuant to this agreement, the Commissioner of Woods duly conveyed to the Corporation by an Indenture dated 24th February, 1857, the title and interest of the Crown to the bed,

Mr. R. Philipson.

6 Nov. 1900.

soil and shores of the river, subject to the foregoing reservation of Crown foreshores. By the Thames Conservancy Act, 1857, it was enacted that the Conservators, as a Body Corporate, should consist of twelve members as follows:—The Lord Mayor; two Aldermen of the City; four members of the Common Council; the Deputy Master of the Trinity House; one other member to be appointed by the Trinity House; two members to be appointed by the Admiralty; one member to be appointed by the Board of Trade. By the Thames Conservancy Act, 1864, under which various additional powers were conferred, six elective Conservators were added to the existing Board of twelve, as follows:—Two by ship owners; one by owners of passenger steamers; two by owners of lighters and steam tugs; one by dock-owners and wharfingers. By the Thames Navigation Act of 1866 the jurisdiction of the Conservators was extended from Staines to Cricklade, in the County of Wilts. Before the passing of this Act this portion of the river was under the control of a body called the Upper Navigation Commisioners, appointed under the Upper Navigation Act, 1795. With a view to efficiency and economy, the Act of 1866 placed the whole river under one management, viz., that of the Conservators, and five Conservators were added by the Act to the then existing Board of eighteen members, making twenty-three in all. The five members were to be appointed and elected as follows:—One by the Board of Trade; four to be elected by persons possessing the qualifications required for Upper Navigation Commissioners as described in the Upper Navigation Act of 1795. The Conservators' powers were extended and enlarged by various Acts passed in 1867, 1870, 1878, 1883, and 1885, but these Acts made no alteration in the constitution of the Board. In 1893 the London County Council obtained powers by their General Powers Act (Section 3) for seven additional members to be added to the Board, viz.:—Three to be elected by the Council, one to be elected by the Middlesex County Council; one to be elected by the Surrey County Council; one to be elected by the Kent County Council; one to be elected by the Essex County Council. The Act also contained a provision that the Conservators should in the Session of Parliament of 1894 introduce a Bill to consolidate and amend their Acts so far as regards the constitution of powers of the Board and that in the event of their failing to introduce such a Bill, or if such Bill failed to pass, to empower the London County Council to themselves introduce such a Bill in the next following Session of Parliament. The Conservators accordingly brought in a Bill in the following Session of Parliament to amend the constitution of and consolidate, amend, and extend the powers of the Conservators, and the Bill became the Thames Conservancy Act 1894. Part II. of that Act (Sections 5 to 57 inclusive) provides that the Board shall consist of 38 members and its constitution shall be as follows:—Appointed by the Admiralty two; by the Board of Trade two; by the Trinity House two; by the Gloucestershire and Wiltshire County Councils one; by the Oxfordshire County Council one; by the Berkshire County Council one; by the Buckinghamshire County Council one; by the Hertfordshire County Council one; by the Surrey County Council one; by the Middlesex County Council one; by the London County Council six; by the Common Council six; by the Essex County Council one; by the Kent County Council one; by the Metropolitan Water Companies one; by the Oxford City and County Borough one; by the County Borough of Reading one; by the County Borough of West Ham one. Elected—By shipowners, three; by owners of sailing barges, lighters, and steam tugs, two; by dock owners, one; by wharfingers, one. This is the present constitution of the Board. The principal powers and duties of the Conservators are:—(*a*) The general government and regulation of all vessels on the river within the port (Section 191), the upward limit of which is London Bridge (Section 3). (*b*) The improvement and completion of the navigation of the river (Section 62). (*c*) The appointment of Harbour Masters who may give directions for all or any of the following purposes:—(1) For regulating the time and manner in which any vessel shall enter into, go out of, or lie in the Thames, and the position, mooring or unmooring, placing or removing any vessel within the Thames. (2) For regulating the manner in which any vessel within the Thames shall take in or discharge its cargo, or any part thereof, or shall take in or deliver ballast. (3) For regulating the time and manner in which any vessel shall lie at any public draw-dock or landing place in the Thames, and the position, mooring or unmooring, placing or removing any vessel lying thereat. (4) For regulating the manner in which any vessel lying at any public draw-dock or landing place in the Thames shall take in or discharge its cargo or any part thereof, or shall take in or deliver ballast (Sections 126 and 128). (*d*) The removal of vessels sunk or stranded, and of all other obstructions to the navigation (Sections 77 and 78). (*e*) Dredging for the purpose of maintaining and improving and freeing or keeping free from obstruction the navigation, and for this purpose the eastward limit of the Conservators' jurisdiction was extended so as to include so much of the estuary of the River Thames outside the limits of the jurisdiction of the Conservators of the River Medway, and so much of the shores of such estuary as are westward of a straight line drawn from the Shoeburyness Water Tower in the County of Essex, to Eastchurch Church in the County of Kent (Section 83). (*f*) The shortening of bends (Section 84). (*g*) The licensing of docks, piers, and embankments, and the licensing of stages and cranes below Teddington Lock for discharging vessels (Sections 109 and 110). The consideration for every such licence is to be such as shall be deemed the true or fair worth or value thereof to the Licensee by the Assessor appointed under the Act (Section 116). The Act provides (Section 109) that the consideration shall be either a sum in gross or an annual rent or partly a sum in gross and partly an annual rent. In practice the Assessor fixes an annual rent on works removable at seven days' notice under the section referred to, but assesses a sum in gross on embankments not so removable, but which, under Section 117 of the Act, are to be held by the same tenure as the land in front of which they are constructed. The Conservators themselves have fixed a scale of charges in respect of their licence for any work *above* Teddington Lock. (*h*) The placing and maintenance of moorings (Section 112). (*i*) The erection of piers and landing stages (Section 119). (*j*) The placing and maintenance of beacons necessary and convenient for the navigation (Section 135). (*k*) The making of bye-laws for any or all the purposes named in Section 191. (*l*) The carrying out of the provisions of the Explosives Act and the Petroleum Acts so far as they affect the river. The Conservators have, under the authority of their Act, made the following bye-laws:—(*a*) For the regulation of the navigation and the general government of the river (Thames Bye-laws, 1898). (*b*) For the protection and regulation of the fish and fisheries (Thames Fisheries Bye-laws, 1893.) (*c*) For the regulation of the passage of vessels through the Tower Bridge (Tower Bridge Navigation Bye-laws, 1896.) The Conservators have made the following bye-laws under various powers as follows:—For the regulation of the conveyance, loading, and unloading of explosives on the river (as Harbour Authority under the Explosives Act, 1875). For the regulation of the conveyance of petroleum and carbide of calcium on the river (as Harbour Authority, under the Petroleum Acts, 1871 and 1879). For the regulation of persons and vessels using the Richmond Footbridge, Sluices, Lock, and Slipway (as undertakers under the Richmond Footbridge, Sluices, Lock, and Slipway Act, 1890). The Conservators do not own any docks or public wharves in the Port. I hand in a list of sufferance wharves.

(*A list of Sufferance Wharves and Legal Quays was handed in. See Appendix, 1st day, No. 1.*)

4. How many are there?—On the north side of the river there are 73, and on the south side 33.

5. Will you describe what these sufferance wharves are?—I understand that they are wharves at which dutiable goods may be discharged.

6. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I see you describe them as sufferance wharves and legal quays?—Yes; that is the technical expression under the Customs Act. The Conservators have placed and maintained a number of public moorings at which vessels load and unload, and no charge is made for this accommodation. Vessels loading or unloading there do so by means of their own cranes or derricks, as the Conservators have provided no machinery for such purpose. Vessels occupy the moorings for periods varying from two to fourteen days. I hand in a list of the moorings provided. See 3532—3.

(*A list of the Public Moorings on the Thames was handed in. See Appendix, 1st day, No. 2.*)

7. (*Chairman.*) What do you describe a mooring as—a place where there is no wharf, and where the vessel temporarily lies?—Yes.

8. Are there permanent buoys?—Yes; to which the vessels are attached to load and unload cargo.

9. What is the number of the moorings?—55.

10. And how many vessels do they accommodate?—116.

11. Have you the range of tonnage of those vessels, in order to give the Commission an idea of the class of vessels?—I was going to put in a statement showing the number and tonnage of vessels which loaded and unloaded at these moorings during the three months from the 1st August to the 31st October.

(The statement was handed in. See Appendix, 1st day, No. 3.)

This statement gives the classification of them. The number of vessels is 953, with a net registered tonnage of 512,758.

12. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) That is in three months?—Yes.

13. Are they the three biggest months of the year?—I do not know that. They are the only months I could get.

14. (*Chairman.*) Have you the largest and the smallest tonnage? What do they range from?—They range from 200 tons to 600 tons.

See 3212. 15. Only 600?—Yes.

16. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) That is registered tons?—Yes. May I interpose at this stage. I received a letter from your secretary, stating that you would be glad to be informed as to the number of moorings in the river which provided accommodation for vessels discharging or loading from lighters; further, whether any, and, if so, what, facilities exist for the extension of the practice. I brought that letter before the Conservators, and they gave instructions for a chart to be prepared by their engineer, showing the existing moorings and showing also the positions at which additional moorings could be placed, extending the accommodation for vessels loading and discharging in the river. I have that chart here.

17. To vessels of what tonnage would that apply?—It would apply to all vessels above 45 registered tons.

18. Up to what?—I think the maximum tonnage of vessels so discharging and loading is something like 700 tons.

19. Have you no large vessels moored in that way; for instance, one employed in laying telegraphs?—I cannot answer that question at the moment. In connection with this chart I submit a statement giving the sites of the proposed moorings.

(A statement and chart as to the provision of additional moorings in the Thames was handed in. See Appendix, 1st day, No. 4.)

In addition to these moorings the Conservators have provided 62 moorings at various places for the use of barges, but have not exercised the power of charging for their use conferred on them by Section 157 of the Act.

See 2334 and 2369-2381 20. (*Chairman.*) That section says that:—"The Conservators may from time to time demand and receive in respect of vessels not paying duties of tonnage leviable under this Act and using any of the moorings in the Thames belonging to the Conservators, the charges appointed by bye-laws of the Conservators for the time being in force." Are there any bye-laws in that respect?—No.

21. They have never exercised that power?—No.

22. Have they exercised the power under Section 155?—Yes. The Conservators are empowered to demand tonnage dues in respect of vessels entering and leaving the port. Coastwise and foreign ports north of Ushant one halfpenny per ton. All other ports three farthings per ton (Section 155).

23. And have they so done?—Yes.

24. What are the vessels exempt from tonnage dues?—The section provides that the following vessels shall be exempt from tonnage dues:—Any vessel trading coastwise between the Port of London and any place in Great Britain, unless such vessel shall exceed 45 tons tonnage: any vessel bringing corn coastwise, the principal part of whose cargo shall consist of corn; all fishing smacks and lobster and oyster boats; all vessels for passengers only; any vessel entering inwards or clearing outwards in the Port of London in case her cargo is reported for exportation, and ultimately such vessel leaves the said port without breaking bulk or taking in goods for the purpose of exportation; any vessel entering the Port of London inwards or going from the said port outwards when in ballast.

25. Have you a classified statement of the tonnage of vessels entering and leaving the port for the last five years?—I have taken it out for the last six years. *Mr. R. Philipson.* 6 Nov. 1900.

(A statement and classification of the number and tonnage of vessels entering and leaving the Port of London for the six years ending 1899 was handed in. See Appendix, 1st day, No. 5.)

26. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to ask you whether these particulars relate to the Port, as you have described it at the beginning of the table, or to the Customs Port, which is not quite the same in extent?—They relate to the Port as described in the second schedule of the Act of 1894.

27. (*Chairman.*) Will you give us the totals of the tonnage of each year inclusive?—Vessels as well?

28. Yes.—1894, 41,152 vessels; tonnage 19,718,770. In 1895, 40,553 vessels; tonnage 19,815,610. In 1896, 43,581 vessels; 21,109,594 tons. In 1897, 43,551 vessels; 21,704,221 tons. In 1898, 43,343 vessels; 22,236,629 tons. In 1899, 46,099 vessels; 22,277,174 tons.

29. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) These are the vessels entering and clearing?—They are vessels paying tonnage dues.

30. So that practically it doubles the number of vessels in one sense?—Yes.

31. You have them twice over, first as entering and then as clearing?—Yes, if they pay both in and out they are here twice.

32. Does it include vessels which do not pay dues as well as vessels which pay dues?—No, it does not include those that do not pay. It is merely vessels paying tonnage dues.

33. (*Chairman.*) Does it include the steamers which run to and fro between London and Continental ports?—Yes, if they pay tonnage dues.

34. Then they are counted several times over?—Yes; it may be.

35. But you have no statement of the vessels which do not pay tonnage dues?—No; I have not been able to get any details of them.

36. Have you compared them with figures given by the Customs?—No; I have not.

37. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) If a vessel comes in with cargo and goes out in ballast, it will appear only once, I suppose?—That is all.

38. (*Chairman.*) Then with regard to the Commissioners of Woods?—The Conservators are required to submit yearly to the Commissioners of Woods a return of all sales or licenses for any works in or upon the bed or shores of the river below Staines, showing the amounts received by the Conservators for any such sales or licenses, and are required to pay to the Commissioners on behalf of the Crown one third of the amounts in question (Section 239).

39. Have you got a return of what has been sold?—That appears in the annual accounts. The statement is shown in the published accounts.

40. I was rather wanting to know what are the annual sums that have been paid to the Commissioners, say, for the last five or six years?—I will give you that further on, when I submit the financial statement. Under an arrangement made with the Commissioners in 1889, the Conservators pay to them two-thirds of the consideration received for any licenses for works on foreshore in front of or adjacent to Crown property or property of a Government Department, which, as has been shown, was never vested in the Conservators, and the reservation of which was continued as necessity arose in the various Acts obtained from time to time by the Conservators (Sections 59 and 213 of Thames Conservancy Act, 1894). The Conservators' receipts and expenditure in respect of the Lower River up to Staines are kept distinct from their receipts and expenditure in respect of the Upper River from Staines to Cricklade (Sections 240, 241, 242, and 243). See 1683.

41. You will give us that when you make your financial statement, I suppose?—Yes. The Conservators' revenue in respect of the Lower River is derived principally from the following sources:—Tonnage dues; Tolls—barge traffic (Section 160); Tolls—pleasure traffic (Section 163); Rents for jetties and other accommodations (Section 109); Dredging Licenses (Section 137). The total receipts and expenditure on

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Revenue Account for the years 1894 to 1899, both inclusive, were:—

—	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
	£	£	£	£
1894 - -	77,094	85,975	—	8,881
1895 -	78,305	72,118	6,187	—
1896 -	85,528	73,945	11,583	—
1897 - -	88,316	67,580	20,736	—
1898 - -	91,454	74,182	17,272	—
1899 - -	91,331	86,703	4,628	—
	512,028	460,503	60,406	8,881
			8,881	
		£	51,525	Surplus.

I hand in here details of the whole of these figures.

(A table showing the receipts and expenditure on Revenue Account of the Thames Conservancy for the six years ending 1899 was handed in. See Appendix, 1st day, No. 6.)

42. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I think perhaps you might state now the amount of income from the tonnage dues in each year, because that is the principal source?—In 1894 the tonnage dues produced £14,861; in 1895, £49,342; in 1896, £52,837; in 1897, £54,436; in 1898, £55,818; in 1899, £55,729.

43. So that most of the dues come from the ½d. a ton, and not from the ⅜d. a ton, is that so?—I have given the whole of the dues.

44. Comparing that with the tonnage itself, it must be for the most part at ½d. per ton?—Yes, I think that is right; the average is ⅜d. per ton.

45. (*Chairman.*) Can you separate the expenses above Teddington Lock from those below?—It is in the Lower River right up to Staines.

46. I meant to say Staines. Can you separate those?—I can give you the receipts from Staines to Cricklade.

47. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) There is no capital expenditure accounted for in these figures?—No, I will deal with that later. I find I have the detailed receipts and expenditure above Staines from 1894 to 1899.

48. (*Chairman.*) Then, in fact, the expenses of the upper part of the river are paid for partly by the dues coming from the lower part of the river?—No. This deficiency was supplied out of reserve income account. I will give you some other figures which will show that the upper river has paid for itself.

49. That is what we wanted to know?—The receipts in 1894 were £23,904, and the expenditure £28,137; in 1895 receipts £36,385, expenditure £27,783; in 1896 receipts £32,788, expenditure £28,306; in 1897, receipts £30,649, expenditure £29,918; in 1898, receipts £34,077, expenditure £38,939; in 1899, receipts £32,133, expenditure £32,206. Total receipts, £189,937; total expenditure, £185,793; balance, £4,144.

50. Has there been any improvement in the locks in the upper river?—They have been maintained, of course, and new locks have been built from time to time as necessary.

51. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you separate the receipts and expenditure between London Bridge and Staines?—I can do that. I have not the figures here. If you wish it I will get them.

See 1683[1]

52. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I was going to ask the same question. I think it will be very material.

53. (*Chairman.*) The Act of Parliament defines the upper and lower river as between Staines to Cricklade and downwards?—Yes.

54. But practically the division would rather be from London Bridge to Cricklade, would it not, as far as the navigation is concerned?—Of course the tide flows to Teddington.

(*Chairman.*) But you have only seven feet at London Bridge, therefore up to London Bridge it is a different class of tonnage taken in that part of the river; whereas, of course, the river might be deepened up to London Bridge. There is no physical difficulty in the way, and the Commission wanted to know, if you could give it, what was expended on it.

55. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Our reference is to "the Port of London." What do you consider "the Port of London?" That is the point?—"The Port of London" is defined in one of these sections.

56. (*Chairman.*) But from physical reasons it must be below London Bridge?—Do I take it you would like the receipts from London Bridge to Staines, and the expenditure from London Bridge to Staines?

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We want the finance of the Port of London so far as you are concerned. That is really what it comes to.

57. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) London Bridge is the limit for sea-going craft; therefore it will be convenient to give it there for our purposes, although the Act of Parliament does not define it in that way?—I understand that sea-going craft go up as far as Lambeth.

Very small craft——

(*Chairman.*) Under 200 tons.

58. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Yes. There are exceptional vessels carrying coal that go up as far as Vauxhall I know, but they are only a few. For practical purposes I think it will be of great use to this Commission to have the finance below London Bridge?—I will go into that question and see what I can give you.

59. (*Chairman.*) Then you were going to tell us about the surplus revenue?—I have handed in details of the figures which I have just read to you. This surplus revenue has been carried to what is called a Reserve Income Account, and with the exception of £9,194, and a balance of £1,368, has been applied to the purposes of Capital Works, viz.:—

Surplus Revenue as above - -		£51,525
Transferred to Craft Insurance Fund - - - - -	£9,194	
Balance unexpended - -	1,368	
		10,562
		£40,963

The total expenditure on Capital Works from 1st January, 1894, up to the 31st December, 1899, amounted to £77,096, viz.:—

On new offices - - - -		£9,121
,, new moorings for ships -		999
,, dredging - - - -	£17,392	
,, new steam hoppers - -	32,867	
		50,259
,, new steamer "Conservator"		10,513
,, purchase of land - - -		1,000
,, Shepperton New Lock -		5,204
Total - -		£77,096

This expenditure has been met:—

1. Out of surplus revenues - - -	£40,963
2. By the balance of money raised by the exercise of borrowing powers -	12,107
3. Amount received for fines for accommodations - - - - - - -	10,573
4. From the sale of Government stock, premises, etc. - - - - -	13,453
	£77,096

60. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Would you kindly explain the item of "dredging" in the capital account? Is that expenditure upon dredging operations or upon a dredger?—That, I understand, is upon dredging operations.

61. (*Chairman.*) I think we shall be able to get that better from the engineer.

(*Witness.*) I can put in a statement showing the expenses of dredging below London Bridge from 1858 to the end of last year, if that will help you.

62. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) My Lord said that probably that would come better from the engineer, but on this item in the account for dredging, £17,392, I wanted to know whether that was for dredging operations or the purchase of a dredger; because it seems to be expenditure of capital for some purpose or other?—I understand it includes plant as well.

(*Chairman.*) Then we will get that from the engineer.

63. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) The charge for dredging applied to revenue would not include plant, would it?—No.

64. (*Chairman.*) Now will you hand in the annual reports?—This is a set of the yearly accounts.

(The yearly accounts of the Conservancy for the six years ending 1899 were handed in.)

65. With regard to your borrowing powers, how have you exercised them?—The Conservators were, by the Act of 1894, authorised to borrow the sum of £200,000 for the purposes of the river below Staines, and they have exercised this power to the extent of £100,000 by the creation and issue of Debenture Stock, thus leaving an unexercised balance of £100,000. The Conservators have not found it necessary to raise further loans, as their receipts on revenue and capital account have been found sufficient to carry out the purposes named in the Act (Section 287 (1)), and they have thus avoided the increased charge for interest which further borrowing would have entailed. Moreover, the amount constituting the unexhausted borrowing power would have been altogether inadequate to meet the large and costly additional works referred to in the Report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission.

66. With regard to that, I think we will ask those questions of the engineer. Now I want to ask you some general questions. How often are the meetings of the Conservancy Board held?—The Board meetings are held once a week.

67. I see your body is 38 in number?—Yes.

68. What is the usual attendance at the Board? Can you give us the attendances in the past year by name?—I can give you that. See 1683.

69. A large number of the members of the Board represent counties above London Bridge?—Yes.

70. Do they attend and vote on questions affecting the Thames below London Bridge?—Yes; but I may say that the work is very largely done by Committees.

71. We want to know how the work is done.—These Committees are composed, in the case of the Lower River Committee, of Lower River representatives.

72. Entirely?—Well, practically, and in the case of the Upper River Committee, of Upper River representatives mainly.

73. Then the Conservancy Board is for all practical purposes two boards, which sit and meet together only on certain occasions?—Yes; for the convenience of doing the work the Board is divided into these Committees, and they report their proceedings to the Board for confirmation or otherwise.

74. And the accounts as far as Staines and upwards are kept separate from those of Staines and below?—Absolutely.

75. Now I should like to ask you some questions about the action of the Conservancy Board with regard to the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade in 1878, and whose Report was presented to Parliament in 1879. The Report says: "Your Committee are strongly of opinion that there should be one authority, and one authority only, empowered to make bye-laws for the regulation of the navigation of the River Thames. They think further that this authority shall be the Conservancy Board who now represent all the principal interests on the river, rather than the Court of the Watermen's Company, who are self-elected, and, so far as they represent any interest, represent only a section of barge owners." Has any action been taken by your Board on the Report of that Commission?—I cannot say; I have not read the Report.

76. We shall require to know that. Of course, you have only recently been appointed Secretary, but this is a question of a Report made 20 years ago, and we shall require further evidence as to what has been done, or, if nothing has been done, the reason why nothing has been done.—Very good. See 1384.

77. The Report goes on to say: "If these changes are made, it will probably be necessary to transfer the registration of barges to the Conservators. It is important that this registration should be continued, since without it, and without such name, number, or other distinguishing mark painted on the barges, it would be impossible to identify them and to enforce the regulations against them. These barges, though occupying the water space of the river and using the public moorings, now pay nothing towards the Conservancy Fund. They pay to the Watermen's Company, as follows:—On first registration, if owned by a freeman 10s.; if owned by a non-freeman £1; and annually, if owned by a freeman 2s. 6d.; if owned by a non-freeman 5s. If our recommendations are adopted, these fees will be abolished; and we suggest that for each barge whilst it remains on the register the owner should pay annually 10s. to the Conservators."—The barges are registered at Watermen's Hall.

78. That is what was the case in 1880; there has been no alteration?—There has been no alteration.

79. And no action has been taken?—None at all.

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80. What is your practice with regard to the appointment of Harbour Masters—how are they licensed?—They are not licensed. The Harbour Master is, I believe, required to be a member of the Trinity House.

81. Are they licensed by Trinity House?—I see under Section 126 of the Conservancy Act of 1894, "No person shall be appointed by the Conservators to be a Harbour Master unless such person shall, after being duly examined by the Trinity House, produce a certificate from them of his proper qualification to be a Harbour Master."

82. Are the Harbour Masters appointed by the Conservators?—There is a Harbour Master and two Deputy Harbour Masters.

83. Where are they stationed?—The Harbour Master has his office at Temple Pier. One of the Deputy Harbour Masters controls the district between there and Woolwich. The other is stationed at Gravesend, and controls the district between there and Woolwich.

84. Then with regard to the policing of the river, what police have the Conservators?—They have not any.

85. You have had some experience on the Tyne Commission, have you not?—Yes.

86. That is governed by a representative body, is it not?—Yes, by an elected body.

87. And under that elected body large sums of money have been spent in the improvement of the navigation?—Yes. If it is any assistance, I can give you the constitution of the Tyne Board.

88. We have that. I merely wanted to ask you a question or two generally as to the working of the Tyne Board. How do they obtain their revenue?—They obtain their revenue from rates and dues on shipping, and on goods and coal carried by the shipping.

89. Are they subsidised in any way by the Municipal rates?—No.

90. Have that body complete control over the whole river, or are there other bodies, as there are in London, competing with them or concurrent with them?—They have complete control over the river for about nineteen miles from the entrance, and the whole of the docks in the river with the exception of Tyne Dock, which is owned by the North Eastern Railway Company. They have control of the lighting of the Port, but not over the pilots; that is in the hands of a body called the Tyne Pilotage Commissioners.

91. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Do they levy dues on all shipping going into the river whether it goes into their docks or not?—Yes.

92. On all shipping?—On all shipping, and if the ships go into the Commissioners' Docks they pay dock dues in addition.

93. They levy dues on all shipping?—River tonnage dues are chargeable and paid on all shipping whether going into the Commissioners' own docks or into the dock of the North Eastern Railway Company.

94. (*Chairman.*) Have they more powerful dredgers there than you have in the Thames?—I would not like to say that.

95. You are not prepared on behalf of the Conservancy to make any statement with regard to the carrying out of the Report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission—not merely as an engineering question but generally. Have you anything to say on behalf of the Conservancy on that subject?—No.

96. You are not instructed to say anything?—No.

97. Since this Royal Commission has been appointed have any meetings been held of the Thames Conservancy Board?—Yes, they meet every week, as I said before.

98. Has any action been taken with regard to this Commission?—No, they have not discussed any policy yet. See 1589-93.

99. You are not instructed on behalf of the Board to make any suggestion or representation to this Royal Commission?—No, for this reason—the matter has not yet been discussed.

100. Is it going to be discussed?—Yes, I quite expect it will.

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101. No time has been fixed for it. The result of the discussion if any policy is arrived at will be conveyed to you no doubt by the Chairman of the Board.

102. Is the Chairman of the Board prepared to give evidence?—Yes. If he is called upon to do so he will. I should like to add that if any invitation is sent to the Conservators from yourselves they will no doubt consider their policy and convey it to you through their Chairman.

103. But I understand that the invitation to appear before this Royal Commission was given by our Secretary to you as Secretary of the Board, and of course that invitation must necessarily have been laid by you before the Chairman, and the Royal Commission certainly would expect that the Chairman, unless he authorised the secretary to speak on behalf of the Board, should himself appear to state the policy of the Board, and reply to any questions which the Commission may have to ask him?—It was felt no doubt by the Chairman of the Board and the Conservators that you required technical details of the powers and income and expenditure of the Conservators.

See 1384.

104. But that is not the only part or perhaps the most important part of the duty of the Commission. Perhaps you will convey this to the Chairman, and we should like to know whether he will be able to appear at an early date?—Very well.

105. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) There are two questions I want to ask you with regard to the Thames Traffic Committee which made certain recommendations as to the regulation of traffic on the Thames and particularly of barge traffic and towing and matters of that kind. Can you tell us whether it is the view of the Conservators that they are already in possession of powers to regulate such matters, or would they require further legislation?—I believe the Conservators have already sufficient power to control all navigation.

106. To make bye-laws as to such matters as the towing of barges and the number of men to be employed on the barges?—I think they have already made regulations with regard to the towing of barges. I am not sure whether they have limited the number of men.

107. Can you tell us what has been done with regard to the recommendation of that Committee which says: "As regards towing we think that a rule may properly be made requiring all dumb barges navigating the whole distance between London Bridge and the uppermost of the dock entrances in Blackwall Reach to be towed?"—The Conservators have made these two bye-laws on that question: "All vessels navigating the river shall be navigated singly and separately except small boats fastened together or towed alongside or astern of other vessels, and except vessels towed by steam. Vessels towed by steam navigating the river below the Albert Bridge at Chelsea shall, if more than two in number, be placed two abreast (except vessels trading on any canal and not exceeding 14 feet 9 inches in width, which may be placed three abreast), and not more than six of such vessels shall be towed together at the same time, and no tow of vessels shall exceed in length the following limits, namely:—Above London Bridge, 400 feet; between London Bridge and the landing place at the end of Trinity Street, Charlton, 320 feet. Below the said landing place, 400 feet, to be calculated from the stern of the vessel towing to the stern of the aftermost vessel towed.

108. That does not quite answer my question. The question was whether they made any regulations in accordance with the recommendation of the Thames Traffic Committee, which says that they think "a rule may properly be made requiring all dumb barges navigating the whole distance between London Bridge and the uppermost of the dock entrances in Blackwall Reach to be towed?"—No, I do not think so.

109. No regulation of the kind has been made?—No.

110. But you think the Conservancy have the power to make such a regulation if they saw fit?—The solicitor of the Board is here if you care to call him on that point.

111. There is one other point I wanted to ask you a question about, and that is as to the expenditure. Can you tell us why the expenditure went up something like £12,000 between 1898 and 1899?—In 1898 the amount spent in dredging below London Bridge was £12,302; in 1899 it was £24,037.

112. Can you tell us why this large additional expenditure began between 1898 and 1899? One wants to know what is about the normal expenditure; that is the object of my question. Perhaps the engineer will give it?—The engineer could answer that better.

113. (*Chairman.*) There are several questions with regard to the police which are mentioned in this Report, but I understand you that you do not know anything about that.—The policing of the river is done by the Metropolitan Police.

114. But if you look at the evidence given before the Thames Traffic Committee there are recommendations that there should be one authority for the river, and that the Conservancy Board shall be that authority?—I confess I have not seen that evidence.

115. (*Mr. Ellis.*) There are some questions I want to ask you with regard to the powers of dredging and other powers under your Act of 1894; but if you say that the Soliciter will answer that better than you I will defer it until the Solicitor comes.—Yes; I think that will be better.

116. You have only been Secretary since March?—Yes.

117. But you are Secretary of the Board?—Yes.

118. You attend the Board meetings?—Yes; all meetings.

119. You are present at all of them?—Yes; always.

120. I notice the income has not gone up much from 1899 as contrasted with 1898. Is it a growing income now? Will it be more for 1900?—Very little. Up to the present time I should think it is not more than £2,000 more than in 1899.

121. Is the want of income any bar to your operations?—Most undoubtedly; if we had more money we would be able to spend more.

122. Just let me call your attention to Section 189 of the Act of 1894—the last words: "if any dredging or other operations shall be recommended in the Report of the said Commission" (that is the Barry Commission) "the Conservators shall as soon as may be reasonably practicable after a copy of such Report shall have been received by them as aforesaid, either proceed to carry out such dredging or other operations, or apply to Parliament for all such powers as shall be desirable to enable them to give effect to the recommendations of the said Commission." That is what we call in the House of Commons a mandatory recommendation. Has that ever been discussed by the Board in your presence?—No.

123. Are there any minutes bearing upon any discussion by the Board on those words?—I cannot say. It was before my time.

124. If you say you do not know, I will take that answer.—The engineer will be able to tell you.

125. (*Chairman.*) We shall certainly require to know it. You do not mention anything about a debt; what debt have you?—On the Lower River Fund we owe £100,000.

126. On page 21 of the evidence before the Barry Commission some questions are asked about the debt on the Upper Navigation: "An outstanding debt of about £78,000, and the old Commissioners' debt, on which no interest has been paid since 1863." Can you tell us anything about that?—The debt on the Upper River account is £110,000.

127. Is that included in your financial statement?—It is in the statement of accounts.

128. About this old Commissioners' debt on which no interest has been paid—has that been cleared off, or what has happened to it?—It is practically cleared off.

129. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You stated just now that the Conservancy had not exercised their power to charge fees for moorings?—That is so.

See 7569-72

130. Can you give any reasons for their not exercising that power?—The matter was fully discussed some years ago; all interests were represented, and it was considered inexpedient to make any charge.

131. Upon what ground?—I do not know that. I have got a copy of the minute here. It simply states what I have stated—that the matter was discussed, and it was decided not to make any charge.

132. With reference to the list of vessels using the moorings, are the same vessels counted twice over?—Yes.

133. They would be, I presume?—Yes.

134. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With reference to the list of sufferance wharves and legal quays which you have put in, that does not include every place, does it, where ships may load and unload besides the docks?—No; it does not include private wharves, for instance.

135. There are private wharves besides?—Yes.

136. You have no list of those to give us?—No.

137. You have control over them, I presume?—Only so far as navigation is concerned.

138. Then what is the distinction between a sufferance wharf or legal quay and other places where a ship may load and unload?—I take it that a sufferance wharf or legal quay is a place where dutiable goods may be landed.

139. That is the distinction?—Yes; that is under the Customs Laws Consolidation Act.

140. Then with regard to the average tonnage dues of about ⅜d. per ton, which seems to be the income which you get from the ships which you do make a charge upon, will you tell us what is the similar charge made by the Tyne Improvement Commissioners, with which you have been connected? — Coastwise 1½d., foreign 3d. per registered ton, in and out. See 1330.

141. That is upon all shipping, without any exemptions?—Yes.

142. Then if you had similar powers of charging shipping in the Port of London, you would increase your income very largely?—To a very large extent indeed.

143. Three or four times, perhaps?—Yes, all that. Besides, there are many other charges on the Tyne which do not obtain on the Thames. See 20, 21, 2334, 2369–81.

144. Of what kind?—Such as the charge for moorings. Every vessel entering the Tyne with cargo and leaving with cargo pays a mooring rate of ¼d. per registered ton, and if a vessel loads or discharges a cargo in the river at public moorings owned by the Commissioners she pays coastwise 1d. per registered ton, and foreign 2d. per registered ton.

145. Then has the question ever been before the Thames Conservancy Board as to the expediency of increasing these charges or dealing with them in any way with the object of improving the Port of London?—Not to my knowledge.

146. You have no information to give us as to the policy of the Thames Conservancy in these matters?—No. So far as I know the question has not been under the consideration of the Board.

147. And particularly as to the question of exempting different classes of ships you have no information to give us as to the reason for so doing?—No. That is an exemption that has been continued since 1834.

148. It belongs to a time long past, and has not been considered with reference to the kind of traffic which now takes place and the conditions of the Port of London as they now stand?—Just so. The powers for charging the tonnage rate which was levied by the Conservators were fixed in 1834. These exemptions were fixed at the same time, and have simply been continued from that time to this.

149. Is there any charge on lighters or barges by the Tyne Improvement Commissioners?—No.

150. So that they are completely exempt in the Tyne as they are in London?—Precisely, below Bridge.

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151. (*Chairman.*) They are not much used there, are they?—No, the barges there are of a different class. They are a smaller craft which we call lighters—not nearly such a formidable craft as barges here.

152. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Then with regard to the constitution of the Thames Conservancy can you give us any reason why the numbers representing the ship-owners and lightermen and wharfingers were fixed as they are at present, both with reference to the other members of the Conservancy Board and with reference to each other?—From my reading of the evidence on the Bill of 1894, the question of representation seems to have been very largely dealt with and fiercely fought out. It was difficult, no doubt, to meet the many claims for representation.

153. Can you give us any idea of the reasons why these particular proportions were fixed upon?—No, I cannot do that.

154. Why the ship-owners, for instance, have three, and the dock-owners, one, and points of that kind?—No, I cannot tell you.

155. (*Chairman.*) The Commission would like to draw the attention of the Chairman of the Conservancy to some recommendations in the report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade affecting the Conservancy, and they would like to have some questions answered with regard to those recommendations, and why they have not been carried out, especially with regard to the general jurisdiction over the river. That question was fully gone into by that Committee, and recommendations were made upon which the Commission would like to inquire the views of the Conservancy at the present time?—I will take care to convey that. See 1384.

156. And we should like to have particulars of the attendance of members in the last year or two?—Yes. See 1683

157. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With reference to the answer you gave to Sir Robert Giffen about tolls on the Tyne, I suppose I should be right in saying that the amount of traffic which enters in ballast and goes out laden on the Tyne is very much larger than on the Thames. I mean the number of ships that come in in ballast and go out laden with coal must be very large as compared with the number of ships which frequent the Thames and make either the journey in or the journey out in ballast?—Yes, that is so.

158. That would be a qualification, at any rate, with regard to the question of the tolls. The conditions are not the same?—That is so.

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) My Lord, would this be a convenient time to ask the Commission whether they intend to allow witnesses to be cross-examined?

(*Chairman.*) I have already given you your answer, and I am very sorry you should think it necessary to ask me again. I can give you no further answer. There is a communication in the "Times" this morning stating what will be done by the Commission, and the order in which the evidence will be heard. More than that I cannot tell you.

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) I am much obliged to your Lordship.

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Mr. James Hughes called and examined.

159. (*Chairman.*) You are solicitor to the Thames Conservancy?—Yes.

160. How long have you been solicitor?—I was appointed in May, 1889. That is roughly about 12 years.

161. There are several points which the Secretary of the Conservancy has been unable to give us information upon. Perhaps as you have been present you will be able to make some statement with regard to the questions which we have raised?—I made a note of two or three. Might I mention this in the first place? You put a question to the Secretary with regard to the Board and its Committees. The position is this: there is no division of the Board; there is one Board, two principal Committees, one dealing with matters relating to the river below Staines, the other to the river above Staines. Those Committees' reports are submitted to the Board and confirmed by the Board. There are again two funds, the upper and the lower; one applicable above Staines and one below.

162. What I want to know is whether those who represent the interests above Staines vote on all the questions affecting the river below Staines; that is to say, below London Bridge?—Yes, they can act in Board assembled.

163. But as a matter of fact do they?—Yes.

164. What is the reason why no action has been taken to carry out the recommendations in the Report of the Barry Commission?—With submission I think the engineer will endeavour to show you that we have carried them out to a very great extent. I think that will come from the engineer. The whole matter was considered immediately the report was received, and it was debated at considerable length. The engineer was instructed to report, and he did, and certain work was carried out afterwards which he will detail. *Mr. J. Hughes.*

165. How have you carried out this latter part of Section 189 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894: "If any dredging or other operations shall be recommended in the report of the said Commission the Conservators shall as soon as may be reasonably practicable, after a copy of such report shall have been received by them as aforesaid, either proceed to carry out such dredging or other operations, or apply to Parliament for all such powers as shall be desirable to enable them to give effect to the recommendations of the said Commission." Now the said Commission recommended that a navigable depth of about 30 feet, suitable for vessels of the largest

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draught, should be afforded at least up to Gravesend.—I had rather you put that question to the engineer, because he can explain the figures.

166. I am asking with regard to this particular clause of the Act of Parliament. You are either to carry out such dredging or other operations, or apply to Parliament for all such powers as shall be desirable to enable you to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission. It is a matter of notoriety that that has not been carried out. I want to know from you as solicitor how it is that you have not acted upon this clause in the Act of 1894?—I am afraid I cannot answer. The Conservators in carrying out the report of, or the course advocated by, their engineer, thought that they were doing as much as they possibly could towards carrying out Sir John Wolfe-Barry's recommendation.

167. But if you could not carry it out you were to apply to Parliament for all such powers as shall be desirable to enable you to give effect to the recommendations of the said Commission?—It was not thought desirable that we should go to Parliament again. We had been there recently.

168. Then you did not carry out the recommendations?—We did not regard them as mandatory.

169. As the legal adviser of the Conservancy Board, ought you not to have instructed your Board to apply to Parliament?—I am afraid I cannot agree. I should be more inclined to advise the Board that if they had done everything that they could possibly do to carry out Sir John Wolfe-Barry's recommendations they had done all that was necessary, and it was not incumbent upon them to go to Parliament.

170. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I should like to make one little correction. It was not a personal recommendation of mine,—No, the recommendation of the Commission.

171. It really was the joint report of Admiral Nares and Mr. Lyster?—It is referred to very often in your own name.

172. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Then the Conservators do not recognise that they are guilty of disobedience to an Act of Parliament?—I am afraid not.

173. (*Chairman.*) Perhaps the Chairman of the Conservators will be able to go further into this matter, but there are certain recommendations in the report of the Thames Traffic Committee. There are several questions with regard to which we should like to know if the Thames Conservancy Board have considered them. I will call your attention to a recommendation of this kind—"In this place it may be sufficient to say that on the Thames, as in other harbours of the United Kingdom, the tendency of modern legislation has been to place the whole authority over matters connected with navigation in the hands of one body, representing more or less completely the different interests concerned in it. Such a body, in the case of the Thames, is to be found in the Thames Conservancy Board, and your committee are of opinion as will be seen by their specific recommendations, that it is to this Board that the public must ultimately look for the efficient supervision of the navigation and for the performance of duties hitherto entrusted to various bodies. No action has been taken upon that?—That is prior to the date of my appointment. The Committee reported in 1879, but as a matter of fact, I understand the report was considered most carefully by the then Conservators.

174. And nothing was done, or what was done?—I can hardly say what was done or left undone. It was before my time. I could deal with some of these smaller matters, such as the towing of barges and so on, but on the question of policy I am afraid I could not say.

175. Will you state what is within your knowledge as to what has been done in order to meet the recommendations of this Committee appointed by the Board of Trade?—I am afraid I am not in a position to state anything of my own knowledge with regard to the Committee's Report.

176. Who is able to give us this then?—Mr. More, the engineer, has been engineer during the whole time.

177. These are not questions of engineering.—No; but we are in this difficulty: the Secretary, as you are aware, has only recently been appointed, and consequently he cannot be expected to know.

178. But I presume the Board has acted with regard to all legal questions upon your advice or the advice of your predecessor?—Yes, since 1889.

179. And nothing has been done, to your knowledge, to carry out those recommendations?—Not that I could speak of from my own knowledge.

180. But surely you must be aware of everything that goes on in the Board?—I am present at the Board and hear everything that is debated at their meetings, true; but I have never heard this Report debated or any portion of it. It was prior to my time. It was ten years before my appointment. The then Chairman of the Board, I would remind you, was a member of the Committee—Admiral Sir Frederick Nicolson. It was a Board of Trade Committee, and he was put on, and Lord Farrer.

181. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Lord Farrer was a member of the Committee of 1879, but he was not a member of the Thames Conservancy Board.—No.

182. (*Chairman.*) And you have never had occasion at your Board to consider the question of the Watermen's Company. There were very strong recommendations which practically amounted to the abolition of the Watermen's Company?—No, I cannot say that it has ever been discussed in my presence.

183. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you any minutes of the Board dealing with the recommendations of the Committee of 1879?—The whole of the minutes can be produced.

184. (*Chairman.*) On page 48 of the Thames Traffic Committee's Report there is this paragraph relating to the relations between the Conservators and the Watermen's Company:—"It will be seen from what is stated above (pp. 32, 34) that many of the bye-laws of the Watermen's Company are upon the same subjects and cover the same ground as those of the Conservators. And it is a matter of well-founded complaint by several witnesses, and amongst others, the chairman and members of the company, that the bye-laws of the two bodies do clash in some important particulars. Your Committee are strongly of opinion that there should be one authority, and one authority only, empowered to make bye-laws for the regulation of the navigation of the River Thames. They think, further, that this Authority should be the Conservancy Board, who now represent all the principal interests on the river, rather than the Court of the Watermen's Company, who are self-elected, and so far as they represent any interest, represent only a section of barge-owners." Has no action, either from your knowledge or from an examination of the books, been taken in consequence of that recommendation?—The accounts of the Watermen's Company are audited annually by an official appointed by the Conservancy. Beyond that no action was taken to my knowledge.

185. What means does the Board take to enforce your rules? There is a very long list of things that you have to do?—Our rules, I might say, are comprised in our bye-laws. Since the Act of 1894, a Special Committee was appointed to consider the question of making bye-laws under Section 191, which contains the whole of our powers with regard to making bye-laws of any sort or kind. The Committee went very thoroughly into the old bye-laws. They added to, amended, and somewhat repealed, and the result was that in 1898 fresh bye-laws were made, which I am prepared to hand in.

186. The question I asked you was what means have the Conservancy Board of enforcing these regulations or bye-laws. Do they act with the Metropolitan Police?—That is a question that is hardly for me, but the river is policed in one sense from one end to the other. The harbour-masters in the tideway have considerable staffs.

187. The last witness said there were only three heads. What is the staff under them?—I cannot give it you exactly, but if you would not mind taking it generally from me, they have boatmen and assistants under them. There is one harbour-master and two deputies, and they have a considerable staff under them.

188. How far do they enforce the rules and regulations and bye-laws of your Board? What police powers have they?—They have no police powers.

189. How do they see that the rules and regulations are carried out. Supposing there is an infraction of

your rules and regulations, what happens?—It is reported to the head office, put into my hands, and if the evidence is sufficient there is a summons.

190. Is it brought before the Courts in the ordinary way?—Yes, before Courts of Summary Jurisdiction in the nature of summonses; and if the Commissioners desire to see it—it was handed in to the Board of Trade Commission in 1894—I have the Convictions Book which I have kept during the period I have acted as legal adviser to the Conservators. The actual convictions each year are very numerous.

191. For breaches of your bye-laws?—For breaches of the bye laws and breaches of the Explosives and Petroleum Acts and Bye-laws.

192. How far do you act with the police?—The police report to us. They patrol the river.

193. Have you steam launches to patrol the river?—Yes; but if the police see any contravention of the Thames Conservancy Act, that goes to Scotland Yard, and it comes from Scotland Yard to us immediately. In fact, the course with regard to proceedings is this: the complaints are put into my hands immediately they come into the head office.

194. Do you regulate in any way the operations of the barges, that is to say, do you see whether they are left and not properly attended to?—Yes, the harbour-master and the officials under him have instructions from the Conservators to regulate the whole of the traffic, barges and everything else, in the river.

195. And do they do so?—Yes.

196. Have the prosecutions that you have instituted, the effect of rendering the infraction of bye-laws less frequent?—Yes. In the case of vessels you may say that there are very few instances of disobedience to the harbour-master's orders in the course of a year.

197. They have powers only for the river?—Yes. They have no power in the docks at all. Our powers are really ample as they stand at present under the Act of 1894. They are ample for the navigation of the river.

198. Supposing anyone wanted to set up a new mooring place or a new wharf, what happens?—The course of procedure is that he makes application to the Conservancy on the form that is kept in the office, which is practically in the form of an agreement. That is submitted to the officials, the harbour-master, and the engineer, to report on. It is then considered by the Board, and if it is not considered to be in any way an obstruction to the navigation or a detriment to the navigation, the license is granted, subject to the assessment as provided by the Act.

199. Can you tell us how many licenses of that kind have been granted in the last five years?—I am afraid I could not, but it is a great many.

200. We want to know whether there is an increasing number of these applications to moor or make lay-byes?—The information shall be afforded to you.

See 1683.

201. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You said that minutes are in existence showing how the Thames Conservancy have dealt with the recommendations of the Committee of 1879?—Certainly.

200. We want to know whether there is an increasing room; the whole of the minutes of the Conservators from 1857 are at the disposal of the Commissioners at any time. They are kept.

203. I think we should like to have the minutes dealing with the Thames traffic and the recommendations of the Committee of 1879?—You shall have them.

204. Nothing has been done in the last ten years I understand?—Not to my knowledge, except that I may point out that our byelaws cover a good deal of the recommendations of the Committee.

205. (*Chairman.*) That is what I asked you and you have satisfied me that something has been done?—Yes. The question of towing, of course, has been considered over and over again, and the question of the lights on barges and various other things that are mentioned. The byelaws are, as they stand, I may say, very complete.

205A. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I wish to ask you a few questions with regard to your dredging powers. If you turn to the Act of 1894 I think they are contained in Sections 83 to 89, are they not?—Yes, they are principally in Section 83.

206. Are you aware whether the Conservators have at all times found those powers sufficient?—Yes. I can say within my knowledge that they have found them sufficient.

207. You have no desire or need to go beyond those?—No, I think not. These powers were the subject of a well-known decision in the House of Lords comparatively recently.

208. Then with regard to income: Your powers as regards income I think are mainly in Sections 155 to 158?—Yes, that is so, and also, of course (which is very important), the amounts received in respect of licences granted under Section 109.

209. Then we will add 109 to those, and say 109 and 155 to 158 inclusive?—Yes.

210. Have those powers been found sufficient?—Yes.

211. I am asking you as solicitor. I am not asking you as a question of policy or engineering?—Yes—the powers.

212. No improvement is desired as regards the matters comprised in those powers?—No, I think not.

213. Then I am afraid I must press you a little further with regard to these words at the end of Section 189. The position is this: You are solicitor to a very important public body created by the Act of 1894. It is not a question of the recommendations of Sir John Wolfe-Barry's Commission. It is a question of what Parliament intended. Parliament used these words: "If any dredging or other operations," and so on. The first question I want to put to you as solicitor to the Board is this. You would have that brought before you, of course. You would consider that?—To answer candidly, I cannot say that it was brought to my attention directly.

214. Did you ever read the Act of 1894?—Do you mean our own Act?

215. Yes.—Yes, several times. The first thing that was considered by the Conservators, and the main question, was what dredging should be done to carry out the recommendations of the Commission. The legal question was never put to me directly.

216. Then you never considered the bearing of these words upon the operations of your Thames Conservancy Board?—No, I cannot say that I have.

217. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I asked the question of Mr. Philipson about compulsory towing. Do you hold that you have the powers to carry out the recommendations with regard to compulsory towing on page 24 of the Report of the Thames Traffic Committee?—Perhaps we have, but I am rather inclined to think that it would be a straining of our powers if we made such a sweeping bye-law as that would be under the power contained in Section 191. I would rather myself, as a lawyer, see the express power.

218. Supposing you made a bye-law of that kind, would you call the trade together and hear their views?—Yes.

219. That would be the natural course of events?—It is the course adopted by the Conservators in all these questions of river policy.

220. Assuming you have the power under the Act of Parliament, the parties would be fully heard before the bye-law was made?—Yes, and further than that, there is a publication of the bye-law necessary. They are heard at the Board of Trade again.

221. It is subject to appeal, is it not?—Practically the appeal is to the Board of Trade, and in the case of these bye-laws of 1898 we were before the Board of Trade for a considerable period. All interests on the river were represented. There was a great question then as to the lights on dumb barges.

222. Has the matter of compulsory towing ever been brought to your notice as solicitor to the Board?—No, not beyond dealing with it in the bye-laws.

223. This recommendation therefore has never had any attention paid to it?—Yes. I happen to know, but I cannot say of my own knowledge. It was thoroughly debated at the time, and it was not thought desirable in the interests of those using the river to make any alteration.

224. You mean that the Conservators exercised their judgment upon it, and considered that it was unadvisable?—Yes. I take it that the Minutes which the Chairman has desired to see will probably clear that point up.

225. Now I want to ask you this with regard to the recommendations of the Commission of 1894. The Secretary stated in his evidence that the apparent reason for

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not doing anything was the unexhausted borrowing powers of the Board. It is put in these words: "Moreover, the amount constituting the unexhausted borrowing power would have been altogether inadequate to meet the large and costly additional works referred to in the Report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission."—Yes.

226. That seems to state that the difficulty is financial, and that you are not carrying it out on account of the difficulty of finance?—I had rather the engineer answered that question; possibly it may be the expense.

227. We have to deal with the evidence of the Conservancy Board. The Secretary distinctly states here that the difficulty is finance?—I see no reason to doubt it.

223. It is not that you are carrying it out, but that you cannot carry it out on account of finance. Is not that the fact?—I can only put it in this way. The more money at the disposal of Mr. More the engineer, the more work can be done.

229. Is it not really the fact that finance is the difficulty?—Finance is, generally speaking, a difficulty. It is a question of cutting your coat according to your cloth.

230. Then in that case, would it not have been a right course for the Conservancy to have applied to Parliament as provided by Section 189, which has been referred to more than once?—I assume that if we had gone to Parliament it would have been to obtain further financial powers.

231. Would not that be the precise power which was contemplated by Parliament in Section 189 of the Act of 1894?—Yes; perhaps so.

Mr. C. J. More.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES MORE called and examined.

232. (*Chairman.*) You are engineer of the Conservators of the River Thames, and you are a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers?—I am.

233. You have been 17 years engineer, and were previously assistant engineer for 13 years?—Yes.

234. Will you state the powers of the Board with regard to dredging and the disposal of the material dredged?—The powers of the Conservators with regard to dredging and the disposal of the material dredged are contained in Sections 83 to 89 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894 (57 and 58 Victoria, cap. 187). By Section 189 of that Act it was provided that the Conservators should apply to the Board of Trade to appoint a Commission to enquire and report to the Board of Trade:—(1) Whether any and what dredging or other operations are practicable and expedient for the purpose of improving the navigation of the Thames and the estuary thereof between Thorney Creek, in the County of Essex, and the Nore Lightship; (2) as to the probable cost of such dredging and other operations (if any) which the said Commission may deem practicable and expedient, and as to the means by which the funds necessary to meet such cost should be provided.

235. The Lower Thames Navigation Commission made their report?—They did.

236. Will you state what steps the Conservators took to carry out generally the recommendations contained in that report?—The Conservators considered this report very carefully, and at a Board Meeting of the 22nd June, 1896, they adopted a modification of the programme, which was laid before the Commissioners, and referred to in paragraph 31 of their report.

237. That was your proposition?—That was the proposition laid before the Commissioners when they sat. Then the Board adopted the modification, as follows:—They proposed to dredge between the Nore and Gravesend for a depth of 26ft. and a width of 1,000ft.; that is, to provide a channel of the minimum widths and depths which I have mentioned. Then between Gravesend and Crayford Ness to a width of 1,000ft. and a depth of 24ft. at low water spring tides; between Crayford Ness and Albert Docks to a width of 500ft. and a depth of 22ft.; between Albert Docks and Millwall Docks to a width of 300ft. and a depth of 18ft. In November, 1896, tenders were advertised for to dredge at least 300,000 cubic yards of material in the Lower Hope and in Gravesend Reach, and deposit the material dredged in the Barrow Deep within a specified area. The area to which reference is made is agreed to by the Board of Trade as a place of deposit for dredging purposes. In the following January the tender of the London and Tilbury Lighterage and Dredging Company was accepted by the Conservators. Under this tender during 1897 and 1898 a quantity of 191.000 cubic yards of material was dredged in the Lower Hope, and 174,000 cubic yards in Gravesend Reach.

238. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) But that is more than 300.000 cubic yards?—Yes; that was the minimum, and we exceeded that by 65,000 yards.

239. (*Chairman.*) Is that all that you thought necessary in order to carry out the depth of 30ft. which was recommended?—The question about the recommendation of 30ft. is not quite what the Conservators thought it was.

240. At page 33 they say:—"With this in view they"—that is, the shipowners—"unanimously demanded much larger works than are proposed by the Conservators, viz., a navigable channel of 30ft. below low water of spring tides at least"?—Yes; and the Commissioners concurred with the view of the shipowners, but if you look at paragraph 50 you will find, as far as I read it (I know we paid considerable attention to this Report, and the Conservators desired to carry out as far as their means would allow them the recommendations of the Commission):—"We also recommend that the small shoal patches in the Yantlet channel, which limit its depth to 25ft., should be removed by dredging. If this be done, a straight waterway 600ft. wide, with a limiting depth of 26ft., would be provided, and the cost of the dredging in question would be so trifling that it might well be defrayed by the Conservancy out of their existing funds." On that 26ft. the scheme was based which I have put before you. That 26ft. might be carried up with the means at the disposal of the Conservators, as far as Gravesend. The 30ft. was altogether out of the question—the Board had no means to do it.

241. They might have applied to Parliament for power?—They might have applied for power, but they also paid a considerable amount of deference to another recommendation of the Commission, which was made in this Report.

242. It is quite clear that the general tenour of the Report seems to be that what was demanded by the shipowners was that the river should be deepened to 30 feet, and in Section 189, which has been quoted several times it was enacted by Parliament that those recommendations should be carried out, and if necessary the Conservators should apply to Parliament for powers to carry them out?—I, at any rate, did not read the report quite in that way. In paragraph 49 it says:—"Having come, with some regret, to the conclusion that works in the river between Thorney Creek and the Nore cannot at present be recommended, we have found it unnecessary to proceed with the second branch of our enquiry, namely, the source from which funds should be provided for works of improvement within that area. We fully recognise, however, that the deepening of the Thames is a matter of great importance, and that the mode in which the necessary funds should be provided demands very careful consideration. It seems to us that the financial powers of the Conservators, whenever the fitting time arrives for undertaking the works, shall be dealt with as a whole; for though we think it is expedient to provide a deep water channel to Gravesend (or even, possibly, to the Albert Docks), it is of equal, and perhaps greater, importance that no financial burden should be so placed as to damage the commercial intersts of the Port of London in the present severe competition with other ports in this and foreign countries." That made the Conservators pause very considerably in the matter of going to Parliament. They did not know where they were going to get any funds to carry out such works as these. It is enormously expensive. It says so here in this report.

243. Has nothing been done to carry out Paragraph 35 of the Report?—Something has been done towards carrying it out, but not the whole 30 feet.

244. Six years have elapsed and the river is still not in the state which that Commission recommended it should be put into—it is not dredged to the extent that that Report recommended?—I cannot quite admit with deference, that this Report recommended that we should undertake the 30 feet. It concurred in the view that it would be a desirable thing to have—that is all.

245. It seems as clear as English can make it that the channel shall be deepened up to Gravesend?—The Conservators have carried out a scheme as far as they could

with the means at their disposal, of 26 feet up to Gravesend, which has been accomplished, and now they are carrying out a lesser depth further up the river.

246. Since that, have not the demands of the shipowners increased rather than diminished?—There are a few very large ships which no doubt feel the want of a 30 ft. channel, but the great bulk of the tonnage does not suffer at all.

247. Is not the tendency at the present day to send merchandise in ships drawing nearly 30 ft. of water?—Yes; there is an increased tendency that way.

248. Then evidently the Conservators have not made the deepening of the river at all correspond with the requirements of the trade—the requirements of the shipowners—which you must admit should be the first object of the Thames Conservancy Board to do?—The Conservators of course have the duty to do the most they can for the river, but the question has to be considered from its financial aspect also—where the money is to come from, and whether it is really worth this expenditure—whether you are going to tax a large number of vessels which do not want the accommodation for the benefit of those who do want it.

249. Then you take it upon yourself to interpret the Act of Parliament in the way you think it should be interpreted?—Oh, no. The Conservators never wished to do anything that was not in the Act; they did not think themselves called upon to carry out all this work under the recommendations made in this Report; if they had they would have done so.

250. What steps have you taken with regard to the dredging? Have you built the largest sized hoppers which are known to the world?—One recommendation was that the stuff should be no longer shot into a place at Sea Reach. In order to carry out that recommendation the Conservators have built two large 1,000 tons steam hoppers to carry it to the Barrow Deeps, where it has been deposited since the hoppers were built.

251. Do you consider those steam dredgers sufficient to carry out economically and effectively the dredging which is required in the Thames according to the recommendations of that Commission?—The steam dredgers and hoppers which we have at present are all we can afford to give with the funds at present at our disposal.

252. You have not exhausted your borrowing powers of £100,000. You might have spent £70,000 in getting a steam dredger of the largest size made?—I think it is not only the steam dredger, but it is keeping the steam dredger and the hoppers at work that you must consider. The £100,000 would not be the slightest use for a work like making a 30 ft. channel up to Gravesend.

253. Of course the same argument that I have mentioned before applies—that you are stopped by finance, not by the Act of Parliament?—That is so—it is finance.

254. The Act of Parliament instructed you to apply for powers to carry out the recommendations of the Commission and that has not been acted upon?—No, certainly there has been no application to Parliament in consequence of that.

255. I suppose you know about the dredgers now used in the Mersey?—Yes.

256. Do you think they would be of any use for the Thames if you could afford to buy them?—Oh, I have no doubt they would.

257. Undoubtedly they would?—I think they would. We have two very good dredgers in the Thames at present.

258. We saw them I think on our visit down the river?—When you went down the river you passed one.

259. Of course these are rather matters for the Board than for the engineer. Have you ever given them any recommendation to carry out any larger scheme than this, and have they been unable to carry it out for want of funds?—No, my instructions were to prepare a scheme which it was possible to carry out with the means at the disposal of the Board, and this is the most, I think, that we can do. We are carrying that out now.

260. Have you anything to say, in your position as engineer to the Conservancy Board, with regard to the present state of things?—No, I have not.

261. You have no recommendation to make?—No, none whatever.

262. You are not instructed by your own Board to make any recommendations?—No, I have not been instructed.

263. *Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You have no doubt read pretty carefully the whole of the 1896 Report?—Oh, very carefully. *Mr. C. More.* 6 Nov. 1900.

264. I think you are also aware that that particular Commission was very strictly limited by boundary lines drawn on the map to a distance of about 5½ miles?—That is so.

265. And they had no statutory power, or power under their Commission to make any recommendations outside those limits?—I suppose not.

266. I think you will also admit that it appears very clearly on the face of the Report that it was in consequence of that limitation of powers that we only expressed our concurrence with the views of the ship-owners as to a navigable channel 30 ft. deep up to Gravesend, and abstained from making what might be called a recommendation under the powers of the Commission?—That is so—I think that is stated in the Report.

267. Therefore, I suppose we may say that no one can doubt that the wish and intention of the Commission was that if the Conservancy Board would undertake the formation of a channel up to Gravesend of 30 ft., then the particular part that was under the purview of the Commission should be deepened to 30 ft.?—I think that would follow.

268. That is quite clear on the face of the Report?—I think so.

269. Then we gave also, did we not, in paragraph 25, a pretty careful table of the obstruction to the navigation caused by the shoals between the points within the limits of the Commission's purview?—Yes, it gives the number of days that vessels would have to wait, and so on.

270. I do not know whether you have had an opportunity of checking these calculations, and whether you can say that they are all correct?—At the time we looked at them I think they were very correct indeed.

271. The obstruction to navigation of ships drawing 26 ft. of water and upwards is undoubtedly considerable?—If they arrive at anything like the period of low water, they have a very considerable time to wait.

272. In the case of vessels drawing 26 ft. of water, the delay varies from a moment to four hours on each tide?—Yes.

273. And those delays would obtain over 310 days out of the year?—Yes, from a moment to four hours during 310 days—that is so.

274. Then with regard to vessels drawing 27 ft. they would be obstructed on 353 days of the year, and the period of delay would vary from a moment to 4¾ hours?—Yes, depending on the time at which they arrived.

275. That is twice a day—at each tide?—Twice in the 24 hours.

276. Then vessels drawing 28 feet might have to wait from a moment to about 5¼ hours?—Yes.

277. I would also like to ask you a question on paragraph 31 of the Report, and on the amended programme which you now give us. You say now that you have been able to obtain a depth of 26 feet of water between the Nore and Gravesend?—That now practically exists. There may be one or two little patches of 25 feet or 25 feet 6 inches, but there is a navigable channel with a minimum width of 1,000 feet, and depth of 26 feet at low water.

278. Have you done any dredging at all on the Leigh Middle Sands?—No.

279. None whatever?—No.

280. Therefore, whatever deepening has taken place, beyond what was found by the Commission in 1894, has been due to natural causes—the natural scour?—Quite so. We have done no dredging there. The recent chart which was undertaken at your desire showed that there was a 26 feet channel about 1,000 feet wide, and the surveys that we have since made show that that channel is maintaining itself.

281. Has that been done since, or was it in existence but not known at the time of our report?—It was in existence, but not known.

282. The disclosure was due to the survey that we recommended?—Quite so.

283. Therefore, so far as regards that particular portion of the Thames referred to in Section 189 of the Act

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of 1894, nothing whatever has been done in the way of dredging or any artificial operations?—Nothing.

284. It is in a state of nature, and nothing has been done at all?—Nothing has been done there at all. I have the charts, which, perhaps, I had better put in.

285. I should like very much to have the charts?—These are copies that I have had made. I have had them made in two forms. One is giving you all the soundings, and the other is marking the 26 feet channel.

(*The witness handed in charts.*)

286. Now I wanted to ask you with regard to the carrying out of what was obviously the wish of the Commission of 1896 as to a 30 feet channel, whether you have made any estimates—surveys especially, and estimates—of what would be necessary to carry out such an undertaking?—No, we have not. The question has not been gone into as regards a 30 feet channel. It was felt by the Board, that as they had not the funds to carry out the work, and it would be a very expensive matter to go into, it was not necessary to do so.

287. How could the Board come to a conclusion like that if they did not know what the cost would be?—I think your own Report shows that it would be a very expensive matter, because there was not only the question of dredging. They were very much influenced by what is said here that it is a question of retaining walls and other expensive works, which they had not the money to carry out.

288. Nobody has considered the question of what was necessary?—Not in detail.

289. Not in detail or in any form at all, because no estimate has been made?—No estimate has been made because to give a reliable estimate on a question like this would involve a very large expenditure in surveys and so on.

290. The expense of making the estimate even, you say, would be considerable?—Very large indeed—several thousands of pounds.

291. But the Conservancy never thought it desirable to consider it at all?—No, as they had no means of carrying it out.

292. But in the first instance they never studied it at all for the purpose of seeing what it would cost?—No.

293. The question of how the money was to be found was quite another matter, was it not. You do not say that the Conservancy have not got money enough to study a plan and see what it would cost to carry it out?—No; but I say that the Conservators' policy was this, to carry out what they could with the revenue which they had. If they had been going to Parliament, of course it would have been necessary to do all this.

294. But whatever the policy was, we may take it it has never been studied at all?—No; certainly not in the sense in which you put it.

295. And you cannot form any opinion, I suppose, as you have not studied it, as to what it would cost, even in the roundest figures?—No; I should be very sorry to do so. The question of the maintenance of that 30ft. would have to be considered, and what would be necessary to maintain the 30ft., and that would be a very difficult undertaking.

296. That is a matter, of course, upon which people's opinion would differ very much?—I should think the very best engineering talent that could be got should be brought to bear upon a question like that.

297. But at any rate the Thames is able to maintain a channel very much deeper than 30ft.?—Oh, yes.

298. By natural scour?—By natural scour. In certain parts it would be able to maintain 40ft, and even up to 45ft.

299. Up to Gravesend?—Yes; over the Cliffe Shoals you get very deep water up to Gravesend.

300. If the shoals are removed you find deep water between the shoals and the natural force of the tide to maintain those depths?—In the lower Thames certainly you do, and sometimes in the upper reaches.

301. In the lower Thames the shoals have now been very much removed?—Oh, yes.

302. Do you find any shoalings take place on the properly-dredged portions?—Nothing worth mentioning.

303. Then therefore it is safe to suppose that if you deepen to 30ft. the Thames will itself maintain it?—Down to the Chapman. Then when you get below the Leigh Middle that is of quite a different character.

304. I think the Commission quite realised that, judging by that paragraph in the Report?—No doubt.

305. Now I will leave the works altogether, and I will ask you as to paragraph 52. That is another recommendation of the Commission as to the sounding and charting of the Thames. Has that been carried out?—Directly the Report was issued, the Conservators appointed an extra surveyor on purpose to carry out this work, and surveys have been regularly carried on .

306. Just to go back for a moment to paragraph 50, the latter part of the paragraph about the removal of the shoal patches. That has been done by nature, has it not, in the Yantlet Channel?—Yes; we have not dredged that.

307. It is buoyed, is it not?—No; the Trinity House have the buoying to do, and they have not buoyed there.

308. Is that channel used?—It is used, as a matter of fact, because vessels know of it, but it has not been buoyed. There has been nothing done since the survey was made.

309. That recommendation has not been carried out?—It was not in the power of the Conservators.

310. Have you asked the Trinity House to do it?—I could not answer that question off-hand, but I can let you know whether any communication has been made to them.

(*Chairman.*) Can the Solicitor tell us?

(*Mr. Hughes.*) No, I am afraid not.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I thought it had been done. and I may say here that the Commissioners attached great importance to having the two channels open, so that they might be available for outgoing and incoming vessels.

(*Mr. Hughes.*) Might I point out that two representatives of Trinity House attend the meetings of the Board and hear everything that takes place, and are supposed to report to their own authority.

311. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Now to go back to paragraph 52; do you employ a competent marine surveyor to sound and chart the Thames from the Nore upwards, and to record the tidal effects throughout its length?—We employ two. They are constantly at work on these charts.

312. That is, always kept up to date?—Always kept up to date.

313. Then will you look at paragraph 54 as to the establishment of self-registering tide gauges?—We have not had four put up, because of the difficulty in finding places. We have one at Southend and one at Gravesend, which are working continuously—automatic tide gauges.

314. With the exception of this non-execution of any works such as were recommended for a 30 ft. channel, the other recommendations of the Report have been attended to?—We set ourselves to carry them out immediately the Report was issued.

315. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to get from you the precise sums that you spend on dredging. If you have the annual reports before you, will you give me the sum which was spent in the year 1895 on dredging?—I have a summary here.

316. I want the total sums.—In 1895 it was £11,512.

317. Was that all what you call revenue charges?—Yes.

318. Was there anything spent that year on capital account?—Nothing.

319. Then, 1896?—In 1896, £14,294.

320. Anything on capital?—Nothing on capital.

321. Then 1897?—In 1897 £11,151—that was on ordinary expenditure—and on capital £10,969, which made a total of £22,120.

322. In 1898?—In 1898 there was spent on revenue account £16,723, and on capital account there was spent £3,531, and a further sum in the new works of £29,618, or a total of £49,872.

323. In 1899?—In 1899, up to the end of the year, ordinary expenditure £27,822, and out of revenue for dredgers £3,250, making a total of £31,072.

324. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That includes some works, does it not, above Staines?—No, this is all below London Bridge.

325. (*Mr. Ellis.*) At the end of your statement of evidence you give us an account of the Conservancy plant. Do you consider that sufficient for your present requirements?—Well, it is as much as we can work with our present revenue.

326. Then it is a question of finance, again?—It all comes round to that.

327. You would like to have more if you had the money?—Undoubtedly.

328. You could do with more?—We could do with more if we had the money to work it.

329. Now I turn to paragraph 25 as to the delays of vessels of certain tonnages. Those figures were correct at the time you say. Has any deepening in the channel, either by nature or art, since then made a difference in those figures?—Well, I have not worked these out lately.

330. It would be rather interesting if you would do that?—It could be done, certainly.

331. You see my point?—I quite see it.

332. But you cannot give me that now?—I cannot off-hand, but I will have it worked out for you. See 1683.

333. I suppose you would admit that even in the Thames a larger proportion every year of merchandise is coming in larger vessels?—Yes, that is so.

334. And therefore the Conservators' programme, arising out of the Committee's Report is year by year becoming less effective. What would be sufficient in 1896, you say, is rapidly becoming antiquated now?—I suppose the proportion of large vessels is becoming greater. The tendency is to make them larger.

335. If the Port of London is to hold its own the necessity for a deeper channel is becoming more urgent every year, is it not?—Yes, it would be, for very large vessels.

336. You have already said that a greater amount of merchandise is coming every year?—Yes, it would be very desirable to have 30 feet of water up the Thames, if you could get it.

337. If you had ample means, as an engineer, you would have no doubt whatever in your own mind as to this 30 feet channel?—I would not go so far as to carry it up to London, but to carry it up to Gravesend or even a little higher.

338. We are anxious to get at your opinion. You have been 30 years with the Thames' Conservancy Board?—I think I may say at once I do not think a 30 feet channel might be taken up to London, but it might be taken up to Gravesend. If you spent sufficient money, I have no doubt you could get a 30 feet channel up to Gravesend.

339. Would you go so far as to say that it is vital to the future of the Port of London that it should have a 30 feet channel?—No, I would not go so far as that.

340. Will you give us a figure as to which we might apply the word "vital?"—It is a question of the amount of delay which those large vessels have to undergo. We have asked the Trinity House to let us know if pilots have complained.

341. Is it a question of complaint in your mind?—If there were really a very serious case we should hear from the people who suffered from the want of it.

342. Do you think the Port of London is suffering by competition of other places where there is a deeper channel?—I can hardly tell you that.

343. You are a man of the very greatest experience, and a most valuable witness from that point of view. May I take it from you that you would desire to see a very much deeper channel if you had the means?—If it could be done, certainly, consistently with not putting too great a burden on the Port of London.

344. It is a question of finance?—Yes, I think it comes to that.

345. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) May I refer you to paragraph 36 in the Report of 1894, which says: "Above Gravesend there may possibly be some complications affecting the feasibility of any serious deepening of the river by reason of valuable properties in places bordering its banks, and there may be questions as to the stability of the embankments which protect low-lying lands from being overflowed. These matters would require careful examination, but we have not investigated them, as the upper reaches of the river are beyond the limits of our reference." Have you ever investigated that point?—Yes. That is a question, of course, that would arise very seriously. I do not think, until you get a considerable way up the river, there would be much in that, but when you get towards the upper reaches, of course 30 ft. is a very great depth to go to. *Mr. C. J. More.* 6 Nov. 1900.

346. (*Chairman.*) To what limit higher than Gravesend would you go?—When you come to Woolwich, as a matter of fact, you cannot maintain anything more than about 14 ft. or 15 ft. 15 ft. is about the most you can maintain through that reach.

347. But up to the Albert Dock entrance?—Yes; I think you could get it there without endangering the banks.

348. And without endangering property?—Yes; I think a certain channel might be got.

349. We may take it that you have quite satisfied yourself upon that point?—Yes.

350. (*Rear Admiral Hext.*) In your dredging plant, it appears you have two steam dredgers. When was the first built—the double-ladder one?—I have not got the date of the building of it. It is pretty old.

351. Can you give us the date when the single-ladder one was built?—No; but I can get the information. Both of them have been very considerably altered and improved of late years. I will get for you the date when they were originally built. See 1683

352. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You consider yourself bound, as an engineer, in dealing with the question of improving the accommodation of the river, always to look at the money side of it, and that you cannot go beyond the funds that are available?—Being engineer to the Board, that is all I can do. I can only work with the funds that are at my disposal.

353. You have had no instructions to consider the question from a more general point of view?—No; that is not my province.

354. For instance, you have no instructions to consider it with reference to what is done at other ports with which London is in competition?—No; I cannot say that I have.

355. I merely wish to get at the position in which you stand, because, if that is the case, we know what has been done by the Thames Conservancy. That is the point. You have not gone beyond the question of what can be done with the funds they have at their disposal?—No.

356. And you have not looked at the general question, which must be looked at by some public bodies, as to what the position of the Port of London is to be in competition with other ports?—No, I have not.

357. And you cannot say whether, as is the case of other ports, funds are provided for doing works which are not done in the Thames from other sources than burdening the trade of the port?—No, I have never made any comparison between the sources of income on the Thames and the other ports.

358. You speak almost as if it would follow from the position of additional funds that those funds must come from charges on the trade of the port. That is not necessarily the case, and it may not be the case with other ports with which London is in competition?—Quite so.

359. But you have no information to give from that general view?—No.

360. (*Chairman.*) I suppose you have never been instructed by your Board to make visits to other ports to see what has been done?—No.

361. You have not been instructed to visit either the Clyde, the Mersey, or the Scheldt at Antwerp?—No. Recalled 1682.

(Adjourned to Thursday next, November 8th, at 12 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

SECOND DAY.

Thursday, 8th November, 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The EARL EGERTON OF TATTON (*Chairman*).

Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. JAMES FLEMING called and examined.

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(*Chairman.*) I wish just to state that it is very inconvenient for the Commissioners to have a statement of the proposed evidence presented only immediately before the sitting of the Commission. It is impossible for the Commissioners to ask questions properly and intelligently unless they have some time beforehand the evidence which is proposed to be laid before them. I must make a public protest against the unfairness of withholding until the very last moment the evidence which the Board of Customs propose to give. What I say about the inconvenience will apply to other bodies also.

(*Witness.*) May I explain, my Lord, that I was informed that I should not be required to be examined until this day week at the earliest.

(*Chairman.*) That has nothing to do with the matter. The Board of Customs have now been aware, and other public bodies have also been aware, for three months, that the Commission was going to sit about this time. The Secretary has communicated with those bodies, and asked them to furnish the evidence they propose to give to the Commissioners in order that the Commissioners may have full time to consider the evidence proposed to be laid before them. I say it is not fair for a Royal Commission to examine witnesses under circumstances such as these, with documents presented at the very last moment.

(*Witness.*) I am very sorry, my Lord; there was a misapprehension. That is the explanation.

(*Chairman.*) There has been three months notice.

(*Witness.*) Yes, my Lord, but there was a letter sent to us informing us that the Commission desired to have evidence with regard to all kinds of goods, grain, wool, timber, etc.; how they are landed; where they are disposed of; and whether they get to private premises or railway companies. That was a matter which we in the Customs could only laboriously work up by personal inquiries here and there, because it does not appear on official documents, seeing that all these goods mentioned were free of duty. We had no official documents to tell what became of them after we had once cleared them.

(*Chairman.*) My observations are with regard to the warehousing of dutiable goods. That is the paper which I have received this morning.

(*Witness.*) I am very sorry it was not sent before. It would have been sent earlier had I known we were likely to be called so soon.

(*Chairman.*) It had been publicly stated for several months that we were going to meet about this time of the year.

(*Witness.*) I am exceedingly sorry; I take all the blame of the misapprehension.

362. (*Chairman.*) Will you state your office?—My name is James Fleming, and I am Surveyor-General to the Customs Department.

363. The evidence you propose to submit this morning is with regard to the arrangements for the warehousing of dutiable goods?—Yes.

364. Will you proceed to give the evidence, the statement of which has been laid before us?—Shall I read the paragraphs?

365. (*Chairman.*) Yes, you had better read straight on till I tell you to stop?—And shall I comment upon them?

366. Yes, if you have any comments to make?—For the purposes of the Customs Department the goods brought into this country may be divided into three classes:—(1) Free goods; (2) goods in transit to another country; (3) goods liable to duty. The goods in Class 3 are obviously those with which the officers of Customs have most to do, their interference with free and transit goods being limited to the narrowest possible dimensions. Customs duties are chargeable on the following articles:—Chicory, cocoa, coffee, dried fruits, spirits, tea, tobacco, wine, and a few other articles of no great importance, such as beer—that is foreign beer, of course—chloroform, ether, etc. Before going into details, however, it may be advisable to make some remarks bearing generally on the subject of the relations of the Customs Department with the business of the port. A merchant has the option of either paying duty on his goods at the time of landing, or of warehousing them until required for home use or exportation. I may explain that by saying that if goods are warehoused there is a certain percentage upon the duty charged by the Crown in respect of the trouble of taking care of warehoused goods, greater than the amount of duty that would be imposed if the goods were duty paid and cleared immediately upon landing. If they are cleared at once—on what we call prime entry—there is nothing extra chargeable beyond the nominal duty per pound or per gallon, as the case may be; but if they are warehoused, all goods except tobacco pay 5s. per £100 of duty; that is a quarter per cent. That is, in addition to £100 of duty the merchant would have to pay 5s. For the trouble of looking after them in the warehouse, I presume it was imposed. In the case of tobacco the charge is only $\frac{1}{8}$ per cent., or 2s. 6d. per £100. So that when the duty happens to be very low a merchant will naturally pay on prime entry and clear the goods at once, and he escapes the warehouse charges by doing so. Where the duty is high, or the goods are such as may probably find a market abroad, merchants usually warehouse them under bond, as drawbacks are not allowed by law, except for British manufactured tobacco,

British compounded spirits and liqueurs, beer, and roasted coffee. That means foreign beer and British beer, of course, also. In practice, nearly all dutiable articles are lodged in a bonded warehouse, clarets and other light wines, on which the duty is low, and which are not much required for exportation, being the most important exceptions. On these duty is usually paid on landing, and they are at once delivered out of charge. There is a certain amount even of clarets and other light wines bonded, but there is a very large amount that is duty paid on prime entry, and cleared at once.

367. Is that in casks or bottles?—In casks. There is not much now comes in in bottles since the imposition of the special bottled wine duty. Of course, there is still a remainder of that which was bottled abroad, and which has to be brought into the country and sold, but the bottled import trade shows a tendency to die out, except with regard to sparkling wines. Tea, coffee, cocoa, and dried fruit are allowed to be taken into warehouse, and weighed and tared there, where the work can be better performed without injury to the goods. I can tell you the method of weighing and taring if you care about such details. I do not know whether that would be worth your consideration, but I am prepared to show you the method if you please.

368. It might be put in a note?—Tea is about the largest dutiable article we have to deal with. In a general way tea when brought into the warehouse is weighed at the scales gross. Then either each separate package is turned out, and the tare of the empty package taken, or, as is the case much more generally, a certain proportion of the packages, according to a scale laid down, are emptied. Those are tared, and the tare found by that means is treated as the average tare for the whole of the bed, as we call it, that is the whole of the division of tea of that size. I do not know that I can put it more clearly. Coffee is treated in a very similar way, but there will be special remarks about each article as I come to them. That may suffice to show the method of dealing with them in the warehouse. Tobacco is also weighed in the warehouse of deposit, but tobacco and cigars intended for warehousing at Crutched Friars, or Haydon Square, are weighed gross before removal from the landing place. Tobacco is not always weighed on the spot when it goes into the warehouse, because sometimes it is supposed to arrive in a condition that would make the weight not a proper index to what the weight of the tobacco ought to be, and it is permitted to be kept back for a while before the weighing takes place, at the option of the merchant. Wines, spirits, and tobacco are the goods which are supposed to offer most temptation to the men about the docks and wharves, and as the duties on these articles, especially the duties on spirits and tobacco, are very high, great care has to be taken to guard against pilfering before the Crown's account has been recorded. After that has been done the warehouse keeper is responsible under his bond for the quantity deposited with him. When the long list of wharves, quays, and warehouses in London, with all their concessions and privileges as regards dealing with various kinds of goods, is examined, it will be found that the Customs Department does not stand in the way of commerce more than is necessary. The peculiar disadvantage of the Port of London is that the deep water required by large modern vessels is far away down the river, at a distance from the warehouses and the centres of the markets. I may say that, after the fullest consideration of the whole subject, I have arrived at that conclusion as the real disadvantage that London suffers under compared with every other big port. It is absolutely necessary to have the warehouses up close to the markets where the merchants are, and where such a large demand naturally will require to be supplied, but at the same time you must have the big ships where there is deep water—hence the building of the new docks, at Victoria Docks, Albert Docks, and Tilbury Docks. There are no warehouses at all at Tilbury Docks; nothing but sheds to land the goods into. There are no warehouses at the Royal Albert Docks, and at the Victoria Docks there are only warehouses for tobacco and grain, and a very small trifle of spirits and wine. But this disadvantage is minimised as far as possible by permitting licensed lightermen to convey unexamined goods in every direction along the course of the river between the lowest dock and the highest approved wharf.

See 737.

See 446.

369. What do you mean by "highest approved wharf"?—There is one wharf a long way up approved—at Nine Elms. Goods are lightered down from Nine Elms, and they may be taken up to Nine Elms, but, generally speaking, all the wharves end at about Blackfriars Bridge. There is nothing practically above Blackfriars Bridge except Nine Elms and possibly one or two other places that I do not remember, for special purposes. The lowest dock is, of course, Tilbury, but there are certain approved places even below Tilbury, such as Hole Haven, for explosives and things that it would be dangerous to have up near the upper parts.

370. I was asking you what is an approved wharf? Is every wharf approved?—No.

371. *(Sir Robert Giffen.)* Is that what is meant by a sufferance wharf?—Yes. Sufferance wharves are of different classes.

372. *(Chairman.)* Is a sufferance wharf not an approved wharf?—They are approved, but there are different kinds of sufferance wharves: class A, class B, and class C. For instance, take the British and Foreign, a well-known wharf at Lower East Smithfield. All goods can be landed there except tobacco, and tea may be landed for uptown warehouses. The premises are also approved for vatting and bottling. That may be taken as a type of the class A wharf.

373. How many are there of that class?—They occupy all the upper parts between London Bridge and Wapping—on both sides of the river. The bulk of them are from London Bridge to Wapping, but of course there are sufferance wharves where free goods only can be landed. Class A has the privilege of landing dutiable goods and perhaps warehousing them if there is a warehouse on the spot. Class B has the privilege of landing free goods. Class B* may have the privilege of landing free goods with certain exceptions, and Class C will have the privilege of landing particular kinds of goods. The privileges have been conferred from time to time by the Board of Customs according to the demands of wharfingers and the necessities of their trade. If any man wants to have a wharf approved he has only to show the Board of Customs that there is a reasonable prospect of sufficient business being done at that place to make it worth the while of the Board of Customs to station officers there to examine the goods.

374. Then have you officers permanently attached to each of these approved wharves?—Yes. Certain kinds of officers may survey and examine goods at all these wharves. They are not all of them busy like the British and Foreign.

375. They go backwards and forwards?—Yes. An officer goes to and fro and up and down to perhaps half a dozen wharves. That is especially so with regard to Class B sufferance wharves, which are only for free goods. Free goods are rapidly examined and cleared, and they are not always there. So the man visits about twice a day. In the case of dutiable goods it is very different, and it takes many officers at one wharf, because there you have to take a strict account.

376. *(Sir John Wolfe-Barry.)* With regard to what you said about deep water, had that reference to the navigable channel or to the water alongside the wharves or to the water in the docks. I wanted rather to follow what was in your mind?—It was in my mind that at the places where the ships lie-to to discharge their cargo the water was not deep enough up river.

377. In the river?—In the docks not deep enough, and probably not in the river, and it perhaps would not be safe for some of these leviathan ships to lie-to in the river. The shipowners of course know their own business in that way, but it is quite obvious that the vessels carrying most of the goods cannot get up as they used to to London Docks and the St. Katharine's Docks.

378. *(Chairman.)* And of course the depth at low water would necessitate the grounding or partial grounding of large vessels?—Yes, and the water in the docks themselves is not deep enough for the very big vessels.

379. That is to say, the docks comparatively high up the river, like the London Docks and the St. Katharine's Docks?—Yes. Railway trucks and road vans secured by Crown locks are also allowed to be extensively employed for the conveyance of dutiable goods which have not been weighed and brought to account, and of packages

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of valuable free goods which the importer wishes to have opened and examined at the warehouse of deposit instead of at the place of landing.

380. But it is not every dock that has railway trucks convenient?—No, they have not all. Tilbury, of course, must do a lot of its work by railway because it is so far away. But still, speaking on that subject of railway trucks and vans, the bulk of the work in London, so far as regards all goods is done by lighters.

381. Will you just mention where your road vans come from?—The road vans come from Lower East Smithfield. They come from the various docks that the Great Eastern Railway has connection with. The road vans also come from the Commercial Road depôt, but there are only goods that come from Tilbury Docks there. They can have a connection, but as a matter of practice all goods coming from Tilbury have to come to Commercial Road, and the goods from the other lower docks come up to Lower East Smithfield. That is from the Royal Albert and Victoria Docks, and so on.

382. You were saying that practically the largest amount is done by lighters?—The greater portion undoubtedly of the trade of the Port of London appears to be done by lighters.

383. How do you secure the dutiable goods which are conveyed in lighters?—They are locked-down lighters. The hatches can be locked down and the Crown locks put on them, and, of course, if those Crown locks are found to have been tampered with there is trouble.

384. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you many cases of trouble?—Of pilfering, do you mean?

385. Yes?—Yes, that happens very frequently, notwithstanding the locking down, but still there are not many cases in proportion to the mass of goods dealt with. You see, we have a means of detecting it to a great extent, by reason of the reports and entries of the ships. When a captain arrives he has to report his ship. He puts in two copies of the list of his cargo. The merchant also has to enter his goods, and give a specific statement of the marks on the packages and the quantity of goods he expects to receive. Consequently we have every means of knowing from the reports, entries, and lighter-notes whether there has been any shortage when the lighters arrive at the wharf of discharge, because there would be something deficient from the amount that the merchant had entered himself as expecting to receive.

386. And do you make a merchant pay duty on the goods which have been stolen?—The merchant has not to pay duty, but the lighterman is obliged to answer to the Board of Customs for the duty on the quantity short, otherwise he would lose his licence. That is one of the conditions. I may explain something more about the valuable free goods. There are certain kinds of things like Eastern carpets, ostrich feathers, valuable drugs, and many other valuable goods, which, although they ought, according to the Customs' general rule, to be cleared at the ship's side when first put ashore, being free goods and entered as free goods, in deference to the desires of merchants not to have their goods discharged in a dangerous place down on the bankside, where they might be exposed to the weather, or other risks, we permit to be taken up to Crutched Friars or Cutler Street, for instance, and they are opened out where the merchant can send his representative to inspect the goods on their first opening at the same time as the Customs Officer is clearing them. That is well understood to be a concession simply on account of the value of the articles and the danger of injury.

387. So that although they are free goods they are still in your custody after leaving the ship's side for some time?—Yes, until they arrive at the floor of the warehouse where they are to be examined and finally deposited. All kinds of goods free or dutiable may be discharged from an importing vessel between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. without the shipowner or merchant becoming liable to pay for the attendance of Customs officers. Now I should explain that that was a concession made about eight years ago to the shipowners. There was a complaint made that there were restrictions on the times of landing and clearance in the Port of London, and the Board of Customs and the Treasury decided that all ships going into the Port of London could discharge all kinds of goods between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. without any charge for overtime on the part of the Customs officers, the Crown bearing the expense. The ordinary legal hours up to that time had been from 8 to 4 from the 1st March to the end of October, and from 9 to 4 from the 1st November to the last day of February.

See 393; 9411.

388. (*Chairman.*) Does not that prevail now?—No.

389. How is it that when we visited the docks we were told that the work ceased at 4 o'clock?—That was work in the warehouses—taking account of goods—but that did not interfere with the ship. The ship could go on discharging her cargo from 6 in the morning till 6 in the evening.

390. Only from 6 in the morning till 6 in the evening?—If the ship goes beyond 6 in the evening she may get permission to work all night. I come to that later on. But then whoever makes the request has to pay the Customs officers for the night hours. The Crown will only bear the expense of landing goods during 12 hours.

391. This paragraph seems to be different from the other. You go on to state: "Should the goods, however, be dutiable, the Crown does not undertake to bear the expense of bringing them to account, except between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. from the 1st March to the 31st October, and 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. from the 1st November to the last day of February"?—But "bringing them into account" has another meaning.

392. That is what I want you to explain?—The ship can discharge her cargo, and if they are free goods the Crown will undertake to examine and deliver them—free them—between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. If they are dutiable goods the ship may discharge them, but the Crown will not find officers to take them to account except between 8 and 4 for eight months in the year, and between 9 and 4 in the remaining months. All taking to account outside those hours is at the expense of the merchant or shipowner, whoever wants it done.

393. Surely that hardly coincides with what you state here, that "all kinds of goods free or dutiable may be discharged from an importing vessel between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., without the shipowner or merchant becoming liable to pay for the attendance of Customs officers." What happens between 4 p.m. and 6 a.m.?—If the goods are merely to go ashore into the sheds the shipowner pays nothing—we deal with them.

394. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Do you permit dutiable goods to be put ashore and put into the sheds before you clear them?—Certainly. When I speak of bringing them into account I mean gauging or weighing. They are not gauged or weighed if they were going to be warehoused, but they can be put ashore.

395. (*Chairman.*) This concession is only to that extent; it is not a complete concession, because a complete concession would be that they would be taken to account between 4 and 6, which they are apparently not. I only want to have it quite clear?—Yes; that is so.

396. Then the concession is not an entire one?—I will give you an explanation of that. The taking into account is a laborious process and requires a great many officers. The merely discharging into the sheds is a thing that does not require many officers, and I am afraid the Treasury would object to paying the amount for doing all this work for twelve hours instead of eight. At present the men have for the most part of the year eight hours attendance, for ordinary officers taking to account of goods—weighing or gauging. That practically means that they are absent from their homes ten hours, because in London they cannot live near their work; they are obliged to live at a distance; and we could not call on the officers to serve more than eight hours a day very well, unless we paid them something for it. The Crown has to bear a great deal of expense to relieve the shipowners. That concession that was made was a very great concession to the shipowners. They were relieved of all expense between 6 and 8 in the morning, and 4 and 6 in the evening, which they had previously paid; but we could not undertake to do the same with all warehouse keepers and merchants, because that would lead to a very serious bill, which I am afraid the House of Commons would object to, if the Treasury did not.

397. Does that interfere with the practical landing of goods to any extent?—No, it does not interfere in the slightest degree. The ships are not detained now a single hour longer than the time that they can throw their goods ashore.

398. I ask that because we are told that rapid despatch is one element of importance in modern trade?—That is so, but if goods are intended to be warehoused it means that they are going to be stored for a considerable time, longer or shorter, and therefore there is not the same urgency to cause the Board of Customs to pay the expenses of officers to weigh them and bring them to account. That can be done in the ordinary way between

the ordinary working hours. When cause can be shown, there is no difficulty in obtaining permission to discharge throughout the night, but in that case the person desiring to do so must pay the Customs officers for their attendance during the overtime hours according to a fixed rate, depending upon the rank of the officer required.

399. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is that privilege often taken advantage of?—There is not a night in the year, except perhaps Sunday night, that there are not ships discharging all night long, down in Tilbury and Albert Docks.

400. Therefore there is a demand for discharging throughout the night?—There is.

401. And that has to be done at the expense of the shipowners?—From 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. at the expense of the shipowner, unquestionably.

402. Could any return be put in showing the amount of money paid for such overtime?—We can obtain a return. I was examining the overtime books myself during the last few days.

403. (*Chairman.*) This is important, because it enters into the charges which the merchant or shipowner has to pay for entering the London docks. Therefore we should like to have a return of all cases where extra charges have to be incurred by the shipowner in consequence of the requirements of the Customs?—By the shipowner for the discharge of goods?

404. For the discharge of dutiable goods, I suppose it is?—Or any goods. I should say there is a slight exception. There are certain kinds of rough goods that can be discharged with the mere casual supervision of what we call the waterguard officers, the officers who prevent smuggling and so on; but these are exceptions. Speaking broadly and generally, if a man discharges his goods between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., he must bear the expense and not the Crown.

405. Would it be possible to give us in the return the nature of the goods to which those charges apply?—Yes; but generally speaking, the ships are so big, and bring so many goods, that it would be miscellaneous cargo including dutiable goods.

406. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I presume that in this matter London is not different from the other ports of the country?—Not in any respect different. That is the universal rule all over the Kingdom—between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. for landing and loading of goods.

407. (*Chairman.*) Perhaps you will find out for us whether this practice of paying for overtime is equally common in other ports with the port of London; because of course the charges of London have to be compared with those of other ports. It is desirable that the Commission should know whether the other ports usually have to pay the same?—They have exactly the same amount to pay.

408. We want to know whether, as a matter of fact, it is done?—I speak from my own knowledge. They take advantage of it in all ports where they want to discharge their ships. A shipowner in Liverpool is just as ready to require overtime as a man in London, but a great deal of the overtime may be different perhaps, because in London there are far more dutiable goods—more miscellaneous.

409. That is what I thought very likely would be the case. In other ports there would not be so much dutiable goods?—Not so much. London is the market for nearly everything dutiable. See 691.

410. But the necessity for discharging quickly may arise with reference to free goods as much as with reference to dutiable goods?—Yes, the rule is universal as to shipping hours—free time and chargeable time.

411. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) The object of the shipowner being to get his ship away as soon as he can?—Yes. Clearance and delivery of free goods may be obtained at any time when the ship is working, that is to say there is a special examining officer detailed to clear free goods without requiring the attendance of a surveyor or the sanction of a surveyor. If any man has made up what we call a perfect entry for goods, properly describing the goods, the examining officer, between 6 o'clock a.m. and 6 o'clock p.m. may clear there and then on demand—he will examine them, and if they are not dutiable he will write "examined, so-and-so, cleared," and there is an end of the matter as far as the Customs are concerned. Should the goods, however, be dutiable, the Crown does not undertake to bear the expense of bringing them to account except between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. from the 1st March to the 31st October, and 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. from the 1st November to the last day of February. These are the authorised hours during which bonded warehouses in London may remain open, and weighing, gauging, etc., proceed without charge to the merchant. I use the words "bonded warehouses in London" respecting the hours, because in some ports, by arrangement, the merchants, instead of having 8 to 4, for instance, prefer to have 9 to 5, and there are some other little variations in that respect. But that does not affect the Board of Customs. If the merchants in London and the warehouse keepers made a request that the hours, instead of being 8 to 4, should be 9 to 5, I presume the Board of Customs would offer no objection, because it has been agreed to in Belfast and other places.

412. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is it so in Liverpool?—In Liverpool it is 8 to 4, I think—in fact I am pretty certain—and there are only one or two exceptions; but I may say there has recently been a committee sitting enquiring into the warehouse hours of all the Kingdom, with a view to having a uniformity of principle, if not an absolute exact equality in the hours, that is to say, to have bonded warehouses open for Excise as well as for Customs. We are under the same regulations for warehousing goods as the Excise are, and we have had a Joint Committee sitting who have made certain recommendations to the two Revenue Boards, the Board of Customs and the Board of Inland Revenue, with regard to warehouse hours for the Kingdom. No decision has yet been come to by the Boards or the Treasury on that matter at the present time, but practically 8 to 4 is the almost universal time at present in the Customs. As a matter of fact, many warehouses, especially those containing tea, dried fruit, and coffee, are in their busy seasons kept open much later than 4 o'clock, but in such cases the merchant or warehouse proprietor pays the Customs officers for the extra attendance. Now I should tell you that, with regard to certain trades, 8 to 4 suits them well enough for the great bulk of the year, and with certain warehouses nearly all the year, but in very busy seasons, when there is a rush of goods, there is such a competition amongst warehouse-keepers to get the goods weighed and brought to account in order that they may be put on the market and sold that they will keep open to 6, 7, and 8 o'clock. In the case of dried fruit they have made requests often to remain open till midnight. The Board of Customs require good cause to be shown if a man applies to keep his warehouse open for weighing goods and to keep the officers in attendance as late as midnight. Even in some warehouses, now and then, when they are very busy, they ask to remain open all night for such a matter as the husking of coffee. All that is allowed. I might put it in this way: Trade has new wants springing up every day, and the Board of Customs have to consider whether there is any reasonable necessity shown for the concession asked for, and it is very rarely indeed that a refusal is given if a man is asking anything at all within the bounds of feasibility.

413. I see in one paragraph you say the shipowner or merchant has to pay for the attendance of Customs officers, and in the last paragraph you say the merchant or warehouse proprietor pays the Customs officers for the extra attendance. When does the shipowner cease to pay?—The moment the goods are put ashore he has done with it.

414. Then the extra hours of Customs officers are paid for by the merchant or the importer, not the shipowner?—Well, that may be matter of arrangement. I do not know what arrangement each importer may make with the shipowner, but we generally speak of the shipowner—he is the man who wants to have his goods discharged, and we look upon it that he is responsible or is the person likely to be wanting the place open from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.—that is the night hours—but it may be the importer that may be so anxious to have some of his goods cleared, especially if they are free goods, and he would then pay on those night hours.

415. Then it may be either one or the other?—Just so. Presumably it is the shipowner, so far as regards the mere putting ashore of the goods. Presumably it is the merchant, so far as regards the clearing of the goods, if he wants delivery. Presumably it is the merchant, indirectly through the warehouse-keeper, if the application is made to keep the warehouse open.

416. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) By "putting ashore," I suppose, in the case of ships lightering in the river, you mean putting into lighters?—Yes.

417. That is "putting ashore"?—That is discharging.

Mr. J. Fleming.

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418. Discharging out of the ship?—Discharging out of the ship.

419. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is the shipowner allowed to put the goods ashore or into the lighter before you have had an entry from the importer relating to the goods?—The captain puts in two copies of his report, that is, or his cargo list, on his arrival. One copy goes to the station where the ship is discharged, and if the captain makes a declaration, that copy may be taken as an "imperfect entry," as it is called, for the goods, which will enable everything to go on except the actual clearance of the goods. It enables all the discharging and so on to go on without any difficulty. If the work to be performed is that of an examining officer, the rate per hour is 2s., or in some instances 2s. 6d.; if that of an assistant, 1s.; if only that of a watcher, 6d. If you would like me to say what kind of work can be done by the different officers I will tell you shortly. The examining officer does all gauging and weighing of dutiable goods, and he also is the person who alone is authorised to clear dutiable goods. The assistant practically does the clerical work for him with regard to all the ship's reports and entries, and identifies the entries with the marks on the same goods on the ship's reports; and we see that all the goods mentioned on the ship's report are accounted for.

420. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I presume that the duties have all been paid before you permit that night work to go on?—You mean overtime?

421. No; the duties themselves have been paid upon the goods?—Well, there are very seldom duties paid on dutiable goods immediately on discharge. That is only in the case of prime entry. The duties would have to be paid on the prime entry before you permitted the delivery. The assistant does the clerical work as an assistant to the examining officer, and helps him in a variety of ways. The watcher tallies the cases ashore, or draws samples and acts as messenger, acts as locker—locking up the warehouses and opening the doors, and so on, and a number of little things of that kind. He accompanies dutiable goods, also, on lighters when the lighterman has not got a locked-down craft, or if for any reason it is inconvenient to have the packages stowed in a locked-down craft: a lighterman would often apply in such a case for a watcher to accompany the goods instead of carrying out the regulation of locking them up. That is continually being allowed in London. Permission to keep the bonded warehouses open beyond the regular hours upon these terms is a concession to the wants of particular trades of far greater value to them than the cost incurred. I think that will be pretty obvious to you. If a man has got a lot of goods for a merchant, and the merchant is very anxious to put them on the market and sell them, the question of a few shillings of Customs overtime is a mere trifle in the matter. The real expense, of course, is the overtime rates of pay that the warehouse keeper has got to give to his own staff, who are, of course, numerous, handling the goods. The Customs people taking to account are comparatively few in number. I come now to say a few words about the facilities granted by the Board in various ways. Many proofs indeed could be given of the readiness of the Board of Customs to grant special facilities when *bonâ fide* required by the representatives of any trade, whether old or new; but perhaps a few instances will suffice to show the spirit in which the authorities approach such questions. Indian and Ceylon teas have been very extensively grown of late years, and the importations into London, which has practically a monopoly of the tea trade, have enormously increased. In many cases these teas are unsuitable for use by themselves, but by judiciously blending and mixing them with other teas, almost any taste can be gratified or any market supplied at a suitable price. The Indian and Ceylon teas being the produce of British colonies, it is of the highest importance that facilities should be given for mixing and preparing them for foreign and colonial markets. It has been found that a large trade can be done by putting the mixed teas in small tins or packets ready for delivery to the consumer, and for exportation. This must be done in a bonded warehouse or floor under special regulations designed to safeguard the Revenue. It has not hitherto been considered by the authorities advisable to authorise to any great extent the mixing and blending of teas in a bonded warehouse. Unless the teas are of the same mark, or unless they are very small parcels that would not be readily marketable in such small lots, it is not the practice in a bonded warehouse to allow a general mixing *ad libitum*; there must be a good cause shown for such a concession in general, because, of course, all these operations require watching and looking after, and it tends to greater expense on the part of the Customs Department, and that is why it is discouraged generally. Not many years ago there were only three or four warehouses in London in which tea could be packed in this way for exportation. There are now twenty approved by the Board for this purpose, and most of them are doing a good business, and employing many hands. That is a branch of business that has sprung up under my own eyes within this last fifteen years or so, and undoubtedly there are now many hundreds employed in the packing of tea in that manner. Quite possibly we should have lost our export trade in tea had that not been allowed.

422. Is that to the Continent that you are speaking of?—Partly to the Continent, but to a very great extent Colonial, to such places as South America, the United States, Canada, and all our Colonies, as well as the Continent. Indian and Ceylon teas, I should point out, have almost altogether displaced China teas within this last fifteen years. The China trade is a bagatelle now, compared with the Indian and Ceylon trade. Our exports of coffee are two or three times greater than our home consumption, and nearly all of it goes out from London. The Board have sanctioned the erection of machinery in several bonded warehouses to enable the proprietors to have the coffee husked, cleaned, polished, and otherwise prepared for the export trade, which has largely increased, apparently in consequence. It has increased much more than 50 per cent. in this last three or four years, and I can only attribute it to the greater facilities we have given.

423. Does that go equally to our Colonies and to the Continent?—No, that goes to the Continent mainly. Coffee comes from all quarters to London, but it goes out from London mainly to the Continent. A few years ago the coffee merchants made a great complaint that they had not got the same facilities that their competitors had on the Continent, and that they were in danger of losing their export trade, which, in coffee, is a very large matter. They came to the Board of Customs and applied for various facilities, which the Board granted, down even to putting husking machinery actually inside the bonded warehouses, and the result has been exceedingly satisfactory as regards the coffee export trade.

424. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You say, "The Board have sanctioned the erection of machinery in several bonded warehouses"; how many are there?—There are about four that have got those husking mills, I think.

425. Are there any of them in the docks of the Joint Committee?—There is one, I think, in the London Dock. There is one at the Red Lion; there is one down at the Metropolitan and New Crane Wharf, and one at Hay's Wharf; if I am not mistaken there is one now in the London Dock, but it has not been there a long time. Facilities have been given for utilizing tea for producing caffeine, and tobacco for manufacturing nicotine, sheep-wash, horticultural powders, etc. In all such cases the article used escapes payment of duty, of course with Parliamentary or Treasury sanction. I can tell you an interesting matter about those two things. These are comparatively new industries. Some years ago every bonded warehouse had got a big "damaged" hole, which contained a great deal of damaged tea, tea that salt water had got into, the sweepings of the warehouse that were not clean enough for sale, and so on; and, that "damaged" hole being of course under Crown lock, warehouse keepers were put to the expense of having the damaged tea taken away and either burnt in a furnace or else emptied into the sea. Some man discovered that he might make use of this damaged tea, and extract theime or caffeine from it. He came to the warehouse keepers and offered to empty their "damaged" holes. They were very glad to get them emptied, because it had hitherto cost them a great deal of money to have the damaged tea destroyed. By and by, when the demand came frequently, more than one person applied to do it. I know there are at least two who now do a good business in this. The warehouse keepers then began to say we ought to have a price for it. As a matter of fact they do now get a price. The better the quality is for manufacturing caffeine the better price they get, I believe, but Messrs. Whiffen of Battersea, and Howard of Stratford, do very well. At all events they go on doing it, and the presumption is that it pays

them very well. Then in the case of using snuff and tobacco; when a manufacturer of tobacco pays duty on the unmanufactured leaf and takes it out for the purpose of manufacturing, he will of course produce a great deal of waste in his warehouse—bits of stalk and dust, and so on, that fall away from the tobacco, and he wants to get his drawback on that. He had already paid the Crown duty upon it, and the Crown agrees to pay him not merely the duty that he paid, but to give him one penny per pound extra on account of the expense of going through a process of grinding it into snuff, so that a proper sample may be taken to separate the dirt and the moisture, and so on, and to arrive at a proper standard for allowing the drawback. First of all they exported this stuff to such countries as still continued the formerly general practice of snuff taking, and then they found by and by that the demand for snuff had died out. Then they began to go through a sort of sham exportation of it; they really destroyed it without putting it ashore. You must understand that the Customs had guarded themselves very carefully that these people did not get the snuff out of the control of the Customs after they had paid drawback upon it. Then it came to this, that the manufacturers requested the Board of Customs to allow them simply to deposit this refuse snuff—what they call offal snuff—in the hands of the Board of Customs, and let the Board of Customs do what they liked with it. A few years ago the cellars of the Custom House were filled with this deposited snuff, and we had to charter steamers every now and then to take the snuff down and empty it into the waters of the Nore to poison the fish. But some man discovered that he could make use of this stuff in manufacturing nicotine and sheepwash and horticultural powders for sprinkling plants and conservatories, and so on. Then they offered to take it away. One man (I know who it was) offered to take it away from the Board of Customs for nothing. Of course the Board of Customs, provided they were safe-guarded that it did not go into consumption as snuff or tobacco, had no objection. They were saved the expense of destroying and the nuisance of having it about the place. At first it was taken away by this one man, but rivals began to bid for taking it away, and a price is now given for it. When the Board of Customs get any considerable quantity of it they have no difficulty in getting the stuff taken away, and really they are paid a price for it, but there is some question about who is entitled to that price—whether the men who deposited it are entitled to it or the Board of Customs; I do not know how the law stands in the matter with regard to that point. I mention those things to show the course adopted. If any man hits upon any idea that is likely to create wealth of any sort, he does not find the Board of Customs stand in his way at all beyond what is necessary to protect their own revenue. In such matters the question of profitable working might very much depend upon the reasonableness of the official regulations. Some particulars may now be given regarding the different kinds of dutiable goods imported into London, and the manner in which they are handled on arrival. Tea is our most important article; for practically all the tea brought into the kingdom is landed in London. The tea ships mostly discharge in Tilbury, Royal Albert, Victoria, or West India Docks. The packages are not weighed there, but landed on the quay or into a shed, and subsequently passed on to some of the wharves or warehouses on the riverside accessible by lighter, or placed in railway trucks for removal to a depôt, from which they are distributed to the warehouses for which the importer has entered them. Some are taken direct from the nearer docks by cart, and some are first lightered to a wharf and carted thence. In the case of Commercial Road warehouse, occupied by the Docks Joint Committee, the railway vans (that is the railway vans that come from Tilbury) can be unloaded directly into the warehouse. I do not think there is another station where a railway van can actually discharge its goods into the warehouse floor. The greater part of the tea removed by lighters from the docks goes direct to waterside wharves having the privilege of warehousing this article, and most of the remainder goes to wharves from which it is collected by vans sent from uptown warehouses. Some of the uptown warehouses are, however, largely supplied through the railway depôts at Commercial Road and Smithfield, near London Docks, to which depôts the packages are sent by railway trucks under Crown locks. Those would be the goods brought mainly from the Royal Albert and Victoria Dock at Smithfield. The method of distribution is more fully set out in connection with the list of bonded tea warehouses given below. Though the greater part of the tea brought into the docks is delivered into lighters, the proportion delivered into railway trucks at Tilbury Docks is relatively greater than at any of the other docks, because of the distance from town. There is a great deal lightered up from Tilbury; but when there is a great distance to go, they apparently find it convenient to a great extent—especially when taking goods from Commercial Road—to take them by the railway. Of course that depends on the relative cost. The wharves usually receiving tea by lighters from the docks and delivering it to vans for uptown warehouses are as follows:—

Wharf.	Vans Collect For
British and Foreign Wharf	Priory Warehouse.
	St. Olave's Warehouse.
	Trinity Warehouse.
Brewer's Quay	Cooper's Row Warehouse.
	Metropolitan Warehouse and a little for other warehouses.
Gun Wharf	Cooper's Row Warehouse.
Hay's Wharf	Monastery Warehouse.

Then I will give a list of warehouses where tea is deposited in bond and brought to account. The method of receiving is stated opposite the name of the warehouse, but every warehouse receives goods in any way that may happen at the moment to be most convenient.

Name of Warehouse.	How the Tea is usually received from Import Ships.
Abbey Wharf	By Lighter.
Brook's Wharf	"
Butler's Wharf	"
Chamberlain's Wharf	"
Colonial Wharf and Buchanan's Warehouse.	"
Commercial Road Warehouse	By Rail from Tilbury to Depôt adjoining, or By Rail from other Docks to Depôt, Smithfield, thence by Van.
Cooper's Row Warehouse	By Lighter to Brewer's Quay or Gun Wharf, thence by Van.
Cutler Street Warehouse	By Rail from Tilbury to Depôt at Commercial Road, thence by Van, and By Rail from other Docks to Depôt at Smithfield, thence by Van.
Hay's Wharf	By Lighter.
London and Continental Wharf	
Metropolitan Warehouse	By Rail from Tilbury to Depôt, Commercial Road, thence by Van, and By Road Van from other Docks, also By Lighter to Brewer's Quay, thence by Van.
Monastery Warehouse	By Lighter to Hay's Wharf, thence by Van.
Monument Warehouse	By Lighter.
Nicholson's Wharf	"
Oliver's Wharf	"
Priory Warehouse	By Rail from Tilbury to Depôt, Commercial Road, thence by Van, and By Road Van from other Docks, or By Lighter to British and Foreign Wharf or Brewer's Quay, thence by Van.
Red Lion Wharf	By Lighter.
Smith's Wharf	"
St. Katharine's Docks	"
St. Olave's Warehouse	By Lighter to British and Foreign Wharf, thence by Van.
Trinity Warehouse	By lighter to British and Foreign Wharf, thence by Van, also By Road Van from the Royal Albert, Victoria, and West India Docks.

426. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) A great part of the tea is, as a matter of fact, put into lighters?—A very great part of the tea is put into lighters and either discharged straight into the warehouse, if the warehouse is on the the river side, or discharged at a wharf that has the privilege of letting tea or dutiable goods generally be landed there, and then it is put into a cart, locked up, and the lock is opened when it reaches the uptown warehouse.

427. Could you tell us roughly what proportion of tea comes to the Tilbury Dock?—About two-fifths I should guess; I have not made a calculation.

428. And from the nature of the accommodation at Tilbury Dock it must go away from that dock elsewhere to be warehoused?—Yes, it must. Tilbury has absolutely no warehouses, neither has the Royal Albert Dock any warehouses.

429. (*Chairman.*) Only sheds?—Only sheds. Lest anybody should say that I am incorrect in that I may take

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one slight exception. The P. & O. Company have got a store warehouse for dutiable stores—a small warehouse where their stores are kept, but that is only for use on their own ships. With that exception there are no warehouses at the Royal Albert Dock any more than there are at Tilbury. Blending and repacking of tea for exportation has been sanctioned at seven of the above-named warehouses. There are also 13 private warehouses approved for the same purpose which receive their supplies by cart from warehouses where the landing account has been taken. Those 13 are not entitled to do anything else; they are not entitled to warehouse goods in general nor in fact to repack any goods except tea with one or two trivial exceptions where they can mix a trifle of coffee with chicory and so on. Chicory is usually landed at Brewer's Quay, Bull Wharf, Colonial Wharf, Fenning's Wharf, Fresh Wharf, Hay's Wharf, Mark Brown's Wharf, St. John's Wharf, St. Katharine's Wharf. The majority of these wharves receive chicory by lighter from importing ships lying in the river or (to a limited extent) at the docks.

430. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you give any reason why the ships importing chicory in particular should be ships lying in the river and not in the dock?—They are mostly continental.

431. And they are small ships?—Small ships. The big ships are the ocean-going ships. Chicory does not come from India or Australia; it comes from France and Belgium and Germany and those places. Ships discharge direct into warehouses at St. Katharine's Wharf (where a large stock of chicory is landed), Colonial Wharf, and Mark Brown's Wharf. A portion is cleared at once from the wharf by payment of duty, being removed by land carriage. Then chocolate and confectionery containing chocolate, and also confectionery containing spirit, are usually imported at Tilbury Docks, Royal Albert and Victoria Docks, British and Foreign Wharf, St. Katharine's Wharf, Chamberlain's Wharf, and in the river. They are mostly cleared at once from the place of landing, either for exportation or upon payment of duty for home consumption. Then as to raw coffee and raw cocoa, there is a very large trade, of course, in these articles. Import ships discharge in the Royal Albert, Victoria, and Tilbury Docks, the London and St. Katharine's Docks, the West India Docks, in the river, and at most of the wharves receiving cargo from the Continent. Coffee and cocoa are also brought from Newhaven and Southampton by rail to depôts at Deptford and Nine Elms, and thence by lighter to London Docks and to various wharves. When not discharged direct from ship into warehouse, coffee and cocoa are almost invariably forwarded by lighter to the wharf or dock where they are to be warehoused.

432. When the coffee comes from Newhaven and Southampton by rail, is the duty considered to be received and paid at the Port of London?—Yes, it is simply passed on and they will probably be doing several operations upon it before it is brought to account for duty.

433. Then would these cargoes appear in the records of Newhaven and Southampton as imports, or would they appear for the first time in the imports of the Port of London?—I think, unless they had been taken account of at Southampton or Newhaven, what we call the short copy slip, which is the summary of the entry, would be made out in London, and the entry would be deemed to be an entry in London in our statistics. I believe so.

434. So they would be imports to the Port of London, although they had come to London by rail?—Yes, but London passes on some goods in the same way under a certain paragraph in our code. If the goods are entered for some outport they are allowed to pass in transit through London and be brought to account at the other port.

435. Not a large amount, I suppose?—No, it is a comparatively small thing in either case. It is necessary, however, to correct what I said just now as to Port statistics. Although goods passing in transit from one port to another are charged against the warehouse in which the account is taken, the quantity imported is under an order issued last year to be in future statistically credited to the actual port of arrival. Generally speaking, we take account of the goods at the place where they are put ashore.

Then with regard to dried fruit, consisting of currants, raisins, figs, dried apricots, French plums and prunes; the import ships discharge into warehouses at the following docks and wharves: Bellamy's Wharf, Botolph Wharf, Fresh Wharf, Middleton's Wharf, London Docks, Millwall Dock. In those cases ships are able to discharge straight into the warehouse. The cranes can crane the goods straight into the warehouse, which of course is a great advantage. Some dried fruit is cleared at once from ship's side by payment of duty, and immediately delivered to vans. A great portion of the cargoes is also sent by lighter to other wharves:—To British and Foreign Wharf, Cotton's Wharf, Fenning's Wharf, Red Lion Wharf, South Eastern Wharf.

Now as to Spirits, the import ships discharge mostly in the docks. In the river German spirit only comes, but all the other spirits are, generally speaking, discharged in the Docks, under the Docks Joint Committee. Import ships discharge at:—

London Docks - - -	Mostly	Brandy.
St. Katharine's Docks -	„	German spirit and liqueurs.
East and West India Docks	„	Rum.
Millwall Docks - - -	„	German spirit and liqueurs.
Royal Albert and Victoria Docks - - -	„	Rum.
Tilbury Docks - -	„	Rum.
In the River (into lighters) -	„	German spirit.

Also at most of the wharves below bridge receiving goods from the Continent, and possessing the privilege of landing spirits. When not discharged from the ship into warehouse, spirits are almost invariably conveyed by lighter to the dock or wharf where they are to be warehoused, or where the landing account is to be taken for an uptown warehouse. The undermentioned uptown warehouses receive their supplies by vans from wharves, as indicated opposite the name of each. The landing account in each case is taken at the wharf, on the landing of the goods from the ship alongside, or from the lighter bringing them from the ship.

Uptown Warehouse.	Landing Wharf.
Cooper's Row Vaults - - -	Brewer's Quay.
Lime Street Vaults - - - -	British and Foreign Wharf.
George Street Vaults - - -	„ „ „
Metropolitan Vaults - - -	„ „ „
Tower Hill Vaults - - - -	Brewer's Quay.
Trinity Vaults - - - -	British and Foreign Wharf.
Water Lane Vaults - - - -	Brewer's Quay.

It is a rule in our Department that all wet goods must have the account taken where they are first put ashore. The casks are not quite full. It would not be safe to fill a cask with spirits, because if the weather got very warm or the cask was stowed in a hot part of the hold, the cask would burst or the bung would be blown out, and therefore casks are not generally full when they arrive in London. If we allowed them to be carted away without very great care, without any account being taken, we should not know how much the deficiency was when the cask was first imported, and therefore the rule is that wet goods shall be gauged at the point of actually putting ashore. That does not apply, of course, to dry goods, as I have explained before.

436. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That is explaining the movement of spirits while under your care?—Yes. They have either to be gauged at the dock when they are put ashore, or they have to be gauged at some wharf which has the right of receiving spirits. Then, after gauging, of course they can be carried up, because the warehouse keeper is responsible.

437. Can you give us any idea what proportion of the spirits coming to London is as a matter of fact put into lighters?—It would depend upon what kind of spirits you are thinking of. The brandy will nearly all be discharged in the London Docks, and therefore will not need to be lightered elsewhere, because London Docks is the greatest place for storing brandy, but there is a certain amount of brandy coming in that is discharged in the London Docks from the import vessel into lighters, lightered round to Brewer's Quay, and then taken to

some of the uptown warehouses. Tower Hill Vaults is the most notable one.

438. And other spirits?—Rum will practically all go into the West India Docks, and practically all of it is warehoused there. When I say practically all, I mean the great mass that we recognise. Of course, every man may have rum in his warehouse if he is entitled to warehouse spirits at all, but speaking broadly and generally, the West India Dock is the place for rum. Then with regard to German spirits, they of course come by the steamers coming from the Continent, and wherever a wharf has ships discharging at it which come from the Continent—Hamburg or some of these places—it will probably have the German spirit there itself, warehoused at its own place, but it may be gauged there and carted elsewhere, according to the choice of the merchant who imported the stuff as to where he wants his goods stowed. He may possibly want it, for the convenience of drawing samples, somewhere near himself, or the warehouse keepers near him may give him privileges in the way of reduction of charge or something of that sort, which will make it worth his while to choose one warehouse in preference to another.

439. The effect of that is that the greater portion of spirits arriving is not lightered, although a certain portion is?—That would be so—not lightered outside the dock, but I am not prepared to say that they would not be lightered inside the dock to go from one side of the dock to another, or from one dock to another adjacent, under the same Joint Committee, of course.

440. That is a different question?—Yes, that would depend upon where the ship was berthed. Now I will deal with tobacco and cigars. Import ships discharge at Tilbury Docks, Royal Albert Docks, Victoria Docks, West India Docks, London Docks, and in the river into lighter. Nearly all tobacco of various kinds, manufactured and unmanufactured, received into London, is sent to three great warehouses, viz.:—Victoria Docks, (mainly "leaf" or unmanufactured tobacco); Crutched Friars Warehouse (mainly cigars and other kinds of manufactured tobacco); and Haydon Square Warehouse, under Excise supervision (mainly cigars). That warehouse is not under the Board of Customs, but under the Board of Inland Revenue. It is a warehouse that belongs to the London and North Western Railway Company. They bring a great deal of goods from Liverpool and Manchester, and they warehouse the goods at Haydon Square. Leaf tobacco is generally imported in heavy packages, and is usually removed from the place of importation by lighter to the Victoria Docks for warehousing there. Crutched Friars Warehouse is supplied by vans, which collect cigars, etc., from Railway Depôt at Smithfield (goods from Royal Albert, Victoria and West India Docks); Railway Depôt at Commercial Road (goods from Tilbury Docks); various Railway Depôts (goods from Liverpool); Nine Elms Railway Depôt (goods from Southampton); Brewer's Quay (from the Continent); and from other approved places at which tobacco and cigars, etc., may be landed. Most of the stock of tobacco at Haydon Square is received by rail from Liverpool. I should say that Liverpool is the great import place for American tobacco, which, of course, is the tobacco in the unmanufactured leaf. There is far more comes into Liverpool necessarily by reason of its great connection with America, but there is a great deal of it which, after coming into Liverpool, comes to London. London gets all the kinds of tobacco other than American, and a considerable quantity of American.

441. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Would the tobacco received at Haydon Square be credited as an import to London?—No, to Liverpool. For two reasons. In the first place it would be more or less dealt with and taken into account at Liverpool, and in the second place it is under the Excise, and the Excise have no ports to credit any importation to.

Then with regard to wine; wine is imported in ships discharging at all the docks excepting Surrey Commercial Dock, which is mainly for timber and other like goods; in the river (into lighters); and at most of the approved wharves, such as British and Foreign Wharf, Brewer's Quay, Chamberlain's Wharf, Hay's Wharf, Fresh and Botolph's wharves and St. Katharine's Wharf. The various kinds of wine are mainly imported at the places named below:—

	Ships mostly discharged at
Port	London Docks.
Sherry	" "
Madeira	" "
Claret and Burgundy	British and Foreign Wharf.
Californian Wine	Royal Albert, Victoria and Tilbury Docks.
Australian Wine	Royal Albert, Victoria, Tilbury and London Docks.
Tarragona	Millwall Dock and Fresh Wharf.
Champagne	Chamberlain's Wharf.
German Hocks and Moselles	River, St. Katharine's Wharf, and St. Katharine's Dock.

Then there are a few uptown warehouses and vaults which receive supplies by van from the wharves which I specify opposite the name of each:—

	Place of Landing and Examination.
Cooper's Row	Brewer's Quay
George Street Vaults	British and Foreign Wharf
Metropolitan Vaults	British and Foreigh Wharf
	London Docks.
	Brewer's Quay
	Fresh Wharf.
	Millwall Docks
Tower Hill Vaults	Brewer's Quay.
Trinity Vaults	British and Foreign Wharf.
Water Lane Vaults	Brewer's Quay

That deals with all the articles of very much consequence. There are a large number of small things, such as collodion and ether, but the duty on them is only for the purpose of protecting the duty on other articles like spirits. It has been found that some people do not mind taking ether for getting drunk upon, and therefore it is necessary, for the purpose of protecting the spirit revenue, that there should be a duty upon it.

442. Is that all your evidence with regard to that part of the subject?—That is all my evidence with regard to dutiable goods unless you wish any explanation.

443. Are you going to speak with regard to the general opinions of the Board of Customs with reference to this Royal Commission, as to any suggestions you may have to make, or are you only speaking with regard to what you have dealt with already? Is anybody from the Board of Customs going to speak as to any suggestions with regard to the Port of London as a whole?—I have not any authority to say that anything will be said from the Board of Customs except this, that the Chairman told me he would be present, and certainly, on the matter that you have for the present put aside, namely, that of warehouses of special security, and so on, the Chairman will be prepared to appear before you. Perhaps he is here to-day.

444. We do not want to be led into any side issues while the main question is still *sub judice*, but we should like, at some time or other, to have the opinion of the Board of Customs with regard to general questions affecting the Port of London, especially with regard to what you mentioned in the earlier part of your evidence as to the disadvantages of the port. If you are not prepared, perhaps you will submit that to the Chairman. Will you intimate to the Chairman that we should like to have the opinion of the Board of Customs with regard to the larger portion of the subject?—The disadvantages that the port suffers under

See 670.

445. Yes. That raises the whole question really which is before the Royal Commission as to the desirability of making any changes in the present system of bringing the goods up to London?—Yes.

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446. Then your evidence is concluded?—Yes, unless you desire to ask me anything further. May I be permitted to mention one thing where there may be a wrong impression given? I said that at Victoria Docks there was nothing warehoused except tobacco and grain, and a little spirits and wine; but, as a matter of fact, they have a large frozen meat place down at Victoria Docks. I do not want the dock people to think that I was neglecting anything. See 368

Mr. CHARLES ALSTON KENT called and examined.

Mr. C. A. Kent.

447. (*Chairman.*) You are Secretary to the Trinity House?—Yes.

448. Will you state the powers and duties of the Trinity House relative to the Port of London?—The duties are confined to two specialities, broadly speaking. The Trinity House is the pilotage authority for the London district, consisting of the waters of the Thames and Medway as high as London Bridge and Rochester Bridge respectively, and also the sea and channels leading thereto or therefrom, as far as Orfordness to the North and Dungeness to the South.

449. Are those the limits of the Port of London legally, or according to the Customs?—Those are the limits of the London district for pilotage purposes, but for the port the limit is fixed at the boundary stone just below Gravesend.

450. Are they the same as for the Customs?—No.

451. We have to deal with the Port of London, and we should like just to know where you overlap, or where you go beyond, the Port of London?—I believe there are several limits for the Port of London, but this is the one fixed by the Merchant Shipping Act for pilotage purposes.

452. You have to do all the buoying?—Yes; the Trinity House is also the general lighthouse authority, and, as such, lights buoys and marks the river and approaches, and removes such wrecks as are dangerous to navigation or to boats engaged upon lifeboat service. Those are really the only two functions of Trinity House.

453. As I understand, the Thames Conservancy have made constant surveys of the river in the last few years. Are you furnished with copies of those surveys in order that you may buoy new channels, and so on?—Yes; I think the Conservancy generally send in copies of surveys to the Trinity House; and of course the Trinity House have all the new charts which are prepared by the Hydrographic Department of the Admiralty. Two members of the Board of the Trinity House—two Elder Brethren—are representative members on the Thames Conservancy Board. Then there is one other function which they perform indirectly; two of the Elder Brethren in turn assist the Judges of the Admiralty Court in deciding marine causes—collision cases, etc.

454. Have you the sole right of giving licences to vessels to take up gravel from the bed of the river?—No longer. Those rights ceased by the terms of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1864.

455. I suppose you are familiar with the Report of the Board of Trade Committee of 1894, of which Sir John Wolfe-Barry was Chairman?—Yes, that is the Lower Thames Navigation Committee.

456. Have you carried out any of the recommendations of that Committee?—I think there was only one which really applied to the Trinity House, and that was not carried out, as the Elder Brethren, after consulting with their navigating officers and pilots, did not agree in opinion with that Committee. After going very fully into the matter, they did not agree.

457. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Will you just refer us to that recommendation?—I am speaking of the paragraph which refers to the marking of the Yantlet Channel.

458. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In the Report of the Lower Thames Navigation Committee, they recommended that the Conservancy should appoint competent surveyors of the river. That is in paragraph 52. Then in paragraph 50 they recommended that the Yantlet Channel should be at once buoyed, and so made available for navigation. They also recommended that the small shoal patches in the Yantlet Channel, which limited its depth to 25ft., should be removed by dredging, and then they believed that the Yantlet Channel would be likely to remain a useful route for large ships for some years to come?—Yes.

459. You say that the buoyage of these channels rests with the Trinity House?—Yes.

460. Did the Conservancy report to the Trinity House that the Yantlet Channel had been dredged and made available for shipping, and if so, why did not the Trinity House place buoys as recommended by the Committee?—They considered the matter very fully with their officers and pilots, and they came to the conclusion that gas buoys, if placed in the proposed positions, would be an obstruction to vessels under 23 feet draught, and would lie in what would be the fairway of most ships; they would be very liable to be fouled and damaged, and a slight blow is sufficient to extinguish the light. The Board were also of opinion that even if a 27 feet channel did exist at the Leigh Middle and was marked for day and night navigation, it would be of little or no use until a channel was made right up to Gravesend of sufficient width throughout for deep draught vessels to manœuvre towards others in accordance with the rule of the road at sea without leaving the deep channel; until this was done it would be better for ships to anchor at the Nore, where the risk of collision is far less than between the Leigh Middle and Gravesend. Further, the Board did not consider that the southern channel was to be preferred for vessels of deep draught to the one close to the southward of the river middle buoys, and that a small amount of dredging to the southward of the west river middle buoy would straighten the latter from end to end, and much improve it for navigation purposes.

461. Then practically the new channel was not marked at all?—No, not as suggested, but as before.

462. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Was any action taken by the Trinity House in conveying that opinion to public authorities who might have to deal with the matter, making it public?—Yes; I think the decision was conveyed to the Board of Trade.

463. But you cannot say for certain?—No. I cannot say at the moment for certain, but I am pretty sure that the decision was communicated.

464. (*Chairman.*) Do I understand that what you have stated before the Commission as the reasons for not doing what was recommended in the Report of the Board of Trade Committee was communicated to the Conservancy Board at once?—I cannot say at the moment whether it was immediately and officially communicated, but the matter was so fully considered, and there was so much consideration given to it that I feel sure that the decision must have been made known. [The witness subsequently informed the Commission that "the decision as to the Yantlet Channel buoys was not officially communicated to any public department or body, as the report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission was never sent to this Board officially, but Sir George Nares, who was a member of that Commission, and also at that time professional member of the Board of Trade, was informed, as well as the members of our own Board who were on the Thames Conservancy Board."]

465. Perhaps you will kindly ascertain what the date of that communication was between the Trinity House and the Conservancy Board?—Yes.

466. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Do the surveyors of the Conservancy report practically at once to the Trinity House any alterations in the channel?—No; they do not report directly, but as a matter of courtesy the Thames Conservancy I think send copies of all new surveys to the Trinity House.

467. But how can Trinity House, unless they are afforded that evidence, carry out the buoyage of the river?—There is not very much buoyage to be done in the river, and the Trinity House take care by sounding that the buoys are in the best positions. There are very few navigation buoys, and they have been transferred backwards and forwards from the Trinity House to the Conservators in former years. When the Thames Conservancy Act, 1864, was passed, the buoys which had previously been laid down by the Trinity House in the jurisdiction of the Conservators were transferred to the Conservators. Then in the year 1878, when the other Thames Conservancy Act was passed, those buoys were transferred back again to the Trinity House, so that practically the Trinity House is the buoyage authority.

468. If you are not acquainted immediately any alteration takes place in any channel by the Conservancy, who are responsible for the survey of the river, how can you be responsible for the proper buoyage?—Practically they always do communicate the surveys.

469. But you say only as a matter of courtesy?—Well, they always have sent it, and there is a communication of course always between the Trinity House and the Conservators, as there are two members of the Trinity House on the Conservancy Board.

470. (*Chairman.*) The Trinity House, I understand, examine and certify persons who are qualifying as dock-masters?—Yes.

471. What sort of examination do they undergo?—The examination is to see that they are competent nautical men and accustomed to the handling of ships.

472. The Trinity House certify for the dock-masters that are employed by the Thames Conservancy, or for the harbour masters?—For the docks.

473. Either for the docks or for the river generally under the Thames Conservancy Act?—Yes.

474. It is a *bonâ fide* examination, is it?—Yes.

475. Do you reject any persons who are not qualified?—Yes. They attend the same committee as that which examines the pilots, and they are tested.

476. Then the pilotage of the river is under Trinity House?—Yes, the pilotage also.

477. We have had a communication from the London Direct Short Sea Traders' Association calling our attention to the anomalies connected with the compulsory pilotage of the Thames. Have you anything to say about that?—The compulsory pilotage of the Thames is established by law, and the Trinity House are not in a position to alter the law.

478. No, but are you aware of any of the anomalies that they complain of?—I do not know to what points they are referring.

479. Nor does the Commission at present. I only give you an opportunity of mentioning the fact?—I do not remember at the moment what their points are.

480. Perhaps you will pay attention to any points that may be raised in future by any body who wishes to come before this Commission?—Yes.

481. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Seeing that the Trinity House have been interested and concerned in the state of the navigable channels of the Thames, and also seeing that they can afford no money for expenditure on Conservancy works, have they ever made any representations to the Conservancy in the way of recommendations for dredging channels?—No. They have looked upon it that a certain line divides them from the Conservancy. Their jurisdiction is on one side of the line, and that of the Conservancy on the other side. They have made representations as to the necessity for dredging within their own jurisdiction.

482. But not otherwise?—No, although they have sent and do send suggestions of pilots to the Conservancy to consider.

483. (*Mr. Ellis.*) To whom were those representations made?—They were made to the Board of Trade.

484. Have the Trinity House received any complaints from any person or public authority with respect to lighting and buoying?—Generally, do you mean?

485. Yes, as regards the Thames. I am speaking of the Port of London?—No, there is no special complaint of any kind.

486. Nothing has ever reached your body?—No; well, there is an Advisory Committee of Shipowners who now have a voice in all matters of new lighthouse works, and special alterations, and that sort of thing, and they have recently made some suggestions, but I do not think any of them come into the London district or the River Thames.

487. I am asking now specifically with regard to the Thames. Then we may take it that, during your time at all events, coming before us as the secretary of the Trinity House, you say that no complaint has reached the Trinity House with respect to the lighting and buoying of the Port of London?—No, I think not—nothing that I can call to mind at the moment.

488. But you do not think—you know?—I think I should remember anything of the kind if there were anything serious at all.

489. Your jurisdiction extends to other ports than that of London, of course?—Yes, in lighthouse matters it extends to the whole of England and Wales, the Channel Islands, and Gibraltar.

490. And in buoying also?—Yes, as a lighthouse authority, but in the matter of pilotage it only goes beyond London in respect of about thirty-seven outport districts.

491. Do you consider London is at any disadvantage as compared with any other port in respect of lighting or buoying, or any other matter falling under your jurisdiction?—No, I do not think so at all. I think that, as between the Trinity House and shipowners, matters both as regards lighting and pilotage are on a very satisfactory footing at the present time. In the matter of pilotage the shipowners are represented on the Trinity House Pilotage Committee. Both the shipowners and the pilots have been represented since 1896; and in the matter of lighthouses there is this advisory committee to the Board of Trade, on which shipowners, merchants, underwriters, and Lloyds are all represented. I think the state of things, if I may be excused for saying so, is particularly satisfactory, because a year or so ago the light dues were reduced, and from the beginning of last year the pilotage rates were also reduced.

492. Then we may take from you, speaking with great experience, that the Port of London has nothing to complain of in comparison with any other port as regards the exercise of the functions and jurisdiction of the Trinity House?—I certainly think so. Besides, further improvements are constantly being made.

493. I suppose Trinity House has never taken part in expressing any opinion with regard to the deepening of the river. Has anything ever been entered in your minutes as an approval of the recommendations of Sir John Wolfe-Barry's Commission with regard to the deepening of the river?—These representations have been made to the Board of Trade. Their attention was called to the gradual silting up of the Swin Channel, and it was represented that the West Swin would have to be closed, and they also represented the desirability of deepening by dredging the Leigh Middle Shoal. It was on making those representations that the Board of Trade replied that even if they could agree with those proposals for dredging they could not legally sanction any expenditure from the General Lighthouse Fund for that purpose. They could not sanction lighthouse expenditure for Conservancy works, they said.

494. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) And there is no fund for carrying out such operations?—There is no fund, and it is very doubtful whether there is any authority for dredging channels which are not within the limits of a local authority or the Thames Conservancy.

495. (*Chairman.*) Do you think that the Thames suffers from the divided authority which is brought before us, the control of the navigation of the river being shared between Trinity House and the Thames Conservancy; or do you think that is an ideal state of things?—The disadvantage is in this way, that, as the Trinity House have pointed out, it is no use doing certain things below a certain line if they are not also done above that line at the same time.

496. And, therefore, the Thames suffers from divided jurisdiction?—The Thames suffers in that respect.

497. From divided jurisdiction or insufficiency of powers?—Yes, rather from the lack of authority or power to deal with such a matter as dredging.

498. As a whole?—Yes. It was thought that the Board of Trade might have some powers inasmuch as by a certain Act they had had transferred to them powers which were formerly vested in the Lord High Admiral of the Seas, which subsequently devolved upon the Board of Admiralty. It was thought that if any Department or any authority had any power it might be the Board of Trade under this Act of 1862 transferring these Admiralty powers to them.

499. But the Board of Trade have always answered that they have no power of financing any scheme. I suppose that is the answer?—That is the answer.

500. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Then it practically amounts to this, that beyond the limits of the powers of the Conservancy, they have actually no money to dredge and no power to dredge.—That is so.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES CATER SCOTT called and examined.

Mr. C. J. C. Scott.

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501. (*Chairman.*) You are Chairman of the London and India Docks Joint Committee?—Yes.

502. We have all of us had the statement of your proposed evidence. It seems to us that the historical statement contained in Appendices 1 and 2 may very fairly be put in as documentary evidence, as there can be no question with regard to a statement of facts; I do not suppose anybody will question that?—That was our intention, if you agreed to it.

(*The witness handed in an historical statement as to the causes which led to the institution of Docks in the Port of London. See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 1. *Also a statement as to Dock and Warehouse legislation and construction from* 1799 *down to the time of the Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Trade,* 1823. *See Appendix 2nd day, No.* 2.)

503. Perhaps you had better begin with the matter contained in Appendix 3?—May I just preface my evidence by saying that we have drawn out this statement of evidence with the idea that we should as clearly as possible give you the history of the docks, and of the Port, from the very earliest times, and so far as the first four appendices are concerned they are entirely historical, and I really do not think there is much necessity for me to go through them, if you would allow me to put them in. I think that would save your time and ours. I will formally hand in Appendices 3 and 4.

(*The witness handed in a Statement as to the Report, made in* 1823 *by the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Trade, and Observations on that Report. See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 3. *Also a statement as to legislation directly and indirectly affecting the docks and warehouses now controlled by the London and India Docks Joint Committee since* 1823, *and as to the works constructed during that period. See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 4.)

504. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you give us a copy of the different Acts of Parliament constituting the docks of the Joint Committee?—Of the different Acts of Parliament constituting all the docks?

505. Yes; I should like to see them, because we refer to a great many Acts of Parliament which it is very difficult for us to get access to. I do not know how far my fellow Commissioners sympathise with me, but I think most legal gentlemen would be of opinion that there is very little use referring to documents which are not to be submitted to those gentlemen who have to decide upon them afterwards, and I feel the necessity very much of seeing the Acts of Parliament themselves?—Mr. Turner, our solicitor, asks me whether you require to refer to all the Acts, including those that have been repealed, or only to those which are in force now.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) You will have a regular library if you have all the Acts that have been repealed.

506. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I may say that I have seen most of the Acts, and I think it would be interesting to see some of the Acts which have been repealed, as well as those now in force. It is very difficult indeed to follow your historical statement without having the Acts of Parliament to which you refer?—Some of these Acts are out of print; but we are perfectly willing to give you a complete set of them all if you would wish to study them.

507. (*Chairman.*) We only want them for reference; we do not wish to keep them. We only want them in order that we may be able to refer to them?—We will see that that is done.

508. I should suppose you would have a copy in chronological order of all the different Acts referring to your business?—We have.

509. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) If you could make a reprint of them it would be very convenient to us?—What you desire is, to have such information as we have for ourselves?

510. Yes?—We will see that that is given to you. Then, my Lord, I should propose this. I have a statement of our Statutory powers. I propose to hand that in, and perhaps that may also go into the appendix.

511. (*Mr. Ellis.*) There is no argument in that we may take it?—None whatever. It is simply a statement of the powers that we have under our different Acts.

512. We cannot allow anything to be put in that is argumentative without having an opportunity of asking questions upon it, but if this is simply historical recitative it can be put in?—You may take it from me that there is nothing argumentative in it.

(*The Witness handed in Statement as to the Statutory powers of the London and India Dock Joint Committee as regards levying rates on Vessels and goods respectively. See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 5.)

513. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That will not prevent us from asking questions upon it afterwards?—Certainly not.

514. (*Chairman.*) Then we come to the statement as to the capital raised and expended, the expenditure of income on capital works and on maintenance, and the interest and dividends respectively paid by the London and St. Katharine Docks Company and the East and West India Dock Company. You can hand that statement in, but we want it explained to us.

(*The witness handed in statement. See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 6.)

We accept it as a document, but we want you to give some information upon it personally?—Certainly. There are twelve tables in this statement, and I think the first thing is Table 1. That is the London and St. Katharine Docks Company. On one side we show the capital authorised. I do not know whether you would wish me to run through all these figures. These are all authorised under our different Acts of Parliament. There is first of all our Capital Stock, which is £5,756,697 5s. 10d. of Ordinary. Then we have Debenture Stock amounting to £3,412,766, and Preference Stock £1,620,000.

515. (*Mr. Ellis.*) May we take it that the word "authorised" includes the word "created"?—Certainly. Then we have a certain amount of Debentures amounting to £286,875. These debentures, as they fall in, we are gradually replacing by the issue of Debenture Stock, the intention being that this is gradually all to disappear and to be represented by Debenture Stock. We have in hand a balance, being unissued Debentures, of £96,513 3s. 8d., representing Debentures which have been paid off for which we have not issued Debenture Stock, either because the market was not favourable for the moment for the issue of Debenture Stock, or we have employed a certain amount of our reserve fund in providing for that money. See 535 to 542.

516. Then are we to take it that the £10,789,463 is minus the £96,513 3s. 8d.?—No, that includes it.

517. But nothing has been issued for the £96,513 3s. 8d.?—It represents Debentures that have been issued, but which have been paid off, and are in hand of course.

518. Then you have cash in hand?—Yes, cash in hand, as it were. The object of this table is to show the amount we have expended on the one side on our different properties, and to show how that amount is represented on the other side by the Capital authorised.

519. (*Chairman.*) Has any of the land been sold since this statement was drawn up?—No, nothing since. On the other side we have, first of all, the capital cost of the London and Katharine's Dock, which I may say was the parent company of the existing London and St. Katharine's Dock Company. That was formed by the amalgamation in 1864 of the St. Katharine's Dock Company with the London Dock Company. At the same time, the Victoria Docks and Estate was merged into that London and St. Katharine's Docks Company with a capital cost of £1,062,480. Then, afterwards, there has been expenditure on the Victoria Docks for sheds and buildings of £49,199 10s. 8d.; additional buildings and improvements, £296,229 13s. 6d. Then the Victoria Docks Extension, commonly called the Royal Albert Dock, is £2,092,366 10s. 2d. Mudding land at Crossness is the one-half share or the two-thirds share of the land which originally belonged to the East and West India Dock Company. At the time of the formation of the Joint Committee in 1889, we took our share of this land, which up to that time was used for depositing the mud dredged from the different docks; we do not use it now, we are simply holding it for what it may be worth in the future.

520. It is valuable land?—We hope it will be some day. I cannot say that I put a very great value on it to-day. Then land at West Ham, £2,035 2s. 0d. That makes the total cost of all our undertaking £10,919,408 5s. 1d., which you will observe is larger than our total capital authorised. To supply the

difference, we have realised property to the extent of £62,211 4s. 1d., and we have received, as premium on issuing Debenture Stock, £67,733 15s. 2d. That does not represent the total amount of the premium on our issue of Debenture Stock, because what we receive now comes to our reserve fund, with which I will deal presently, all of which has been invested in the property. Our old 4 per cent. Debenture Stock stood at a very considerable premium. It is not as high now as it was some three or four years ago, and anybody who knows anything about finance will quite understand that everything has gone down, but it stands to-day at about 124, I think, and we have put out this 4 per cent. Debenture Stock as high as 137.

521. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) The greater part of this capital expenditure is for the London and St. Katharine's Dock, and not for the Victoria Dock, nor for the Victoria Dock Extension?—Quite so. The London and St. Katharine's Docks were close up to the City, the St. Katharine's Dock particularly so. The land originally was very expensive to buy. Then they are surrounded by very massive walls, which were erected in accordance with the requirements of the Government; and, in addition to that, we have very large warehouses which were also erected many years ago when there was a great number of dutiable articles, for which it was necessary to have those warehouses.

522. I was not putting the question in order to criticise the expenditure, but merely to have it brought out where the money had been spent?—Just so.

523. (*Mr. Ellis.*) The only deduction from the £10,919,000 is from realised property and premiums in order to bring it to the same figure?—Certainly.

524. That is the only object of that?—That is the sole object of it. Otherwise, if we did not show that, it would appear that we had spent more on our property than we had power to realise.

525. Then the £10,789,463 is simply the sum that has been expended; it does not carry with it the idea of value?—Oh no, I would not say that. That is the simple sum that has been expended. To-day, I do not say anything on the question of value unless you wish me to. This is simply a copy really of our account, where we show that we have received so much money and expended so much money.

See 5580. 526. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you supplement this by a statement of the market value of all these stocks at their different prices?—I have not got that for you to-day, but I can very easily let you have it.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I thought you were going to take value afterwards.

527. (*Chairman.*) If you take the value of property, you must also take the value of the docks *quâ* land, It might be useful that we should know that in the course of the proceedings, but we do not want to go into that question now, particularly?—What I understand is, that you would wish at some future time that I should be able to put forward some idea of the value of our present undertaking.

(*Chairman.*) Just so, that is the important thing, I think.

528. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You raise it, as I understand, in your case—inferentially at any rate?—Inferentially we do.

529. Therefore, if you raise it, you must give us the information?—Very well.

530. (*Chairman.*) Then will you go on to Table 2?—Table 2 shows the amount charged to revenue for maintenance for the years from 1864 to 1888. That is the amount charged for maintenance of the London and St. Katharine's Docks Company's premises prior to the establishment of the Joint Committee, which came into force on the 1st January, 1889. After that the accounts for maintenance were of course for both companies.

531. You say in Table 2 that the amounts include renewals?—Yes.

532. But Table 3 is an account merely of new works?—Yes.

533. So that besides renewals you have absolutely new works?—Yes. I should explain that by new works we mean this:—In that account, the table showing the amount charged to new works, we have put what we really believe may be fairly called capital expenditure; only in the old days we had a system by which we charged a certain amount of new works, spreading them over a number of years.

534. Those are the days when you had money in hand. You spent some of your revenue in works?—We spent some of our revenue in works. That, however, does not represent the total amount. That is only the amount which we are actually able to-day to abstract from the accounts. You will see that of 1865 there is no mention; of 1869 there is no mention, because in those years we were not able to extract the amounts for certain. We preferred only to put in the figures that we were absolutely confident were spent upon new works. Then Table 4: "Amount received from the East London Railway Company as compensation for the right of passing railway under the dock; expended by the Company wholly, or very nearly so, in respect of new works; as extracted from the half-yearly accounts." This is an addition to our capital expenditure—a further amount of £155,000 in those years from 1874 to 1886. Table 5 gives the same information for the India Company as Table 1 gave for the London and St. Katharine's Docks Company, but I must make this correction when I say that. It is not on the same lines, because, unfortunately, the India Company had trouble some few years ago. They had carried through a scheme with their creditors, and under that they had to fund a certain amount of interest, and you will find that on the debit side there is funded interest on creditors' statement capitalised under amended statement arranged, £177,495. Then there are further amounts, making a total of £1,181,394, less discount on preference stock, £18,167, making a total amount arranged for under that statement, £1,163,227 8s. 9d; so that when you come to the cost of the property I do not think it is quite fair to say that for that amount of their capital there exists in this balance sheet an absolute asset. I say that at the moment, but I want presently to draw your attention to another point, which I think more than corrects that.

535. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I see in this table you have two columns: "amount authorised" and "existing issue." There you have separated what I referred to before "authorised" and "created." Is not that so?—Yes. See 515.

536. The amount created is not the same as the amount authorised. Am I correct in that?—In the account of the London Company, the capital authorised and the capital created we have treated as the same. We have unexhausted borrowing powers, which were scheduled in our Act of last Session on the occasion of the amalgamation, but they are not brought into this at all.

537. I wanted to clearly understand whether "authorised" included "created"?—Then I was wrong in saying that. We have, in addition to the capital authorised here, certain borrowing powers which are not tabulated here.

538. You see it is very important?—Yes, I quite see your point.

539. (*Chairman.*) Does that apply to both companies?—No, not to both companies. You have noticed the difference here. In the case of the India Company the amount authorised is stated, and the amount created. In the case of the London Company it is not so. We have not treated it in that way. Really this "capital authorised" here should be "capital created." I think that would be the fairer way to state it. It is authorised and created. In addition to that there is a certain amount of capital authorised, but not created.

540. That is what I wanted to get at?—It is in the schedule here. Would you like me to put in a table showing what capital we have authorised, but not issued?

541. (*Chairman.*) Yes, I think that will be very valuable?—We will do that. See 5580.

542. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Briefly, what I mean is this. As you raise the financial case, you must let us have all the financial figures?—I will try to give you that.

543. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) It would be impossible, would it not, to say exactly from Table 5 how much has been spent on the Tilbury Docks and how much has been spent on the West India Dock, the East India Dock and the South Dock; owing to the deductions for sales of land we cannot tell from this account how much has been spent on each?—Oh, yes; it is stated here in the first part.

544. But you go on to make a deduction from the aggregate sum on account of sales of land of about £616,000, and we do not know to which dock it is applicable. Perhaps you would know, but it does not appear from this account?—You mean there are certain deductions made for premiums and sales of land. The West India Dock should have such and such, and Tilbury such and such amounts.

545. Yes. I mean we cannot distribute that item?—

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(*Mr. Ellis.*) What Sir Robert Giffen wants is the allocation of the £616,000. We want to allocate that to the particular docks.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Just so.

545a. (*Chairman.*) What are these sales of land; are they sales of surplus land in connection with a particular dock?—No. I think I can answer that question. Formerly the India Company had certain uptown warehouses at Fenchurch Street and Billiter Street. They realised those, sold them, and the money which they got I believe went into the construction of the Tilbury Dock, so that there would be no deductions from these amounts for the cost. The money that was realised by the sale of those properties was employed in the building of the new dock.

546. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That would have the effect, would it not, of diminishing the capital cost of the East and West India Docks? As between the different docks, the West India Dock and the East India Dock would stand at a smaller sum in your books on account of these sales of land. The whole effect of these sales of land should be allocated to these docks, although the money was used to build the Tilbury Dock?—No, I do not think that is quite so.

547. I wish to know how it stands?—There are two assets of the India Company that have disappeared. By their sale they have received so much for them. That money was used for building the Tilbury Dock. That money is represented in the accounts by this £616,068.

548. (*Chairman.*) What Sir Robert Giffen means is that the first two items here relating to the East and West India Docks should be diminished by the sales of land, because those lands were appurtenances to, and formed part of, the docks. That is Sir Robert Giffen's point.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That is my inference from the figures, with Mr. Scott's explanation added, but I should like to know how the Joint Committee view the matter, because it is for them to explain.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) The question really is, against what docks the £616,000 is to be credited?

(*Witness.*) I do not think it could be credited against any dock, because it was separated altogether. It is a little difficult for us to bring this out as you want it, because, as I shall point out to you presently, the Fenchurch Street warehouse was bought out of Revenue; it never went into capital account at all. In the prosperous days of the India Company that was bought out of Revenue. Then, when it was sold it was dealt with in this way: they used that money as a means of paying for the cost of the Tilbury Dock. It is not included in either the West India Dock Company or the East India Dock Company, or the South Dock Company. Those are all represented by their separate Capital accounts, and there was something outside that altogether in the shape of property bought out of income.

549. Of which income?—The surplus income of the old East India Company, going back to the first third of the century.

550. (*Mr. Ellis.*) But surely you would have had to spend more on the docks if you had not had that £616,000?—Undoubtedly; you would have had to raise more money if you had not had that, and the cost of your docks would have stood higher, undoubtedly.

551. That is the point?—You are quite right about that.

552. The Tilbury Docks would have cost three million odd pounds?—No; more capital would have had to be raised.

553. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But where would it have been spent if it had been raised. This gross figure would have remain what it is?—That first figure, £616,068, would have remained exactly what it is.

554. But you cannot say exactly from which of the five items composing the £6,000,000, the £708,000 should be deducted?—Yes, practically I think I can say. It is from the Tilbury. That money went into the Tilbury Dock. That £708,000 came from the town warehouses which were sold.

555. It belonged to the East and West India Dock Company?—Yes; that is the explanation—practically all. The capital really at which those docks now stand is £5,489,000, because the £6,198,000 is written down by that amount of £708,000.

556. But as between the different docks, I was suggesting that the accounts would appear to show that if you were separating the different docks from each other, the deduction would be made from the East and West India Dock Company, and not from the Tilbury Dock?—Only a small portion. The major part of the deduction would be made from the Tilbury Docks, I think, because it was at the time of their trouble when the Tilbury Dock was being built that these premises were sold for money. The premises were not sold so as to provide for any of the cost to the East India Dock Company or the West India Dock Company; they were sold to provide part of the cost of the Tilbury Dock.

557. Still, if you had not built the Tilbury Dock, and you had sold the premises, the shareholders of the East and West India Dock Company would have had the money divided amongst them?—Yes, it would have gone in diminution of the capital account, undoubtedly.

558. (*Mr. Ellis.*) If you had not spent the money, you would have had it?—I will not dispute that for a moment.

559. (*Chairman.*) Now will you go on to Table 6?—Table 6 again shows, as in the case of the London Company, the amounts charged to revenue for maintenance over a series of years.

560. (*Sir Robert Giffen*). Does that include Renewals of any kind corresponding to the other account?—No, that is Maintenance pure and simple, not Renewals. Then we come to Table 7. That is a statement of the items of expenditure on new works charged to Revenue Account, and of amounts used in the diminution of cost of works. If you will take the first items of the West India Company, from 1804 to 1822, there was charged for maintenance and new works £862,000. Allow for revenue account, say, £6,000 a year, and you have a balance of £748,000 charged to revenue for cost of new works. From 1823 to 1826 the amount charged to revenue account for new works was £80,000. Then from 1827 to 1830 the note is "New works were provided out of new capital, or by sales of lands." From 1831 to 1838 new works charged to revenue account were £23,000, and then the Fenchurch Street warehouse, bought in 1835 and cost charged to revenue, sold for £335,000—that is a portion of that £600,000, to which I was referring just now.

561. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) How much was charged to revenue?—The Secretary tells me £80,000. So that on the West India Company alone they had £1,186,000 of revenue or the proceeds of revenue, which has gone into capital expenditure receipts, and I think it is fair to put that as against that £1,163,000 of capitalised interest. So that, practically, on that alone the account balances. There was value in property for that amount of capital. Then, in addition to that, the East India Dock Company spent—I do not know that I need specify the amounts—the Company spent four sums totalling £203,000. That was all charged for revenue from new works—amounts that might very properly, if they had thought fit, have been charged to capital. Then the East and West India Dock Company, after they had amalgamated, charged a further amount of £325,000. Now, I should like to draw your attention to the summary. The West India Dock Company during its existence charged to revenue £1,186,000; the East India Dock Company charged to revenue £203,000; the East and West India Dock Company charged £325,000, and then there was a profit on sales of other lands applied to works of £40,000. So that in addition to the capital amount raised for the construction of their works, they put in no less a sum than £1,754,000.

562. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Against which there is that item of rather more than £1,000,000 for interest which has been capitalised?—Yes.

563. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Down to what date was the £1,754,000?—Down to when the Joint Committee came on the scene.

564. Then it went on till the two streams met?—Yes.

565. Perhaps this is anticipating—if so, you will not answer it now. Can you give us at any time in your evidence the dividends that were paid?—Yes; I have them here.

566. The last three paragraphs of Table 7 depend on what the values are?—Yes. To a certain extent, of course, it is speculative. I simply mention it, but I should not like to make too much of it. It is certainly very material that the land on which the East and West India Docks stand originally cost £60,000, and are now valued by Messrs. Edwin Fox and Bousfield

at £1,030,000. That is the unearned increment in 100 years.

567. When you say "now," you mean at the present time?—At the present time. This is got up practically for the purposes of this Commission.

568. (*Chairman.*) Then let us go to Table 8?—That is a statement of the total capital expenditure on the company's undertaking, showing that a much larger amount than the authorised capital has been spent on the undertaking in capital works. If you turn to Table 5 you will see that, including that amount of capitalised interest, the capital was £6,914,363. And the total expenditure as set out in Table 8 was £6,664,410.

569. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Not much more than the capital authorised?—No; but it is so much more than the capital issued.

570. But you have "capital authorised"?—Yes. What I really want to show is that for the money put into the property of the company there should be value, because there has been spent so very much more than the actual amount raised for that purpose, and if there is cause to allow for a depreciation, still the property should be worth the capital amount.

571. You say it is "so very much more," but it is £700,000?—Well, it is 10 per cent.

572. There has been a shrinkage in values. However, I will not enter upon that?—Table 9 shows the capital expenditure of the Joint Committee from the 1st January, 1899, to the 31st December last year. This you must not treat as in addition to the figures I have just given you for the India Company, because you will see that there is an advance by the India Company of £305,000 at the bottom of Table 8, which is of course money lent to the company for the purposes of carrying out these works.

573. (*Chairman.*) These are merely giving in detail what has been already put before us in your table?—Half of it, because some of that has been provided by the India Company. The arrangement with the Joint Committee was that each company should provide one-half of any capital expenditure. The East and West India Docks Company, in their accounts, show their half. The London Company do not show their half.

574. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What would you say is the aggregate capital account of the two companies, putting it together?—In round numbers about £18,000,000.

575. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Just to get the right figure on the notes, as I understand (you will correct me if I am wrong), the net capital expenditure of the Joint Committee, when they deduct the £305,000 from it, is a sum of £321,925; am I right?—Quite right; but may I say that I think the better way to put it is that the Joint Committee have expended £627,000; of that amount of £627,000 expended by the Joint Committee at the bottom of Table 8 you will find £305,000.

576. Then we will put it in this way. The East and West India Dock Company have contributed £305,335, and the others have contributed £321,925, is that so?—The explanation is that each company had provided the same amount, but on the 31st December, 1899, the Joint Committee had not applied to the India Company for the balance of their half, so that there was an amount due from the East and West India Company to the Joint Committee which was not paid.

577. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Before leaving that point; you said that the capital account stands at about £18,000,000?—Yes.

578. But that would not include the sums spent out of revenue, which were really on capital account, but were not charged to capital account?—No, certainly not.

579. That is about £600,000 more?—Approximately you are right. I think I must go back from what I said just now. We show that the India Company have out of revenue spent 1¾ millions in new works. Against that there is a certain sum of about £1,100,000 for interest. That leaves, as you say, a debt of about £600,000. But in addition to that the London Company have spent certain sums. On Table 4, there is £155,000. But if you go back to Table 3, there is another £117,000. Then in addition to that, not shown in this statement here, there is all our reserve fund, about £330,000, which has all gone. Our reserve fund has been invested in our works. So that really your £600,000 would be plus nearly another £600,000. In reality the amounts invested in the works under the control of the Joint Committee represent about £1,200,000 in excess of the capital of the two companies.

580. That was what I wished to make appear, as you do not add up the sums in this account?—It is just £1,200,000. Now I go to Table 10. Table 10 really shows the maintenance of the Joint Committee, dock by dock and department by department, since we came into existence on the 1st January, 1889. You will notice in the middle of the account the rectification of the account to the end of 1895. That rectification came about in this way. When the Joint Committee was established, the two companies thought it good policy to continue their old practice of charging to revenue every year a certain amount of new works. After we had carried this out for six years it was brought to our attention that we as the Joint Committee had simply control over the working, and we had no power of spending any revenue on capital account, and we had to refund those amounts which had gone in new works—we had to return them to both companies. That involved a rectification of the accounts at the end of 1895, and a rectification of these figures as applied to new works.

581. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Was that rectification in consequence of any legal decision?—It was not through the action of anybody outside the Joint Committee.

582. You took advice, perhaps?—We took advice. Somebody on the Joint Committee raised the point; we then took the best opinion we could get, and we were very sorry, but the opinion we got was very, very strong indeed that we had to account to each company for its share of the money earned—that we had no control over the capital expenditure.

583. That was the reason for the total deduction of £82,000 and the addition of £62,000?—That is so.

584. In consequence of an internal legal decision?—Certainly. The Table shows that for the eleven years the Joint Committee spent on maintenance out of revenue £1,037,158 6s. 8d.

585. The amounts seem fairly stable. There has been no change of policy on your part?—No; I think not. We try as far as possible to keep it about the same level, so as not to interfere with the accounts at all. Anyhow, it is fairly done; there is no cooking of the accounts at all.

586. Oh dear no! Of course the figures depend on the policy, and your policy has been regular?—Our policy has been regular, undoubtedly. Of course, where it is an absolutely new work, that is charged as capital, and for that capital we have to go to two companies. Where we have what we consider a renewal which is partly capital and partly maintenance, there again we treat it as fairly as we can. We say such and such is the fair amount to charge to revenue, and such and such is the fair amount to charge to capital. For instance, the other day we had to put improved hydraulic plant at St. Katharine's Dock. There we put a portion to revenue and a portion to capital, because it was to replace something that was there, but which was not so good. We estimated the value of what was taken out; that we put to revenue, and the rest to capital.

587. When you put in electrical power, did you charge that all to capital, or partly to revenue?—We have been lately doing that in the London Docks, and we are not charging that to capital at all. I think, if I may say so, we have erred on the side of burdening revenue rather than burdening capital, because we consider that the proper policy. I may mention that on the 1st January next, the Joint Committee ceases to exist, and there will be one amalgamated company which will have absolute freedom to revert to the old custom, if it likes, and to charge any works over a series of years. It is only the Joint Committee's Act which has made them an administrative body which has caused any difficulty at all. Table 11 gives, I think, the information that Mr. Ellis was asking about just now. I should just like to point out that perhaps this is a little misleading. May I refer to the second column from the outside? We give the rate earned per cent., that is, the rate earned per cent. on entire capital of the company, including debentures and ordinary stock. The last column gives the rate paid on the ordinary stock.

588. I think I asked you a question about dividends on the summary in Table 7?—Yes, that follows here, I think.

589. That summary goes back very much farther than the year 1886, does it not?—Yes, it goes back to the beginning of the century.

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590. So that this is a partial answer to my question?—But I think you may take it that in those early days the dividends were very much larger.

591. Table 11 contains the dividends of the London and St. Katharine Docks Company?—Yes, which up to the end of this year remains a distinct company so far as capital account is concerned. Perhaps you would like the dividends of all the companies right back?

592. No, I do not ask for that. The only reason I raised it for was this. You really seemed to make rather a point of the £1,754,000?—Yes, I think so.

593. Then if you make that point, to go into the matter fairly, one ought to know what the proprietors were receiving. You only give us it from 1866. To compare like with like you should take out of the £1,754,000 everything anterior to 1866. It is not a very great point, but if you make a point of the one I make a point of the other?—I do not quite follow you.

594. You come before this Commission, and you wish the Commission to understand that you have spent this enormous sum of money—you rather take credit for it?—I am afraid I do.

595. If you take credit for spending that money, you must give us the information how much the proprietors received during those days?—But we were rather putting it not in connection with that, but to show that we have certain property which cost the proprietors so much. In addition to that, out of the proprietors' own earnings they have added so much property.

596. Then I reply to you, but the proprietors have received such large earnings that they can well afford to pay it?—Of course.

See 5580.

597. I should like to know what they have received?—I will get that out for you.

598. If you make a point of it, I think you had better do that?—Very well. Then Table 12 gives the same statement, only set out much more at length, as to the East and West India Dock Company for the years from 1866 right down to the present time.

599. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like you just to state the rate earned per cent. in the case of the London and St. Katharine Dock Company, and in the case of the East and West India Dock Company, at the latest date. Tell us what the rate now is?—On the ordinary stock?

600. No, the amount earned per cent?—The amount earned per cent. last year was 3.30 per cent., that is on the entire capital of the London and St. Katharine Dock Company.

601. Then the East and West India Dock Company?—2.29 per cent.

602. This is on the capital standing in your account, and not on the total capital which you claimed to expend?—No; on the capital standing in the account.

603. (*Mr. Ellis.*) To the year 1868 there appeared to be net earnings, £132,000 odd, and interest and dividends paid, £140,000, the difference being made up by the payment drawn from the reserve fund. That is on Table 12. Then you say the rate earned per cent. on the capital is 6·43 per cent., and the amount paid is 6 per cent. and a bonus?—1 per cent. bonus.

604. Is that so? The payment out seems so much more than the earnings?—The £11,849 was withdrawn from reserve to add to the amount earned. That would be just about ½ per cent.

605. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to ask you about Table 10 before we leave it. You show the expenditure for maintenance divided according to the different places which you have to maintain?—Yes.

606. This is not connected, as far as I can see, with the form in which you make up your annual account, or your half-yearly account. Would it be possible for anyone to find out what the items of this account are?—It is the same, only this is our own private return of expenditure on these different places.

607. We have no means of comparing it with the half-yearly accounts of your revenue and expenditure?—For which years would you like it?

608. Take the last year, 1899, in which you show an expenditure of £109,000 for maintenance. What are the items in the account of the Joint Committee which constitute that sum?—That I will let you have.

See 6068.

609. I should just like to see how you apply the one to the others?—We will have that probably by the next meeting of the Commission.

610. (*Chairman.*) Now let us go to your statement giving particulars of the property belonging to the London and St. Katharine Docks Company and the East and West India Dock Company?—Yes, I will hand that statement in. It is important.

(*The Witness handed in statement. See Appendix, 2nd day, No. 7.*)

I do not know whether you would wish me to go through all the details of the different properties which belong to the Joint Committee. I mean the properties under the control of the General Committee—the two companies.

611. You mean they will be the property of one company by the 1st January?—Yes. It is set out at length. If you do not wish me to do so, I do not think there is any necessity for it, but I should like to draw attention to the table at the end of the statement.

612. Does this give the rents of all these properties?—No, it does not.

613. It is rather important to know what the aggregate rents would be. You have it somewhere, I suppose, have you not?—Do you mean the rents received?

614. Are they all in your own occupation?—Yes, they are all in our own occupation and what we do is to let them out, of course to different firms of ship-owners, who have different berths; but nothing more than that. All the property is let on short terms. We always reserve power to re-enter on short notice because we consider that in managing docks you must have that power.

615. Could you not give us some idea of the annual value?—I am afraid I could only show it from our balance-sheet, because the annual value is represented by our earnings. We could give you the rateable value.

616. What we want is to know, for instance, what the value of the warehouses is as properties. They practically give you rent, I presume, or the equivalent of rent. What is their value to you?—Take the case of St. Katharine Dock. Would you say the warehouses in the St Katharine Dock as distinct from the water area?

617. That is what we want to separate. We want to separate the income which you get from dues and shipping, and so on, from that which you get from landed properties which are part of your undertaking?—We can show you the amount of revenue which is received in connection with earnings from ships, and the amount which is received in connection with the warehouses. Those amounts are set out separately. But it is a very difficult thing to do, and although we show it in that way in our balance sheet, and we divide it in that way for our own purposes, taking the case of goods landed in the lower docks and warehoused in the upper docks, those goods may cause a considerable amount of expense in the lower docks, but practically, except a very small proportion of the earnings, the entire earnings are credited to the upper docks, where they are warehoused.

618. That would not affect the aggregate, although it would affect the value of the particular property?—If you take the value of the whole, certainly.

619. We want the annual value of the properties other than that derived from dues and shipping?—That is shown in a table in a later portion of my evidence.

620. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That is in your case really?—Yes. It gives us the nearest we can get. Take last year: the income from import rates—those are rates on goods—is £994,327; export rates—also on goods—£176,929. Then you come to tonnage dues and rent on ships and discharging and extra rates on ships, £478,000; graving docks, £38,656. Import rates would cover all the profits from warehousing, but it also covers profits on what is not, strictly speaking, warehousing business, but goods passed over the quay for immediate delivery, which are not warehoused.

621. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) And you cannot distinguish between the two?—I do not think we could. I think it would be quite impossible. And even if we could do that, it would be almost impossible to separate what part of the expenditure applied to the warehouses and what part applied to the shipping part of the business. If I can give you an explanation when I come to that portion of the evidence I will do it, but I am afraid it will be very difficult.

622. (*Chairman.*) It represents more than what you put here as rent of premises?—Yes, a great deal more.

623. That is exactly what we want to get at?—We do let a certain amount of property which we do not want—some of it for very short terms, and some, very few, for longer.

624. What we want is to separate your income as a Dock Company and your income as a Warehousing

Company?—Except so far as this table, which I have said we shall come to later on, is concerned, I am afraid that is the best we can do for you.

625. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Could you separate your income derived from the up-town warehouses from the rest of your income?—Yes, we can do that. If we take Cutler's Street, Fenchurch Street, and Commercial Road, I think we can separate those three.

626. Would it be a considerable part of your income?—No. The area for goods at Crutched Friars is 12,000 tons, Cutler's Street 303,000 tons, Commercial Road 11,000 tons, leaving out the odd figures. But then, when you get to the Victoria and Royal Albert Docks—that includes all shed space—it is 280,000 tons. But we have a very large warehousing business there for frozen meat, tobacco, jute, and grain. In the West India Dock we have a very large trade in hard wood, and in the East India Dock, a certain amount, and in the West India Dock, I ought to mention, that we have all the rum of the port. So that although we can show you the warehousing earnings of Cutler's Street, Crutched Friars, and Commercial Road, it will not represent even the greater part of the earnings of our warehousing business. I want to save time as much as I can, but this is a little important. In Appendix 7, we give you the particulars. St. Katharine Dock is the dock nearest to the City. The Tower is on one side of the road, and St. Katharine Dock on the other, and it is a very favourite Dock for short traders who are constantly coming into port because they there come within the cheapest cartage rate. At present every inch of water space in that dock is occupied. I have another statement here which I will put in.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the number and net registered tonnage of loaded vessels, from Foreign and Colonial Ports, entering each of the Docks controlled by the London and India Docks Joint Committee, to discharge, for the years* 1865 *to* 1899 *inclusive. See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 8.)

It is a little interesting when we come to St. Katharine Dock—and we go back to 1865—we find that the tonnage coming into that dock was 153,860. Last year it was 200,731, or an increase of roundly 30 per cent.

627. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You are not taking exceptional years, are you?—No.

628. It is a fair average?—It has gone 150,000, 140,000, 130,000. It falls off about the eighties, but since then there has been a more or less steady increase. It has gone gradually up, and the last five years would average 200,000 tons.

629. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) These figures relate exclusively to the foreign trade, do they not?—If I were to add to this, in the upper docks particularly, the home trade, the figures would be very much more.

630. That is what I wished to bring out. This statement is not quite complete?—My object in drawing attention to this is to show that so far from these upper docks being practically out of date, they are being worked to-day to practically their maximum capacity. To-day in the St. Katharine Dock I could not find another berth for a shipowner who wished to have one.

631. Could you say the same of the West India Dock?—I was going to take the London Dock, where, of course, with the increased size of the ships, they cannot get up. It would not matter what your entrance was, or what your depth of water was, the biggest ships would not come.

632. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That is the explanation of what strikes one as curious at first, that the average tonnage of ships to the London Dock and the St. Katharine Docks falls?—A lot of the foreign trade has come more and more in large ships. It is only the smaller ships which care to run the risk of navigation in the upper river, and come into the upper docks. We do find that in the case of certain large ships which used to go up into the London Docks and discharge wool, their owners have replaced these ships with larger ships, and they cannot go. There is one case, where Mr. Lund used to bring his Australian ships up into the London Dock. He is now getting larger ships in that trade, and he has taken them into the Albert Dock. But my point is, that although these larger ships have been compelled, on account of their size, to go into the lower docks, the gap created by that diversion has been filled up from other sources, and both the St. Katharine Dock and the London Dock to-day are practically working to their maximum power.

633. (*Chairman.*) Your point is, that there is a class of vessels which will still do with a lower depth of water, although, owing to owners of vessels having increased the size of their vessels which used to use them, they cannot go into those particular docks, but they could go in in the lower part of the river?—Yes. The trouble is to find a place for the steamers there.

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634. What is the maximum amount of tonnage of ships which can enter here in that way? This is average here, I suppose? I want to know the maximum?—Take the London and St. Katharine Dock. It is quite true, as Mr. Ellis has pointed out, that if you take the last four years, you have an average per ship of 825,905, 871, and 785. It is the smaller class of foreign ships that will come there.

635. Do vessels of 1,000 tons go there?—Yes.

636. The average is lower, but I ask you what is the largest class of vessels that enter there, and the tonnage?—To be perfectly on the safe side, I should say vessels of 1,500 tons. I think I am well on the safe side when I say that.

637. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Before you leave the London Dock, is it the entrance to the dock itself, or the river that is the impeding circumstance?—The Shadwell new entrance is 366 ft. long, the breadth is 60 ft., and the depth 28 ft.

638. Then the dock itself limits the size very much there?—Yes.

639. There are two points before this Commission about the depth in the river or the depth in the dock, and I wanted to know whether it was the difficulty in the navigation or the difficulty in the dock?—So far as the dock is concerned, I do not think it is the dock that interferes there. The larger vessels will not come up the river there.

640. On account of the difficulty of navigation?—Yes.

641. Is it the question of the difficulty of navigation or the depth of water?—The upper part of the river is so crowded, and there are so many difficulties about it.

642. Then even if the depth of water were increased, you do not think they would come up?—In the old days—I do not think we are doing it so much now—in order to save the cost of lighterage of wool, we have paid ships—given them a gratuity—to come; but even that they do not find sufficient. They will not do it. The ship could get in, but it is the navigation. I do not think it is a question of the depth of water in this part of the river, but it is these big ships which do not care to come up with so much traffic there.

See 3411

643. I suppose we shall hear much more about this. The depth of the water adds to the dangers?—Yes. Then the West India Dock in this statement is interesting in this way:—It shows how, without regard to the increasing size of ships, unless the dock is properly equipped, the tonnage will fall off. Take the tonnage from 1871. The figures prior to that do not really form a proper ground for comparison, but taking the figures from 1871, the tonnage entering the West India Dock was 347,774 tons, an average per ship of 336 tons. In 1891 that had fallen to 121,373 tons, with an average size of ship of 569 tons. In that year we felt that the dock itself was a good enough dock, but that its deficiency was its entrance, and we then started a new entrance at Blackwall. For the next three years the dock was practically closed. We could only work it through the South-West, but, when the dock was really reopened in 1895, it immediately doubled its tonnage. The tonnage, which had fallen down to 120,000, ran up to 236,000, and the size of the ships ran up from 569 to 1,237. Since then it has gone on increasing, and now we have every berth let in the West India Import Dock, and at the present moment we are adding certain accommodation at the west end of that dock, so as to provide another berth. I mention that again to show that the West India Dock cannot be said to be a dock out of date. Then the South-West India Dock has the deepest water of any dock in London except Tilbury. Now we are engaged in lengthening the entrance to that dock, and when the entrance is completed you will see the same thing there that you have seen in the West India Dock—an increase of tonnage. In fact, at the present moment we have applications from people who are bespeaking berths there as soon as the dock is completed. These docks meet the need of the port. I do not think the port could do without them. They are not out of date, and for the class of trade which gravitates to those

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docks they are admirably suited. Then, when we come to the Albert and Tilbury Docks, to save you time I propose to put in a statement which I think you will find of no little interest. We have taken out the largest ships built in recent years, and we find that there is no ship afloat that cannot enter Tilbury Dock, and that there are only 28 ships that cannot enter the Albert Dock. During the past ten years the following steamers over 7,000 tons gross have been built. In the United Kingdom 90 steamers with an average length of 490ft.; in foreign countries 30 steamers with an average length of 522ft.

See 862-868.

(*The Witness handed in a statement as to the largest ships afloat and the ability of the docks to receive them. See Appendix, 2nd day, No. 9.*)

644. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are you alluding to the possibility of entering at all kinds of tides—springs and neaps?—Yes. I think I am right in saying Tilbury at all times.

645. Is that the case with the Albert Dock?—Yes, we have these vessels coming in. They have to.

646. When you say "there is no ship afloat that cannot enter," that applies to all tides in the year, does it?—Yes. Two of these steamers here are regular traders to and from Tilbury. They cannot afford to wait for spring tides. They must come.

647. It does not say so. It says "that cannot enter." You mean at high tide of every tide?—Yes. These 120 ships have included the following ships over 600 feet in length and 65 feet beam:—The "Oceanic," 685ft. 7in. length, 68ft. 3in. beam, 17,274 tons; "Campania," 601ft. length, 65ft. 2in. beam, 12,950 tons; "Lucania," 601ft. length, 65ft. 2in. beam, 12,952 tons. Those are sister ships, and just under 13,000 tons. Then we come to the "Minneapolis" and the "Minnehaha," both of which are regular traders to Tilbury, and are constantly in and out. They are sister ships, the former 600ft. 7in. length, 65ft. 5in. beam, 13,401 tons; and the latter 600ft. length, 65ft. beam, and 13,401 tons. Then there are two foreign ships over 600ft. in length and 65ft. beam: the "Deutschland," 662ft. 7in. length, 67ft. beam, 15,500 tons; and the "Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse," 626ft. 7in. length, 66ft. beam, and 14,349 tons. The "Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse" has been in the Tilbury Dry Dock. Thus there are only seven ships out of the total number of 120 above referred to which are over 600ft. long and 65ft. beam. All these could enter Tilbury Dock, and the "Minneapolis" and the "Minnehaha" regularly use that dock. The Albert Dock can take ships up to, say, 536ft. long. Only 18 English and 9 foreign ships out of the above 120 are over 536ft. in length. Of these seven ships which are over 600ft. long, of course the "Oceanic," the "Campania" and the "Lucania" are regular traders to Liverpool, and the "Deutschland" and the "Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse" are regular traders to Hamburg, but there the fact remains, that at the present moment, so far as Tilbury is concerned, at high springs and high neaps any ship afloat can enter that dock; and, in the case of the Albert Dock, there are only 27 ships afloat that cannot enter at high springs or high neaps. I wish to lay great stress upon these statements that I have put in now as to these docks, because I think it shows conclusively that the docks of London have not fallen behind the times, as many would say, and at the present moment we are able to accommodate, and we do accommodate, all the shipping that comes. No ship can say: "I cannot go to London because I cannot dock there."

See 9412

648. (*Chairman.*) Then there are other causes, I suppose, which prevent them coming here?—I do not know of any.

649. There are not the same class of vessels, one has heard stated publicly, coming into London that used to come?—Surely you have it in the instances of the five ships trading with this country which are over 600 ft. long: two of them are regular customers of London, and the other three have their fixed destinations, Liverpool and New York.

650. There is not only the question of water. There are other questions, possibly, which we will deal with hereafter?—What I wish to point out is that, so far as the docks are concerned, there is nothing to prevent any steamer afloat coming to the Port of London.

651. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Could you accommodate many more steamers at Albert Dock than at Tilbury Dock?—Yes; we have more berths there; at Tilbury some 16 or 18, and at Albert Dock we have about 30.

652. And is the business growing so that you may require to give more accommodation shortly?—Undoubtedly, and before I have finished my evidence, I hope to put some proposals before you.

653. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With regard to the figures you have quoted from your statement as to ships coming into particular docks, I suppose the figures come really from the Customs authorities?—You will find it headed "Compiled from the Records of Her Majesty's Customs and the Records kept by the Joint Committee." Then I have a "Statement giving particulars of the trade carried on, the accommodation provided, and the governing bodies at the ports of the United Kingdom; and also showing the return on capital invested in dock and harbour accommodation at some of such ports." I will hand that statement in. (*The witness handed in statement. See Appendix, 2nd day, No. 10.*) I think it is not contentious at all. It is only so far contentious that we have endeavoured to correct some errors made in a statement prepared by the London County Council.

654. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Then it is contentious: it must be?—It is to a certain extent, but so far as we are concerned, it is not contentious, because this is all extracted from public records. I do not wish to say anything against the Chamber of Commerce or the London County Council, but they are new to the work, and I think they have made certain errors in that way.

See 3348.

655. (*Chairman.*) Where does that come in?—May I read the first three pages? I think that will explain the whole thing.

656. Very well?—"The first portion of the accompanying return is based on information furnished in most cases by the Port authorities. In cases where no reply has been sent to the inquiry, "Lloyd's Register of Shipping" and the "Shipping World Year Book," and other sources of information, have been consulted. Though the various authorities do not always agree, the return will, it is believed, be found generally reliable."

657. We could not take this as evidence. It is only furnished by the Port authorities. We should have to get the evidence from the Port authorities?—Might I not read it?

658. (*Mr. Ellis.*) It would never do to take it in that way?—Is the report of the County Coucil evidence?

659. (*Chairman.*) That has not yet come before us officially?—Then may I just put this in, not as evidence, but as information?

660. It cannot be taken as evidence?—Then I will not read it at all, but I think you will find a good deal of information in it.

661. Of course it is on the same ground as that of the County Council, which we shall treat in the same way. It is information to be tested?—May I venture to assure you that we do not put this in with any idea of trying to run our heads against the County Council at all, but our object throughout has been with regard to any information that we have at our disposal to place it fully at yours.

662. It is not evidence at all?—Then I propose to go to the next portion of my statement.

663. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That will begin your case?—I shall now begin my case, having cleared off all the historical and statistical portion of it.

(*Chairman.*) We should like to discuss privately how we are to commence on Tuesday, because we are now coming to a matter which requires some consideration. It is not a question as to how we are to receive the evidence, but the question is in what order we shall receive it.

See 277.

(*The Commissioners retired and deliberated.*)

(*Chairman.*) The Commissioners have considered whether they should continue your evidence at the present time or not, and they have come to the conclusion that they desire to hear your engineer as to the physical state of the docks before they enter into questions which may have to be gone into at considerable length, and with which they may have to deal later on. We shall therefore be prepared on Tuesday to take the evidence of your engineer, and also to hear representatives from the other dock companies, the Millwall Dock Company and the Surrey Commercial Dock Company. We want to deal with the physical facts before we go into questions of future policy as to the raising of rates and so forth. We reserve to ourselves to decide when we will

go into these questions, which you will have to deal with later on. We want to deal with the main physical facts of the different bodies connected with the Port of London before we go into any extensions or future plans.

(*The Witness.*) Then I understand that on Tuesday you would like our engineer, Mr. Baggallay, to attend

(*Chairman.*) Yes, he will then attend to give us full evidence on the points I have mentioned. Recalled 5580

(Adjourned to Tuesday next, November 13th, at 12 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

THIRD DAY.

Tuesday, 13th November, 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The EARL EGERTON OF TATTON (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

(*Chairman.*) I wish to make a statement to the parties who are appearing before the Royal Commission, to this effect. The Royal Commission are desirous of hearing independent and official witnesses from public bodies and others interested in the trade and the Port of London, and of considering any proposals for improving the docks or deepening the waterway of the Thames, before hearing any evidence as to the means by which funds could be raised and administered for those purposes; and they will undertake to give to all parties affected by any new proposals involving the alteration of dues, tolls, or other charges, full opportunity of being heard either by counsel or otherwise, as the Commission shall determine, and to subject the supporters of any such schemes to cross-examination.

Mr. GEORGE LISLE RYDER, C.B., called and examined.

664. (*Chairman.*) You are Chairman of the Board of Customs?—Yes.

665. For how many years have you been connected with the Board of Customs?—For only one year and about nine months.

666. As Chairman?—I was new to the Department when I was made Chairman.

667. Had you any opportunity of considering the questions affecting this Royal Commission before your connection with the Board of Customs?—The Board have given their best consideration to the matters referred to the Royal Commission.

668. But I ask you whether you personally, before your connection with the Board of Customs, had given any attention to these subjects?—In no way.

669. Now will you go on to the next question? What is the opinion of your Board?—May I follow the statement of proposed evidence that I have submitted?

670. Yes?—The Commissioners invite the Department to make any suggestions that may occur to them with regard to the well-being of the Port of London as a whole, and especially the remedying of the disadvantages arising from the shallowness of the river and the distance of the Port from the sea. I there refer to Questions 443 and 444 of the second day's evidence. The only part of Her Majesty's reference to the Commissioners that directly touches the Customs is "the arrangements for warehousing dutiable goods," and this Department could not pretend to speak with any sort of authority upon the commercial administration of the Port and waterways, and the adequacy of, and system of charge for, the accommodation for vessels and their cargoes. At the same time, it is undeniable that the scattering of wharves and warehouses over many miles of river, and the necessity of unloading vessels into lighters which carry goods of a duty value of many hundred pounds at a time, by night and day, to otherwise inaccessible landing places, cause much trouble and expense to the Customs, and risk to the Revenue. From a departmental point of view therefore measures that would mitigate these inconveniences could not be otherwise than acceptable. Our position, however, is necessarily one of neutrality. The dock companies, lightermen, and wharfingers may in certain respects have antagonistic interests, but the Customs are the friends and well-wishers of all those bodies, and could not properly suggest steps which might favour one at the expense of the others. At the same time, it must be remembered that whilst this department takes a warm interest in all that concerns the prosperity of that great city in which its headquarters are situated, for which so many of its members have a life-long attachment, and which is united to it by ancient traditions of friendship, it necessarily regards the fluctuations of commerce from the broad standpoint of national welfare rather than of the interests of sections of the community, or of the inhabitants of particular towns or quarters of towns. It is not for this department to attempt to direct the course of trade. We follow trade wherever it goes, in obedience to the two principles that govern our action in all cases, viz., the security of the revenue and the convenience of the merchant. We would request the attention of the Commissioners to the fact that a decrease of imports and exports by the River Thames does not necessarily mean a decrease in the commerce of London. The use of steamers, the larger size of ships, and the extension of railway communication have not merely caused the docks and quays of the capital to move nearer to the sea, so that the practical (as distinct from the legal) Port of London may now be said to stretch from London Bridge to Queenborough. The further effect has been that London, so to speak, stretches her feelers out to various ports on the east and south coasts, and draws through them much of the commerce that used to come by the Thames. To judge properly of the decrease or increase of London trade, we must include in our survey such ports as Dover, Folkestone, Harwich, Newhaven, and Southampton. Perhaps the Commissioners will permit us to give a few figures in illustration of our meaning:—

See 747 752.

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See 753–770.

IMPORTS.

—	London.		Dover.		Folkestone.		Harwich.		Newhaven.		Southampton.	
	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.
	£		£		£		£		£		£	
1873 - -	127,561	34·35	4,853	1·3	7,983	2·1	3,044	0·8	6,363	1·7	10,011	2·6
1883 - -	145,139	33·99	6,206	1·4	9,514	2·2	9,785	2·2	7,639	1·7	8,425	1·9
1893 - -	141,560	34·97	6,531	1·6	11,858	2·9	16,147	2·9	8,716	2·1	10,138	2·5
1899 - -	164,105	33·83	8,518	1·7	14,883	3·06	18,044	3·7	10,739	2·2	13,233	2·7

EXPORTS OF BRITISH AND IRISH PRODUCE.

—	London.		Dover.		Folkestone.		Harwich.		Newhaven.		Southampton.	
	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.
	£		£		£		£		£		£	
1873 - -	57,199	22·41	2,443	0·96	1,990	0·78	2,799	1·10	477	0·19	11,459	4·49
1883 - -	55,229	23·03	1,797	0·75	1,515	0·63	3,330	1·39	2,325	0·97	7,402	3·09
1893 - -	42,268	19·36	979	0·45	1,105	0·51	3,405	1·56	2,052	0·94	7,780	3·57
1899 - -	53,717	20·30	1,578	0·60	879	0·33	3,651	1·38	2,361	0·89	8,294	3·14

EXPORTS OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL MERCHANDISE.

—	London.		Dover.		Folkestone.		Harwich.		Newhaven.		Southampton.	
	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.	Value in thous.	Per cent.
	£ No Re	£ cord	£ No Re	£ cord	£ No Re	£ cord	£ No Re	£ cord	£ No Re	£ cord	£ No Re	£ cord
1873 - -												
1883 - -	39,989	60·92	1,844	2·81	2,527	3·85	2,338	3·56	863	1·32	1,444	2·20
1893 - -	34,395	58·41	1,664	2·83	587	1·00	1,889	3·21	740	1·26	1,147	1·95
1899 - -	34,460	52·98	1,388	2·13	762	1·17	1,352	2·08	699	1·08	2,510	3·86

UNITED PERCENTAGE BORNE BY THE SIX PORTS TO THE TRADE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

—	Imports.			Exports of British and Irish Produce.			Exports of Foreign and Colonial Merchandise.		
	London.	5 Ports.	Total.	London.	5 Ports.	Total.	London.	5 Ports.	Total.
1873 -	34·35	8·5	42·85	22·41	7·52	29·93	No Record.		
1883 -	33·99	9·4	43·39	23·03	6·83	29·86	60·92	13·74	74·66
1893 -	34·97	13·0	47·97	19·36	7·03	26·39	58·41	10·25	68·66
1899 -	33·83	13·36	47·19	20·30	6·34	26·64	52·98	10·32	63·30

See 725–731 and 753–770.

Note.—(1) Goods transhipped under Bond are not included in Imports and Exports. Their amount for 1899 was about six and a-half millions.

(2) The decrease in British and Irish Exports from London is accounted for by increases at Middlesbrough, Hull, Liverpool, Newcastle, and Glasgow.

The decrease in Foreign and Colonial Exports from London is partly accounted for by increases at Hull and Liverpool.

The general effect of these figures is to show that relatively to the trade of the United Kingdom there has been a certain falling off in London. If we turn to the last table, we find that for London in 1873—a year chosen because it was a very prosperous one—the proportion borne by the imports of London to the imports of the United Kingdom was 34·35, and in 1899 the proportion sank to 33·83.

671. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That was a smaller proportion of a much larger trade?—That is so. It was a very much larger trade in volume. That is a most important consideration, and I propose to give a few figures to the Commissioners later on, to prove what Sir Robert Giffen has said. If you take the five ports that I have mentioned—the five ancillary ports, as I may call them—we find that in 1873 their imports in proportion to the trade of the United Kingdom were 8·5, but they had risen to 13·36 in 1899. Then, in the case of the exports of British and Irish produce, we find certainly evidence of proportional decrease. In London the

figures are 22·41 for 1873, and 20·30 for 1899, and for the five ports named they were 7·52 in 1873 and 6·34 in 1899. In the exports of foreign and colonial merchandise we find that for London in 1883—for we cannot give the figures for 1873—the percentage was 60·92, which sank to 52·98 in 1899, and the like exports from the five ports show again a sinking; 13·74 in 1883 falls to 10·32 in 1899. These tables show more or less of stationariness or even decrease in the Port of London, but they also show how far this has been compensated for by growth of business at what may be called her daughter ports or creeks, which draw goods from all parts of the world and send them to London for sale or warehousing.

672. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I notice that in the third column of the table the percentage of the decrease appears to be greater than the increase in the first two columns; that is to say, the percentage of decrease of exports of foreign and colonial merchandise appears to be greater than the increase in the imports and exports?—That is true.

See 11563. 673. Could you give us—perhaps not offhand—the relation that the total of the exports of foreign and colonial merchandise bears to the imports and exports. Do you see my point?—Yes. I am afraid I cannot give you that at once, but we will do our best to furnish it.

674. That bears upon your phrase, "less of stationariness or even decrease," does it not?—Yes, it does. What I should like to do now is to say a few words upon the point raised by Sir Robert Giffen, and perhaps I may be allowed to read what has been given to me by a great authority upon the subject, my fellow Commissioner, Mr. Pittar.

675. (*Chairman.*) Do you put that in as a document from the Board, because we do not allow second-hand evidence?—He is a member of the Board, and you may accept what he writes as the evidence of the Board.

676. You put it in as from the Board?—Yes. I will read it then.

"A good deal has been said and written about the falling off in the oversea trade of London. It is, however, difficult to see how such a proposition can be sustained by figures. If due allowance be made for the great fall in the prices of commodities since 1873 (a cause which of course results in concealing or masking the greater quantities of merchandise represented by the totals in the trade returns in the years of low prices) it will be evident that there has in fact been no falling off, but, on the contrary, an enormous increase in the imports and exports of the Port of London. In support of this statement the following arguments may be cited: Mr. Sauerbeck's index number of prices since 1877 (which year is chosen as presenting no specially abnormal features) has fallen from 94 to 68, or 27·6 per cent. Roughly speaking, we may say that £68 represented as much merchandise in 1899 as £94 represented in 1877. Therefore, while the declared value of the oversea trade of London in 1899 was in excess of 252 millions, as against nearly 226 millions in 1877—an increase of only 26 millions in 22 years—yet if we consider that the volume of goods represented by the 1899 figures amounts to something like 348 millions if expressed according to the prices that prevailed in 1877, it will be seen that there has really been a most significant increase of commerce in the 22 years. Of course the Royal Commission is very well aware of the necessity of taking the alteration of price into account. But the general public and merchants, when consulting the returns, very commonly compare the absolute figures of the declared values in different years as if they really represented the difference in the business done. The tonnage figures of the Port afford corroboration of the view that there has been a vast increase of trade. Comparing for the same two years, the tonnage of ships (with cargo) which entered inwards and cleared outwards from London, we have—

	1877.	1899.	Increase per cent. in 1899.
	Tons.	Tons.	
Entered - - - -	5,583,792	9,244,593	65·2
Cleared - - - -	3,138,799	6,042,050	92·5

Also it may be noted that the average tonnage of importing vessels rose from 472 tons in 1877 to 850 tons in 1899. This increase in the size of ships is, of course, really one of the great difficulties with which the Port of London has to contend. The warehouses are for the most part in the upper reaches of the river, whilst the large modern vessels cannot come up higher than the Victoria and Albert Docks, and the very largest cannot find dock accommodation nearer to the city than Tilbury. The London of the future may possibly provide quay and warehouse accommodation along the banks of the river for steamers of great size, but, in view of the keen competition of other ports, home and foreign, there may probably be, for many years to come, some difficulty in disposing of the cargoes of first-class vessels discharging at a distance from the exchanges, the markets, and the existing warehouses."

Wherever London finds it convenient to transact her import and export trade the Customs plants its officers; and approves the requisite quays and warehouses; and it is not for this Department to suggest that there should be any interference with the outlets and inlets which commerce is finding by a natural process for itself. Perhaps, however, the Commissioners will object that their concern is not with the trade of the Metropolis, as a whole, but with that of the Port of London exclusively, and that they want to know whether the Customs can suggest some concession that will benefit that port by compensating for its peculiar disadvantages. To such a question we regret to reply that, in our opinion, it would be of most doubtful expedience to make any concession, in the matter of Customs arrangements, to the Port of London which we were not prepared to extend to other ports. The trend of modern policy has been in favour of uniform practice in London and the outports, and many differences of old standing have been removed. Nevertheless, there is one matter in which we think that, subject to the sanction of the Treasury, some concession might perhaps be made in London, and in all other ports where it seemed to be required, and that is the number of hours in a day during which Customs officers attend for the bringing to account of dutiable goods, whether on prime entry or for warehousing, without charge to the merchant. In former days, when all Customs officers were paid by fees for the services that they actually rendered to merchants, and had no salaries, limitation of hours was of little consequence. The officers attended when wanted, like medical men. But early in the nineteenth century, when our bonded warehousing system began to assume large dimensions, the officers were placed on salaries, with definite prospect of pension, and great jealousy was shown of supplementary earnings from merchants. I mean jealousy on behalf of the merchants and the Customs both. An inevitable result of this important and beneficial change, for both sides, was the fixing of hours, service during which was to be held to be covered by the salary. And these hours were fixed accordingly under statutory powers, either by Treasury warrant, or Board's order, at 8 to 6 hours a day, when the day was the unit, or 48 hours a week when the week was the unit. By Section 7 of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, the Treasury can appoint the hours of general attendance of the Commissioners and officers of Customs and other persons in the Customs service; and the Board can appoint the times during such hours at which any particular parts of the duties of any such officers and other persons shall be performed. And by Section 9 of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881, it is enacted that with the exception of diamonds, bullion, lobsters, and fresh fish of British taking, in British ships, no goods may be landed on Sundays or holidays, except by special permission of the Board, nor on other days between any hours than from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. from 1st March to 31st October, and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the remainder of the year—or between such other hours as the Board may appoint. The above mentioned hours were the same as had been prescribed by the Treasury and Board for warehousing hours; and it was not found necessary to make any definite and permanent difference between landing and warehousing hours until 1891. In that year the Goschen minute, issued by General Order 24-91, fixed the hours for landing free goods without charge by the Customs at from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. These hours were made universal in 1894. But subject to a few traditional local differences, warehousing hours are still

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those named in the Act of 1881 as those for landing. Attendance outside the above hours must be paid for by the merchants who ask for it. In considering the expedience of any prolongation of free hours of attendance of Customs officers we must remember (1) that habitual attendance for over eight hours' work a day implies an increase of staff, because it can only be provided for by an overlapping arrangement, under which part of the staff come and leave early, and the rest come and leave late; (2) that prolongation without charge releases the merchant and wharfinger from the valuable check against needless or wanton demands for extra attendance, that is afforded by having to pay for it; (3) that the boon may prove in reality to be of little value to the merchant though costly to the Exchequer, because the Customs charge for extra attendance is small compared with the other charges entailed on him for labour by prolonged hours. If he wishes to land goods at midnight for solid reasons, the Customs charge will never stand in his way. May I now, my Lord, interpolate another part of Mr. Pittar's memorandum which the Board entirely adopt. I think he gives what I may call a fourth consideration that should always be borne in mind if we consider any prolongation of hours. "It is probable that the effect of Customs supervision and Customs regulation upon the trade of London has been unconsciously exaggerated. In reality the sphere within which the necessary fiscal restraints are felt is extremely limited in comparison with the magnitude of that trade. The following is—in round figures—a statement of the foreign trade of London in 1899:—

	£
Value of Imports - - - - - -	164,100,000
„ British and Irish Exports - -	53,700,000
„ Foreign and Colonial Exports -	34,500,000
Total Exports - - -	88,200,000
TOTAL Value of Foreign Trade of London - -	252,300,000

Of the London total of 252¼ millions, only about 24¼ millions represent dutiable goods. The remaining 228 millions are free from Customs control after the very slight and partial examination which constitutes the Customs clearance of free goods upon importation. It is important, therefore, that it should be understood that over 90 per cent. of the London foreign trade suffers no impediment from the existence of a Customs barrier in the Thames, except in so far as it is necessary to secure the consent of the Customs Department to the discharge of vessels after 6 p.m., so that an officer, or officers, of Customs may be present. In the discharge of its responsibilities as guardian of the Revenue, the Board of Customs are, of course, bound to retain thus much of control." If, however, the Royal Commissioners are convinced that some concession in this direction is desirable, and the Treasury were disposed to sanction it, we think the most useful form it could take would be an extension of the Customs warehousing hours from 4 p.m. to either 5 or 6 p.m. If the extension were to be to 6 p.m., perhaps the opening might be deferred until 9 a.m. The hour from 8 to 9 a.m. is often one of very little business. As an index to the value that an extra two hours in the afternoon would be to the Port of London, we give the payments made by merchants for attendance from 4 to 6 p.m. in bonded warehouses in London during the year ended 30th September, 1900.

	£	s.	d.
In Tobacco Factories - - - - - -	276	16	3
In Bottling Warehouses or Compartments	217	15	6
In all other Warehouses - - - - -	2,481	7	9
	£2,975	19	6

See 696.

The sum paid for extra attendance at all other hours, during the same period, in London, was £1,721 2s. 8d. The cost of extending the concession to the outports may be estimated at about £1,500. It must not be supposed that we commit ourselves to definitely recommending such a concession. We simply suggest it as one that Her Majesty's Government might be prepared to take into consideration if the Commissioners were to recommend it.

677. (*Chairman.*) Is that the whole of your evidence?—Yes, that is the whole of my evidence.

678. Does not the competition of other ports—especially foreign ports—render despatch more necessary than it was ten years ago?—I should think that is the case.

679. And do you find that more extra hours are paid for by shipowners than were paid for ten years ago?—I understand that they pay less than they used to pay.

680. Less in amount?—Yes; that they pay less for extra attendance; but I am afraid I cannot speak with quite certainty.

681. About ten years ago the Goschen minute fixed the hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.?—Yes, that was so for the landing.

682. In some of the docks is it not the fact that the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. govern the whole of the work in the docks?—So far as regards dutiable goods.

683. When the Royal Commission visited the docks in July they found that at 4 o'clock in the afternoon there was a suspension of work?—That would be so for tobacco and spirits.

684. There appeared to be a general suspension of work?—Yes.

685. Do not those hours govern other goods as well?—I should have thought they need not do so.

686. But as a matter of fact they appeared to do so?—They are prescribed for only about 10 per cent. of the trade of London—the dutiable part.

687. It might be quite possible that the dutiable part affected the other part as well?—It is possible, but I should have thought that need not be.

688. Then the concession which you suggest would not be a very expensive one for the Treasury?—It would be several thousands a year. I do not think the Treasury would think lightly of anything like £4,500 a year.

689. But is it not a fact that for some reason or other London has the reputation of being a dear port, and would not that be one of the elements in decreasing the charges which shipowners have to pay in bringing goods to, and dealing with them in, the Port of London?—That certainly would be a reason, but I doubt whether the Board and the Treasury would think it right to make any concessions specially to London.

690. I can quite understand that it might be just the same at Liverpool or Manchester or Southampton, and other ports?—Exactly.

691. You say the other ports would not matter so much, because there are not so many dutiable goods. We were told before that a very much larger proportion of dutiable goods came to London than to the majority of the other ports?—Yes, and that is evidenced by the very much larger payments for extra attendance in London. See 408-9.

692. Naturally for the same reason?—Yes.

693. Therefore the concession in other ports would not be a very large pecuniary concession?—About half as much as it would be in London.

694. Over the whole of the ports of England?—Yes.

695. That is a very small proportion, of course?—Yes.

696. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do the figures that you gave in your evidence include all the payments made, whether for dutiable goods or in respect of free goods?—There would be no charges in respect of free goods for those hours between 4 and 6. See 676.

697. But suppose a ship comes in with free goods and desires to continue unloading for part of the night or the whole of the night, would not she have to pay for a Customs official?—Certainly, she would have to pay for the attendance of the Customs officials.

698. Then what I mean is this: Are there any payments made in respect of such service as that in respect of free goods which are not included in the figures you gave?—Certainly, only those payments would not be in respect of the hours from 4 to 6; they are free hours.

699. Then what payments are made for extra hours in the Port of London? Taking the whole trade of London, what extra payments are made for Customs supervision, whether on free goods or dutiable goods or mixed cargoes?—I am afraid I have not got that.

700. Would there be any difficulty in preparing a return of that sort?—All that I have is a statement of the overtime paid by merchants for the attendance of officers in bonded warehouses. That, however, is confined to dutiable goods. I have not got the information as regards free goods, but certainly it could be obtained.

701. I think we should like to have that——

(*Chairman.*) You mean in cases where there are mixed cargoes of free and dutiable goods?

702. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Yes. There are three cases of payments for extra hours; there are those that you have given us already in connection with dutiable goods into warehouses; then I think the Commission would like to have all the payments that are made for extra hours attendance of Customs officers for the discharge of ships with free goods or the discharge of ships with mixed cargoes. We should like to know all the money that is paid for overtime to the Customs in connection with the trade of London?—We certainly can give the information; it is merely a matter of time in collecting it. I may say that speaking roughly the total payments by merchants for overtime attendance for the United Kingdom is a little under £30,000 a year. We show that at the foot of our estimates every year.

See 11563. 703. Then perhaps the return would show that as well. If you give a return for London you might also include the outports as well?—Certainly. It will take some little time, but there is no difficulty in doing it.

704. What I think we should like to know would be the burden, such as it is, upon the trade of London in respect of all overtime paid to the Customs——

(*Mr. Ellis.*) And all the elements of the burden.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) And possibly if you could dissever it into the elements it would be better—as to whether they were on wholly free cargoes or mixed goods or goods which were wholly dutiable.

705. (*Chairman.*) That bears on the question I asked just now—whether free goods are delayed in their work by the possibility of having extra charges to pay for the attendance of the Customs officers to other parts of the cargo which may consist of dutiable goods?—I was not aware of it, and I think if it is the case we ought to try to remedy it.

706. I want to know the reason why the Commission found in July—in the middle of the summer—that a great deal of the work was ceasing at 4 o'clock. I think that is what we found, and I want to know whether the Customs are indirectly responsible for creating that state of things?—I do not think we wish that state of things at all. It may be a matter for the workmen.

707. I want it cleared up. I want to know whether it was an accident that we saw it or whether it is the usual thing?—I will endeavour to find out how far any
See 11563. action of the Board contributes to that kind of thing.

708. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) May I ask what is the way in which a ship is unloaded subject to Customs supervision. Suppose a ship first of all comes into the river with a large cargo part of which may be dutiable and part free. Must the unloading stop at a particular hour, whether dutiable goods are being landed at the time or free goods?—In ordinary course the unloading would stop at 6 p.m.

709. In the river?—Wherever she was—wherever she was being unloaded.

710. In the river or in the dock?—Yes.

711. (*Chairman.*) But why should it stop at 6 p.m. in the summer months?—It may go on beyond 6 p.m. if the merchant likes to pay.

712. Then the shipowner has to pay an extra charge?—Yes.

713. To that extent, then, the action of the Customs prevents the unloading of vessels as rapidly as it otherwise could be done in the summer months; is not that so? It has a tendency to check the unloading of vessels, because the ship has to pay an extra charge?—It has a tendency to check the unloading after 6 p.m.

714. I say, after 6 p.m. In the summer months it might go on till 8 or 9 in the evening?—No doubt. It is 4 p.m. for dutiable goods and 6 p.m. for free goods.

715. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Must there be a Customs official on board all the time discharging is going on?—A watcher, I believe, is enough. Mr. Fleming draws my attention to General Order 75 of 1872, under which "the discharge of cargoes of free goods in bulk and of fibrous goods in packages is allowed to be carried on under certain conditions at any hour of the day or at night, without any expense to merchants in respect of any consequent overtime attendance on the part of Customs officers." But apparently that order has been so far modified that "any overtime expenses incidental to such discharges between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. will be defrayed by the merchants."

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716. (*Chairman.*) Then that does not fall on the shipowner?—Yes, it would fall on the shipowner; I presume. "As, however, in the Port of London, these discharges are almost exclusively supervised whether by night or day by the waterguard only without expense for overtime, the same practice is to be continued subject to the regulations of General Order 94 of 1887." Apparently there are some bulk goods which are discharged at any time of the day or night without charge for the Customs.

717. (*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) Then how do the Customs know what are being discharged from a large ship? If they begin discharging any dutiable goods, how do the Customs know that dutiable goods will not form part of the cargo? Do they go entirely by the bill of lading?—Not entirely. Every ship must be boarded by a Customs officer.

718. But they cannot examine the whole: do they trust to the bill of lading?—To a great extent, I expect they must do so, but they keep an eye on what is going out, and I think I am right in saying that they examine about every tenth package in the case of cased goods; that, however, would not apply to things like bricks, and coals, and heavy things like that.

719. What I was trying to get at is, how much supervision is exercised over the discharging of ships, whether carrying dutiable goods or free goods, and what amount of delay is caused to the shipowner. I am afraid I cannot quite understand it at present?—The Solicitor to the Customs has just drawn my attention to the fact that, before any goods can be unloaded, they must be entered; that is to say, a document describing them must be passed in the Long Room.

720. Then, if they are shown to be free goods, can they be discharged throughout the night without any supervision?—I believe not, except in the case of those bulk goods about which there is no suspicion at all; but as regards case goods, there must be a certain amount of supervision, because one never can tell that inside a case that professedly contains free goods there may not be some eau de Cologne or some cigars.

721. I think you said something about the advantages of deep water. Had you in view then deep water in the river so that ships might go alongside the wharves and avoid the lightering?—That is one of the plans for relieving the Port of London from its present disadvantages.

722. So as to lessen the amount of lightering?—Exactly.

723. That would not, of course, affect the amount of lightering from the docks to the warehouse to a great extent, but it would diminish the lightering from the ships in the stream to the warehouse?—To the wharves up the river.

724. And also the lightering would be greatly diminished, I take it, if, for example, from Tilbury the lighters had not got to traverse so long a course in the river owing to the absence of warehouses at Tilbury or at the Victoria Dock?—Yes.

725. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to take you back to the tables See 670.
you put in at the beginning of your evidence. You have reminded us that in estimating trade we must consider not only values but tonnage. Now suppose that tonnage were considered in respect of London and the five ports mentioned, would it make any change in the inference to be drawn?—These tables deal only with value, and the reason for that is that there is no other common measure that can be found for the great variety of goods that come in. But it is most important to remember that if you take volume and quantities of goods into account, the lesson that you draw from the tables is something very different.

726. I am quite aware of that, but I am asking you this specific question: whether you can say that the inference to be drawn from this table would be different if tonnage were taken instead of value?—By tonnage I understand you mean the weight of the goods—not the tonnage of the vessels carrying them but the quantities of the goods.

727. Exactly the same as we saw in that interpolation of your fellow commissioner?—I think what he said was that it is of the greatest importance to remember ——

728. I appreciate the importance of it, but what I

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want your answer upon, if you can give it me, is whether the inference to be drawn would be different if "tonnage" in his sense of the word were substituted for "value"?—I think I see what is meant. Suppose we put values aside, and made the same kind of table—a percentage table—dealing with quantities only, we might arrive at very different results.

729. Would it be so?—I think it probable, but the great difficulty is that we should have to make separate tables for all the different leading kinds of goods. We cannot add corn and wine together.

730. I am not dealing with the difficulty; I am quite aware of that. My point is this; you interpolated from a fellow commissioner a suggestion that in certain cases we should not only deal with values, but that we should consider tonnage or quantity. I am asking you whether if the same process were applied to this table a different result would be arrived at?—I think it would look much more favourable to the Port of London; that is my full impression; but to prove it we ought to laboriously make up tables for each of the leading kinds of goods.

731. I think I have got what I wanted. Your impression is that it would be distinctly favourable rather than the reverse?—Oh, yes.

732. We shall get the figures in other ways. Then with regard to the concession of hours—do you appreciate what I mean by that?—Quite.

733. As far as I understand it would cost £3,000 a year for London and £1,500 a year in round figures for the outports?—That is our estimate.

734. Do you think that if the concession were made all round it would in any way favour the Port of London? Would it alter the relative position of London favourably or otherwise?—I should expect really very little result from it—very little.

735. It would be simply that instead of the shipowner or the purchaser of the goods bearing the cost of the extra labour the taxpayer would bear it?—That would be so.

736. And it would not make any difference to London in comparison with the other ports?—I think it would be insignificant. It would touch such a small area of London trade, for one thing.

737. My last question relates to this very serious matter of the disadvantage of the Port of London. Mr. Fleming used in his evidence the phrase: "The peculiar disadvantage of the Port of London is that the deep water required by large modern vessels is far away down the river at a distance from the warehouses and the centres of the markets," and I notice that your fellow commissioner uses the same phrase, and you spoke of "the peculiar disadvantages of London" too. Now, what I desire to ask you is, do the Board of Customs consider that "the peculiar disadvantages of the Port of London"—to use your own phrase, are increasing or decreasing relatively with other ports?—I should have rather thought that they were increasing relatively to other ports, but I feel that I can speak with very little authority on that point. See 368.

738. Of course, you only speak for the Board of Customs?—I speak for the Board, but I must speak with the utmost reserve upon such a question, because I cannot say that I have paid personal attention to it.

739. You will understand that we shall have any amount of evidence on the subject; I only want to get your impression as the head of the Board of Customs, and I think your impression is that it is increasing?—I should have said that the disadvantages are relatively increasing.

740. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to ask you, with reference to these figures showing the proportion of the trade of the Port of London that consists of dutiable goods. Mr. Pittar in his memorandum enumerates imports and then exports of British and Irish produce and exports of foreign and colonial produce, but I do not think he refers in that statement to transhipment goods, which may be more important in the Port of London than in the outports?—It is quite true; he excludes transhipment goods.

741. And they would be more important in the Port of London than in some of the outports?—Certainly more important in London than in many of the outports, that is perfectly true. I see that from 1889 to 1899 the "Imports, transhipments," that is, transhipments under bond, have ranged from 4·8 millions to 3·3 millions, and the percentage borne by the London transhipments to the whole of the United Kingdom was, in 1889, 47·81 per cent., and in 1899, 30·98.

742. That is rather a diminishing element in the Port of London compared with others?—Yes, a diminishing element.

743. It would not alter the proportion of 10 per cent. very much?—It would not.

744. On the other side there is a circumstance that would perhaps rather diminish the percentage of dutiable goods—these figures do not include gold and silver?—I believe they do not.

745. And a very large amount of gold and silver is imported and exported at the Port of London?—Yes.

746. We do get the figures, but they are in a separate statement?—Yes.

747. Then with reference to what you said at the beginning about the scattering of wharves and warehouses over many miles of riverside, and your having so many places where duties are paid, do you consider that the Customs have to encounter special difficulties in dealing with the revenue in the Port of London, that it is perhaps a little more difficult to make the revenue secure, and that they are put to more expense in consequence?—I think there is no doubt that that is the case. See 670.

748. That London is a particularly difficult and expensive port for the Customs to deal with?—Exactly.

749. But you are not aware that the difficulty which the Customs experience is reflected in greater expense to the trade. You endeavour to put the trade of all the ports upon an equal footing?—So far as we can.

750. Do you think there is any balance of disadvantage to the merchants and shipowners of London compared with others in consequence of that scattering of wharves and warehouses?—I have no doubt that it must cause great expense to merchants. I should have thought that merchants would have saved a great deal of money if there was a greater concentration of warehouses and quays and accommodation for vessels.

751. On the other hand, goods must be distributed; you must not merely concentrate them, but you must send them to different points where they can be distributed?—Yes, it is perfectly true that they must be distributed in the end, but I should have imagined that there would have been a great convenience in a concentration, were it possible, of business premises.

752. And you believe that on the whole this dispersion of business that seems to be connected with the general conditions of the Port of London imposes some expense on the trade as compared with other ports?—I should have thought that that was the case. Mr. Fleming, I think, agrees with me that that is so.

753. Then coming to your tables: the whole object of them is merely to show the diminishing proportion of the whole trade which London has as compared with these five "daughter ports," to use your phrase?—Yes, if we take values. See 670.

754. But it is a diminishing proportion in any case. Would not that be so?——

(*Mr. Ellis.*) That is exactly the question I asked, and I understood that his answer was, No.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) It would be a diminishing proportion, although the absolute amount of the trade, if you take account of quantities, may be always increasing. The proportion of London is a diminishing one.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) If you take values.

(*The Witness.*) Yes, judging from values. I really cannot tell how far it would be altered if we took quantities. It might be altered, and it might not.

755. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But assuming value as a common measure, it shows a diminishing proportion of London as compared with the other ports?—Yes.

756. But the truth is, at the same time—which is not quite apparent on the surface of the figures—that it is a diminishing proportion of a greatly increasing trade in bulk?—True.

757. So that although taking the first table of imports, the proportion of London, which was 34·35 in 1873, has fallen to 33·83 in 1899, yet the trade itself has enormously increased?—Enormously grown.

758. And is it not the case that even in value, as far as imports are concerned, there is a very large increase

of value in the case of London, because in 1873 the value is £127,000,000 sterling, and in 1899 £164,000,000?—Quite so.

759. But when you come to the exports of British and Irish produce, and the exports of Foreign and Colonial produce, you find that in these cases, contrary to what is the case with the imports, the values in each case diminish?—That is the case.

760. And the value appears to diminish quite as much in the case of the daughter ports as it does in the case of London—I am speaking of exports now?—Yes.

761. The impression of these two tables would be altered somewhat if you considered that the quantities of goods had increased, but the proportion is a diminishing one in all cases in London?—That is so.

762. But would it not also be the case that if the proportion of Dover and Folkestone and Harwich and Newhaven and Southampton also diminished, then some other ports in the United Kingdom must have been gaining in proportion at the expense not merely of London but of all these ports as well?—That is true, and it is referred to in one of the notes: "The decrease in British and Irish exports from London is accounted for by increases at Middlesborough, Hull, Liverpool, Newcastle, and Glasgow. The decrease in Foreign and Colonial exports from London is partly accounted for by increases at Hull and Liverpool."

763. Would not it be the case then that London to some extent is served by such ports as Bristol and Liverpool and Hull?—No doubt. Every British and Irish port, perhaps, in a sense serves London.

764. Can you say anything as to the course of trade in particular articles—whether it is less or more as regards London as compared with Liverpool or as compared with Hull, than it used to be?—The question is a very interesting one, and I wish I could answer it at the moment. I understand that it is whether we can mention any particular articles of importance, the trade in which in London has been sinking, and the trade in which in outports has been growing.

765. Not altogether that: whether the goods are brought to Liverpool or to Hull and then brought on to London, instead of coming by sea to London: say, such goods as tobacco, tea, sugar, and other articles?—My impression is that tobacco from Liverpool goes to Bristol more than to London. I think the best answer is to say that I am unable to give the information at the moment, but I will endeavour to procure it for the information of the Commission.

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766. (*Chairman.*) Could you tell us about the re-exportation of tea and coffee at the present time as compared with what it was say ten years ago, before the active competition of some of the foreign ports, such as Hamburg and Antwerp. We want to know how much London appears to have lost by the competition of foreign ports?—I am afraid it would mean a sum in arithmetic.

767. It is rather important to find that out, and also whether it is the case with any of the Colonial imports. Tea and coffee are imported from the Colonies, I suppose?—Yes.

768. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) And also wool?—Yes.

769. (*Chairman.*) Wool, as I understand, originally nearly all came to London, and now it does not. Is that so?—I believe that is to a certain extent the case. See 1961–1964.

770. We should like to know with regard to some specific articles such as tea, coffee, tobacco, and wool, what the effect during the last ten years has been of either competition of other ports in England, or other ports abroad?—We will do our best to get the information and give it to the Commission. See 11563.

Now I beg to hand in three returns which have been prepared in response to the request of the Commission. They are as follows:—(1) An account of Customs duties received on goods delivered at each dock, wharf, or warehouse, in the Port of London, showing the principal and all other articles paying duty, together with the quantities of the principal articles, for the year ended 31st December, 1899. (*See Appendix, 3rd day, No.* 1.) (2) A return of the number and tonnage of vessels entering Queenborough only, in the Port of London in the years 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1899. (*See Appendix, 3rd day, No.* 2.) (3) A return of the number and tonnage of vessels entering the Port of London (exclusive of Queenborough) in 1899, distinguishing the particular dock, wharf, pier, or mooring, at which entered. (*See Appendix, 3rd day, No.* 2.)

Recalled 11547.

Mr. Henry Charles Baggallay called and examined. *Mr. H. C. Baggallay.*

771. (*Chairman.*) How long have you been engineer to the London and India Docks Joint Committee?—Three years. I am not their engineer now. I resigned a year ago, but since then I have been consulted by them, and am carrying out works for them.

772. You are a consulting engineer?—I have not an official position as consulting engineer, but I was their chief engineer, and now I am carrying out works for them. Your Lordship asked last Thursday that I should give evidence as to the physical condition of the various docks under the control of the Joint Committee. I propose to give to the Commission a description of the various docks, which will be in effect an extension of the Table giving particulars of the Docks, which was handed in by Mr. Scott on Thursday last (*see Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 7), and I would ask the Commission at the same time to look at the plans of the docks as I go through them in detail. See 663.

(*The Witness handed in plans of the following docks: Tilbury, Royal Victoria and Albert, East and West India, London, and St. Katharine.*)

Before describing the different docks one by one, as I propose to do, I think it will be useful if I explain what the figures I am about to give regarding the levels in the river and docks mean. We refer everything at the docks to Trinity High Water, which is an arbitrary level 12½ft. above ordnance datum. High water at spring tides is generally about 12in. above Trinity. High water at neap tides is generally 3ft. 6in. below Trinity. On very rare occasions is it as much as 5ft. below Trinity.

773. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What do you mean by ordnance datum?—Ordnance datum is what is put on all Government ordnance plans.

774. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) The datum of the ordnance maps?—Yes.

775. (*Mr. Ellis.*) And it is marked on the wall?—Yes; it refers to the old dock sill at Liverpool, I think, which is the mean tide level. Taking average tides through springs and neaps, I found the average level of the water in the river at the Albert Dock at high water to be 9in. below Trinity—that is to say, taking an average of all the tides, springs and neaps. At one hour before or after high water 2ft. below Trinity.

776. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is that an average tide or a spring tide?—An average tide. At 2 hours before or after high water, 5ft. below Trinity; at 3 hours before or after high water, 9ft. below Trinity; at 4 hours before or after high water, 14ft. below Trinity; at 5 hours before or after high water, 18ft. below Trinity; at low water, 19 feet below Trinity. I may add that these figures which I have given are the average, but as a rule there are only four tides at neaps that do not reach within 2ft. at Trinity, and there are eleven tides which reach Trinity, or go above it. Therefore this 3ft. 6in. or 4ft. below at neaps only occurs on a certain number of days, not very many, at dead neaps.

777. Could you give us an ordinary spring tide and an ordinary neap tide, and an extremely high spring tide and an extremely low neap tide?—Yes. As you know, in November it is sometimes influenced when we have enormous floods. We have one mark very nearly 5ft. above Trinity, but an extremely high spring tide would be 18in. above Trinity, and an extremely low neap tide would be 4ft. below Trinity. They do not often go more than 3ft. 6in. See 5580.

778. Now will you give us the low water for those tides?—The low water for those tides would be at springs 21ft., and at neaps about 18ft. or 19ft.

779. Below Trinity?—Yes, below Trinity. In giving therefore the levels on the sills I assume, to be on the safe side, a neap tide to be 4ft. below Trinity, and ordinary low water to be 20ft. below Trinity. Of course in the River Thames exceptionally high and low tides occasionally occur, owing to strong winds or to floods coming down from the upper reaches. The outer sills are much deeper than the inner sills in most of the docks. In pumped docks there are no neaps, because we pump

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the water up to the Trinity level, but the outer sills have to suffer the difference in level between springs and neaps.

780. (*Chairman.*) How do you pump the water—from the river?—Yes, from the river.

781. That is so as to keep a uniform depth within your docks?—Yes, which of course affects the inner sill of a dock. In the case of a dock like Tilbury the water in the Dock gradually goes down to neap water level, whereas a dock that is pumped is always maintained at spring level, so that in that case the outer sill really only influences the number of hours in which there is water enough for a ship to get into the dock.

782. At what time of the tide do you open your lock gates?—That entirely depends on the ship that is coming in. If a small ship had to go in we will say to the Albert Dock, where there is deep water, she might come in three or four hours before or after high water; but if a ship that was drawing 27ft. to 28ft. wanted to come in she could only come in, we will say, two hours before, or two hours after, when the water is not more than 5ft. below Trinity.

783. Then you have to keep your lock gates shut during the greater portion of the time?—For ships, but not for barges.

784. You have constantly to open them for barges?—Yes.

785. And you lose water consequently upon that?—Yes.

786. The effect of the lighters you must tell us about afterwards?—Yes; that is in the other part of my evidence. Tilbury, which is the most modern dock, was commenced in 1882, and completed in 1886. It is distant 26 miles by water from London Bridge, and by rail from Fenchurch-street 22 miles. The total area of the property, including the water area, is 583 acres, as shown in green and yellow on the plan which is before the Commissioners. These colours have no force now. They were the division between the company's property and the Committee's control. The land coloured green is well adapted for dock extension. The dock, which consists of a main dock and three branches, has a water area of about 53 acres. It is entered by a lock leading from an outer tidal basin of 20 acres, protected by timber jetties projecting into the river. Opposite the entrance the depth of water in the centre of the river at low water is 45ft., and there is a depth of about 27ft. in the river at the entrance to the basin. The basin is 25ft. deep at low water, 45ft. at high water springs, and 41ft. at high water neaps. I may mention that there is more water on the Kent side than in the centre of the river, but I have to deal with the centre of the river where the ships have to go. And also there is less water lower down, but that has nothing to do with this particular instance. The lock from the basin into the dock is 700ft. long, with three pairs of gates, and is divided into lengths of 150ft. and 550ft. That is done partly for safety, and partly not to use a whole lockful of water for a short vessel. The breadth is 80ft. The outer and middle sills are 44ft. below Trinity, giving 40ft. at high-water neaps. The inner sill is 38ft., giving 34ft. at high-water neaps. In case of accident to the lock, the traffic could be passed through the graving docks which connect the basin with the dock. They are shown on the east side of the lock. I believe that the "Oceanic" is the largest ship afloat. She is 686ft. in length, with 69ft. beam. She could therefore enter the Tilbury Dock at the very lowest of neap tides, as I believe she is never loaded down to draw more than 33ft. She trades with Liverpool, where the newest dock entrances only give about 30ft. at high-water neap tides. But of course London is at a disadvantage with many other ports in this respect. If a ship arrives at a dock where the river is deep, she can lighten in the river or wait there till she can get in. If you have a bad tide, very often the following tide is a foot or two more. She can lighten in the river, but that cannot be done anywhere in the London docks except at Tilbury. It could not be done at any of the other docks, because the depth of the river would not allow a ship to be afloat at low water. The main dock is 1,820ft. long by 600ft. wide. The centre branch dock is in a direct line with the lock. It is 1,600ft. long, with a width of 300ft. The eastern and western branch docks on either side of it have a similar length, but their width tapers from 300ft. at the main dock end to 200ft. at the far end, instead of the quay walls being parallel, as is the case in the central branch. These branch docks and the main dock are all 38ft. below Trinity, which gives 34ft. at ordinary neap tides. Occasionally, locking reduces this as much as 2ft. On those occasions therefore the available depth is only 32ft. The dock system is capable of accommodating at one time about 20 ships of 550 to 600ft. in length, or about 30 ships of the average size of those which come to Tilbury, the total quay length available for shipping being about 15,000 lineal feet. One of the quays of the main dock is used for coaling purposes, and is let to a private firm; another quay is let as a timber wharf, and several shipbuilders rent yards on the estate. The two quays which divide the branch docks from one another are 1,600ft. long by 380ft. wide. Sheds 300ft. long by 120ft. wide are placed along the quays in the branch docks, and are set back 32ft. from the water edge. The tidal basin is also furnished with quays and sheds, and it is used for a certain class of transhipment business and passenger traffic. This dock was built on marsh land, and it was therefore quite impossible when it was constructed to pave the quays with any chance of the pavement standing. They were therefore only ballasted; but recently the Joint Committee have been putting down concrete paving, which, it is expected, will stand now that the ground has had time to consolidate. For the same reason the floors of the sheds were made of timber. This, as the timber decays, is gradually being replaced by concrete. There is no doubt that at first considerable inconvenience was caused owing to the irregularity of the surface of the quays, and the sinking of the floors of the sheds; but it was quite unavoidable, and the time has now come when the dock company is able to make, and is gradually making, a more permanent surface suitable for trucking. The quay walls are built of concrete faced with brickwork. The sheds are of a substantial kind, with boarded and slated roofs, and are provided with roller shutters for their whole length, so that trucking in and out can take place at any part of the sheds. The floors of the sheds are level with the quays on the Dock side, but at the back the rails are laid at a lower level to facilitate loading into trucks. There are 24 of these sheds in the branch docks and three in the basin, with a total floor area of nearly 1,000,000 square feet. Thus, taking the number of ships in the dock to be 27, each ship can be accommodated with a shed floor area of 36,000 square feet. These sheds are all single floor sheds. It would have been exceedingly expensive to have had double floor sheds. On account of the foundations being so bad there they would have had to be on piles. There is another reason why double floor sheds were not put there. They would not be required so much there as at some of the other docks, because such a large quantity of cargo goes over the side into barges, that the same accommodation is not necessary there as would have been the case had all the cargo had to go on to the quays. A double line of rails runs down the quays, and also several lines of rail at the back of the sheds, so that the cargoes can be disposed of with great rapidity. There is ample provision of sidings, also of sorting sidings, the total length of rails within the dock boundary being 26 miles. The shunting of the wagons is done by five locomotives, one of which has been only recently added. I ought to mention that the rails are connected with the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway which runs to Fenchurch Street. There are two graving docks each 846 feet in length. One has a width of 70 feet at floor level, and the other 61 feet 6 inches. The sill of the larger one is 35 feet below Trinity and of the smaller 30 feet. The width of the entrances at sill level is 70 feet for the larger and 60 feet for the smaller, but at water level at the basin end, the width is 7 feet more in each case. Each of these graving docks can be divided by caissons into two shorter docks. There are several grooves in the sides of the dock so that different lengths can be given. One portion can be entered from the basin, while the other portion can be entered from the main dock, or the whole can be used as one graving dock entered from either end. The pumping engines for the graving docks have an indicated horsepower of 908. These can empty the larger dock in four hours, and when shortened by the caisson and with a ship in the dock the pumps can empty it in two hours. The Tilbury Dock is furnished with 62 movable hydraulic cranes (of which some have been delivered since June last) having a lifting power of 30 cwts. Hydraulic power is supplied to these cranes.

also to capstans, and to the machinery for working the gates, by three pairs of engines of a total indicated horse power of 600. In addition to the hydraulic travelling cranes there is a floating steam derrick capable of lifting 30 tons at a radius of 27 feet. I ought to explain that being on a barge she could only reach over a ship 18 feet 6 inches. There are also two steam portable cranes. On the east side of the graving docks a large number of workmen's dwellings, cottages for foremen, and houses for officers have been provided. There are also a large hotel and restaurants belonging to the Docks Company. The tidal basin collects a great deal of mud, which is driven out again by a "blower." A "blower" is a small tug with pumping engines on board which pump water at considerable pressure through a tube to a sort of rake. This latter is hauled over the surface of the mud, and stirs it up so that the tidal current may carry it away. The Joint Committee have three of these "blowers" and one drag. A "drag" is a tug fitted with a rake, but without the pumping arrangement. The blowers are used for dispersing the mud at the entrances and preventing it from forming bars. They are also used for removing the mud from the locks and from the inner basins near the locks. They stir up the mud, and as the gate sluices are opened it passes out. This is only done at spring tides, when the water used can be replaced without cost. The blower at Tilbury is also furnished with fire engines and salvage pumps. There are 17 tugs altogether at the various docks, but only three are fitted up as blowers and one as a drag. Ten of these tugs have fire engines on board. The dredging is done with single ladder dredgers, of which there are two in commission, and one grab dredger. There are two other ladder dredgers, but they have not been used lately, as they are only suitable for the smaller docks, and it is found more economical to hire a dredger when extra work is required than to keep them in commission. As locking is carried on at all hours at Tilbury, some of the mud stirred up by the blower must enter the dock and increase the quantity to be removed by the dredgers. The quantity of mud that accumulates at Tilbury is so great that the average annual dredging for the last three years has amounted to no less than 3,740 tons per acre. The average quantity removed from the Tilbury Dock per annum is 187,000 tons. In earlier years it was greater still, but recently, owing to stricter regulations as to locking, the loss of water has not been so great per tide. The average cost of dredging at Tilbury for the last three years being over £9,200, and the number of berths in the dock being 24, the proportion of the dredging expenses that should be attributable to each berth is about £390. In former years it was as high as £500 per berth. This dock is in direct railway communication with the Commercial Road warehouses and railway depôt, where the floor area of the warehouses amounts to 360,000 square feet. Goods trains run daily between the depôt and the dock. There are no warehouses at Tilbury, because there is no demand for them, the exigencies of trade requiring the goods to be stored as near the centre of commerce as possible. Goods are therefore sent up by rail or water to uptown warehouses. Some goods are, however, warehoused at Tilbury in the sheds, which are quite suited to warehousing requirements, as they are closed sheds, and of a solid construction. Although these buildings are termed sheds they must not be confounded with ordinary open shelters.

787. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Before you leave that may I ask one question about railway access. You have mentioned the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway as the line with which you have connection. Have any other railways running powers over that line?—I am afraid I am not able to answer that question. That is the only railway we have got contact with.

788. That is the only railway company you know?—The solicitor informs me that all the other companies have running powers over that railway.

789. By "all the other companies" you mean the northern lines—the Great Northern, Midland, London and North Western, and so on?—Yes.

See 5580. 790. (*Chairman.*) Will you tell us, as you have no warehouses at Tilbury, what proportion of the goods are lightered and what are sent by rail or road?—I cannot answer those questions.

791. Those are physical questions; they are not commercial questions. They are questions which relate to the physical use of the docks, they do not raise questions of policy?—But the Chairman proposes to give that evidence.

792. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) To whom do the locomotives belong?—To the Joint Committee of the Dock Companies.

793. Do they take the terminal upon all goods, do you know?—I do not know that.

794. What is the absolute available depth in the entrance basin. Are you able to maintain it at the depth on the sill?—With great difficulty. We have a blower there, and we do maintain it, but it is only by constantly having the blower at work and occasionally sending a dredger down to assist.

795. By those means you are able to keep the depth on the sill available in the basin?—Yes.

796. With regard to the matter of cost, £9,200, is that the cost inside the dock or does it include the cost of the basin?—It would include the cost of the basin.

797. Is the water of the river more muddy at Tilbury than opposite the Victoria Dock?—I do not think so. I think it is owing to the way in which the dock has to be worked. Locking takes place at all states of the tide owing to the river being deep, and when the lock is filled and then reduced to low water there is something like 7,000,000 gallons of water that passes out; that reduces the level of the water in the whole dock 6 inches, and therefore the incoming water brings in its mud in far greater quantities than in docks where locking is practically confined to the hours when the water is higher.

798. Then would you think that if you pumped up Tilbury Dock you would reduce the amount of mud inside?—Not unless the hours at which barges went in and out were restricted. The mere fact of pumping the water in does not alter the quantity of mud. We find exactly the same quantity of mud in water pumped in as comes in with the tide.

799. Do not you find the quantity of mud in the river much less at one time of the tidal flow than at others?—Yes, it does vary very much, but where we pump we have unfortunately to pump so many hours that we have to take it in all its states.

800. (*Chairman.*) Is this tidal basin the best way of entering large docks like this?—No, I cannot say that it is.

801. If you were constructing the works over again would you have a different entrance?—Certainly, on account of the mud. That basin would have been all right if there had been no mud, but with the mud it is very awkward. We have to keep a blower always at work to keep it clear.

802. Is it always open to the river?—Always open.

803. Would it be very expensive to make any alteration to avoid that?—I am afraid it would, and the direction of the entrance is not very good for making it straight on to the river. For locking purposes it is very desirable—that is to say if you want ships to come in at different states of the tide—that the entrance should point up the stream. The upper docks are nearly all at right angles to the stream, but ships, on account of the depth of water in the river, are obliged to come in at the top of the tide, when there is no current, and therefore they come in at right angles. You could hardly lock in at Tilbury unless it was high water, and unless the tide was more or less quiescent.

804. Then are the docks at a wrong angle now?—They would be if we removed the basin.

805. Are they at a wrong angle now?—Not now.

806. But they would be if it was open to the river?—Yes, if you did away with the basin.

807. Is there any proposal to make docks alongside, of a different opening and a different construction?—Yes, quite different—pointing up the river. Plans have been before the Committee, and they have been considering them for some time.

808. In what way would they be different?—Instead of being short docks like these they would run right up to the top, and the entrance would be a continuation of the main dock, so that it would point up stream.

809. In the opposite direction, in fact?—Yes, pointing up stream.

810. Is that a convenient place for the extension of docks in London?—No, I think not, as a first

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extension. They ought not to be extended there until the site near the Albert Dock is utilised.

811. Then there would not be a sufficient number of ships to justify your making the docks here?—Certainly not, at present. I understand that no ships go in at Tilbury if they can possibly get in higher up, and it is proposed to make much deeper entrances and deeper docks at the Albert Dock. There is certainly room for extension there.

812. Then you find the distance from London a drawback to the dock, in fact?—Yes.

813. Except for certain purposes?—Except for certain purposes.

814. It does not matter, I suppose, for passenger purposes much?—No, I presume not.

815. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you indicate what kind of goods are warehoused in the sheds at Tilbury?—I am afraid I cannot speak on those subjects at all. I am only an engineer.

816. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In using the graving docks, which entrance do you generally use?—The basin.

817. From the basin or the dock itself?—From the main dock as a rule.

818. (*Chairman.*) Now will you go on to the next docks?—Proceeding up the river the next docks are the Royal Victoria and Albert Docks. The Victoria Dock was commenced in 1850 and completed in 1855, and the Royal Albert Dock was commenced in 1875 and finished in 1880. The total area of this property is about 702 acres, of which the water area is about 177 acres, the two docks practically forming one continuous dock, as they are connected by a canal in which there are no gates. Along the north bank of the river there is a wharf stretching 1,100ft. down the Thames from the lower Albert Dock entrance, having a depth alongside of 27ft. at low water, and a breadth of 50ft., with a railway station abutting on it. The railway lines are continued along this wharf, and the largest vessels are able to lie there at any time of tide to coal or take in cargo or disembark passengers. Coasters and Continental steamers are able to avail themselves of it in connection with the ocean steamers or otherwise. There are two entrances to the Royal Albert Dock at Galleons, which is 11 miles by water from London Bridge, and one entrance to the Victoria Dock, which is about 7 miles by water from London Bridge. The depth of water at Galleons in the centre of the river at low water is 20ft. shoaling to about 12ft. at the pierheads in front of the entrances. Although there is 20ft. opposite the entrances, there is less water a little way lower down. These two entrances at Galleons are both 550ft. in length by 80ft. in width; they each have three pairs of gates, the middle pair in each case being 150ft. from the inner pair. The new or down stream entrance was constructed in 1886, as the old entrance alone was found to be inadequate for the growing traffic of ships and barges, and did not give sufficient depth of water for the increasing draught of ships. It has a depth of 36ft. on all three sills at Trinity high water, or 32ft. at high water neaps. The upper or older entrance has 30ft. on all three sills. The inverts in the locks are curved, and therefore at the extreme edges of the lock, which is 80ft. wide, there is 18in. less depth, but with that width of lock there is not more than the curvature of even what is called a square ship would amount to. The entrance from the river to the Victoria Dock is 325ft. in length, 80ft. wide, with 28ft. on the outer and 25ft. 6in. on the inner sill; the depth of water in the centre of the river here is about 13ft. at low water, shoaling to about 8ft. at the entrance to the dock, giving about 29ft. at high water spring tides, and 25ft. at neap tides. The canal at the inner or dock side of the lock is crossed by a swing bridge carrying a line of rails and a public road.

819. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are those depths at low water in the river, spring tide low water?—They are at the fixed Admiralty Chart level. At this particular point, 21ft. below Trinity is taken. There are various depths on the Admiralty chart between London Bridge and the mouth of the river, and the depth I have given you is at what is called low water on the Admiralty chart.

820. It is usually the spring tides on the Admiralty charts—almost invariably?—Yes. Nearly all the ships for this system of docks enter by the new Galleons lock. The old lock at Galleons and the Victoria entrance are almost exclusively used by barges and small craft. The water in the Victoria and Albert Docks is maintained at a level of Trinity high water—giving a depth of 32ft. in the Albert Basin; 27ft. in the Albert Dock; and 25ft. 6in. in the Victoria Dock and Basin. This is effected by powerful pumping engines situated at the Galleons entrance. Therefore, at the Victoria Dock the inner sill is higher than the outer sill, but if once a ship can get into the lock, you can get the full depth of spring tide on the inner sill, and not have to deduct the 4ft., which we have to do on the outer sill. The Albert Dock Basin has a present area of 15¼ acres, having been increased from its former area of 13 acres in 1886, when the new entrance was made. It is surrounded by quay walls capable of accommodating six of the deepest ships. The average length of the ships there is 450ft., whereas we can take in through the locks ships up to 536ft. It would take six ships of 450ft. average length; it has all the requisite sheds, appliances, and railway connections, and is connected with the main dock by a passage crossed by a public road swing bridge. This passage is 80ft. in width, and is furnished with a pair of gates, the depth on the sill being 27ft. 3in. Vessels up to a draught of 30ft., therefore, which cannot enter the Albert Dock, are able to discharge at the quays in the basin. It is a very common practice that when a ship wants to load down to more than 27ft. 3in., or a little over (we can generally get the water a little above Trinity) she completes her loading in the basin, so as to avoid the difficulty of getting out fully loaded.

821. What is the object of having a different depth in two docks which communicate with each other?—When the dock was originally built, I presume they intended to use the basin (which was the old custom) more as a big lock. You will find that all basins are made much deeper than the dock, because a loaded vessel when she is coming in, if she is too deep, has to discharge part of her cargo before going into the dock. That is done, in other ports, in the river; but in London they cannot lie in the river, because there is no water for them.

822. It is rather a makeshift sort of business?—Except that at some docks the basins have quays and sheds exactly like the dock.

823. But suppose you have a certain number of vessels drawing over 27ft. 3in. of water; that basin would not hold them?—No.

824. And the tendency is to have vessels drawing over 27ft. 3in.?—That is so; and the intention is that, if extensions are made at the Albert Dock, as proposed, a cut shall be made from the old dock, so that ships can get in without passing over the sill.

825. What would be the expense of deepening the Albert Dock?—I think it would not be a very costly matter. It could be done by putting a false quay in front of the walls, say 10 or 15 feet wide, as has been done in some of the other docks, and then dredge deeper. You would make a timber staging with concrete and ironwork superstructure, and it could be easily lowered a few feet. There will be a cut from the new extension, probably from 36ft. to 39ft. deep, to go into the old dock.

826. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Has that ever been proposed by the board of directors?—I have prepared plans with that object.

827. By their instructions?—By their instructions.

828. (*Chairman.*) The property coloured white on this plan does not belong to them?—No; that is town. It is only what is coloured green that belongs to us.

829. Where would they enter, according to your proposal?—(*The Witness pointed out the position on the plan.*) The proposal is to buy a strip of land on the south side, which is not built over.

830. You would have room enough with the purchase of a little extra land on the south side?—Just a strip more land will give sufficient width. I think the Chairman will probably tell you what his ideas about extensions are when he gives evidence.

831. Do you say you have made plans, or that you have considered the expense of such an alteration?—Yes, I have.

832. That you can give us, I suppose?—Yes, to make an extension on the south side of the Albert Dock for 20 ships of an average length of 500ft., which

is the average length of all ships over 7,000 tons that have been built during the last ten years, with a cut into the Albert Dock, a graving dock 700ft. long, with 30ft. on the sill, an entrance lock 750ft. long, with 38ft. on the outer sill and 34ft. on the inner sill—to make a dock of an average depth of 36ft., with 39ft. at the entrance end to catch the mud, would cost, without sheds, but with all other expenses, like rails and everything else, exactly one million pounds, including the land. The sheds that are proposed would cost about £350,000, but the question of how they should be made has not been settled yet. There are so many different ideas as to what is required nowadays that it is a big question; but the sheds would cost about £350,000, in addition to the million, which includes the dock, the lock, the graving dock, the cut, and the rails.

833. Would you consider that a cheap dock for the accommodation which it affords?—I should say very cheap.

834. Cheaper than it could be made at any other part of the river, are you prepared to say?—Yes, I should think so. One point is that the dock company has already so much of the land required, and it would be so much more economical to work it there, because there would be the same staff and the rails.

835. How long has that plan been considered?—I was first consulted on the subject about two years ago, but it has gradually got more matured lately. In fact, the board approves my plan for the Albert Dock. They have not yet approved the one for Tilbury, but I do not suppose the Tilbury one would come on until they had settled the question of the Albert Dock.

836. Would that estimate include the fitting up with hydraulic cranes, and everything necessary for the purpose?—Yes, complete.

837. And all done in the best and most substantial manner?—Yes.

838. All solid?—Yes, it would be almost entirely of concrete, which is the cheapest material that can be used now for dock purposes. I have some hesitancy in saying what the Committee propose to-day about extension, because I believe it depends to some extent upon their funds, which I am not competent to speak of.

839. We do not want you to go into that. We only want to know what your estimates are. Now, will you go on with your narrative?—The Albert Dock itself has a water area of 72 acres. It is 6,500ft. in length, with a breadth of 490ft., and can accommodate 28 ships of an average length of 400ft. Each berth is provided with a shed 320ft. in length and 120ft. in width, giving an average area of 38,400 square feet to each berth. The quay between the sheds and the water is 40ft. wide on the north side and 50ft. wide on the south side, and there are two lines of railway running down the whole length between the sheds and the dock side. Rails are also laid down the quays for the travelling cranes. At the back of the sheds there is a minimum of three continuous lines of rails, with numerous additional sidings. There is also a very complete system of sorting sidings on the north side of the Victoria Dock. These two docks are connected directly by rail with the East Smithfield depôt, near the London Dock. This is the depôt for the receipt of all goods to be sent to these docks by rail. Numerous goods trains run daily between the depôt and the docks, occupying about twenty minutes in transit. The total railway mileage in the Victoria and Albert Dock system amounts to 45 miles. The proximity of the Victoria and Albert Docks to London causes a large proportion of goods to be conveyed by cart and van direct to their destination. On account of the Albert Dock having been built on marshy land the quays were originally planked with timber, because the ground was not sufficiently consolidated to bear concrete or any more solid form of paving, but during the last few years 21 out of the 28 berths have been laid with concrete. Between the Albert and the Victoria Docks there is a passage way 80ft. wide and 25ft. 6in. deep. This depth cannot be increased, as there is a railway tunnel beneath for the Great Eastern Railway line. There is also a railway and public road swing bridge over the passage. I mention all these bridges over, because, having to open so many swing public road bridges is sometimes a great factor in the delay at the docks. The Victoria Dock has a width of 1,000ft. On the north side there are eight jetties, which are available as well as the quay-side for the accommodation of vessels. On the south side berths are provided by a timber quay with concrete flooring. All these jetties and quays are supplied with sheds. The dock is connected with a basin, which has an area of 16 acres, by a passage having a width of 80ft. and a depth of 25ft. 6in. The dock and basin together have quay berths for 27 ships, and have a total water area of 90 acres. There is, in addition, ample accommodation in this dock for ships to lie up. Lines of rails run all round the dock behind the sheds. On the south side of the dock there is a basin or pool covering 11 acres, formerly known as the Victoria Graving Dock, and purchased a few years ago from the Victoria Graving Dock Company. This, together with some of the adjoining land, has recently been let to the London Grain Elevator Company, who have erected four large grain elevators, on the American principle, to facilitate the handling of grain. In addition to the shed accommodation there are large warehouses for tobacco built on the north side of the Victoria Dock, also large granaries of four floors on the north-east side. On the south side are large timber structures for warehousing grain and other goods. The sheds, warehouses, and granaries in the Victoria and Albert Docks together have a floor area of no less than 3,360,000 square feet. There are also 36 refrigerating chambers provided with the necessary machinery and appliances for storing 364,744 refrigerated sheep. Where new sheds have been put up of late years they have been made with two floors. All the old sheds at Tilbury, and also at Albert Dock, were single-floor sheds, but recently two sheds have been put up on the south side of the Victoria Dock and another on the north side of Victoria Dock, which are double-floor sheds. It would have been very expensive at first to put up double-floor sheds in the Albert Dock, because there would have had to have been so much piling, owing to the marshy ground. The railway companies run trains direct from these refrigerating chambers——

840. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do you mind saying what railway companies? Just give us the names?—All railway companies.

841. Not all railway companies. You mean all the northern lines, surely?—Yes, all the northern lines. All the railway companies run trains direct to the sorting sidings in these docks, and their trucks are taken by the Joint Committee to and from the sheds and berths. At the west end of the Albert Dock there are two graving docks. The larger is 502ft. in length, 62ft. wide at the floor, and 85ft. wide at the coping level, the width of entrance being 59ft. at sill level, and 68ft. at water level. The sill is 22ft. below Trinity, and the floor level 3ft. lower. This dock can be pumped out in about 2½ hours when there is a ship in it. The smaller dock, which can be pumped out in about 1½ hours, is 410ft. in length, 77ft. wide at the coping level, 54ft. wide on the floor, and 52ft. wide on the sill which is 22ft. below water level and 65ft. wide at water level. With the exception of the graving dock in the Blackwall Basin, which is let to the West India Dock Graving Company, the graving docks in the Albert and Tilbury Docks are the only graving docks belonging to the Joint Committee. Although it involves a little departure from the plan of dealing with each system of docks separately, I think it will be convenient for me to explain the reasons for this fact here. First, at the time the older docks were built there were Acts of Parliament expressly forbidding the building of graving docks by the dock companies, and the practice of building or repairing ships. These Acts governed the London and India Companies respectively during the whole of their earlier history, until the space round the docks which might have been available for graving docks had been devoted to other purposes. The sections applicable to the London Dock and the India Docks respectively are as follows:—The London Dock Act, 1800, 39 and 40 George III. Cap. 47, Section 26: "Provided always and be it enacted that no slip or slips dry dock graving dock way or other place for the building heaving down or repairing of ships or other vessels shall at any time hereafter be made or built or permitted or suffered to be made or built in or adjoining to any of the said docks hereby authorised to be made or of the basins and cuts which shall belong thereto nor shall the said London Dock Company at any time or times carry on or be in anywise concerned in the trade or business of building or repairing ships or other vessels for hire or profit." The West India Dock Act, 1831, 1 and 2 William IV., Cap. 52, Section 141: "And be it further enacted that it shall not be lawful for the said West India Dock Company at any time or times to carry on or be in anywise concerned in the trade or business of building or repairing ships or other vessels for hire or profit nor

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shall any slip or slips dry dock graving dock way or other place for the building heaving down or repairing of ships or other vessels at any time hereafter be made or built or permitted or suffered to be made or built in or adjoining any of the said docks basins and cuts of the said company but nothing herein contained shall extend to prevent the said company from selling or letting the docks yards and other premises at Limehouse now in the occupation of Messieurs Fletcher Son and Fearnall, nor the docks yards and premises at Blackwall now in the occupation of Messieurs H. and W. Pitcher but so nevertheless that no opening or communication shall be made or permitted between the docks cuts and basins of the said company and the said docks, yards and premises now in the occupation of Messieurs Fletcher Son and Fearnall and Messieurs H. and W. Pitcher so long as those docks yards and premises shall be used for the purpose of building or repairing ships or other vessels." The above section of the London Dock Act was not repealed until the London and St. Katharine Docks Act, 1864. The section of the West India Dock Act was incorporated in the East and West India Dock Act, 1838, and is still applicable to the East and West India Docks. Secondly, it has up to the present time been unnecessary to build more graving docks than those already referred to because there are in the river Thames sufficient private graving docks to meet the requirements of the Port, but in any future extension of the Albert Dock, the Dock Company propose to make a new graving dock capable of accommodating the largest class of vessel. There are in these docks 121 travelling cranes, exclusive of a certain proportion of 24 new cranes recently delivered and on order. There are also 96 fixed cranes and jiggers, and two floating cranes, one capable of lifting 50 tons at 51 feet 6 inches radius, and the other 30 tons at 47 feet radius. The larger one would only have an effective radius of 34 feet and the smaller one 24 feet 6 inches clear of the barge. The number of cranes in the Albert Dock are quite sufficient for the work. I have made a point now for more than two years of always noticing the number of cranes in the Albert Dock when I have been there, and I have never yet seen more than half of them at work. The reason that complaints are sometimes made that there are not cranes enough is the difficulty of moving the cranes quickly from one point to another when the quays are blocked up by the cargo from other vessels. In most ports where cranes are used, they are hired more or less for the whole time the ship is loading or discharging; but in London, where such an enormous proportion of the goods go over the side, ships do nearly all their business into barges, and then suddenly require cranes for every hatchway on the ship. Therefore, when a ship is about a fortnight at the quay, instead of, as would naturally be expected, taking a number of cranes, she probably does not require them for ten days, and then she requires a large number for two or three days. In fact, I calculated a short time ago that the cranes do not earn even interest on their own cost. Hydraulic power is laid on to all parts of the Docks with two pumping stations. The four largest steam tugs are fitted with steam fire engines, and fire hydrants and engines are provided along the quays. These docks are illuminated with electric light supplied from an installation at the Victoria Dock. There are 17 locomotives for shunting wagons on the various sidings in the Docks, and there is also a passenger railway on the north side belonging to the Joint Committee, but worked by the Great Eastern Railway Company. There are stations at different points all down the Docks.

842. (*Chairman.*) Do the locomotives belong to the Joint Committee?—Yes. A ferry is maintained across the Albert Dock near its centre. That is a steam ferry. Large quantities of mud enter the Victoria and Albert Docks. It is found that on an average based on the returns of the last three years the quantity to be removed by dredging amounts to nearly 1,600 tons per acre of water space. I have already mentioned that the dredging per acre of water at Tilbury amounts to 3,740 tons per acre of water space; at these docks it is 1,600 tons per acre. The quantity of mud dredged at the Victoria and Albert Docks during the past three years amounts to an average of 280,000 tons per annum. The plan of the Albert Dock is very convenient, and could hardly be improved upon. It will be noticed that the quays are of great length, and straight, so that the various berths can be divided from time to time into suitable divisions for any length of ship. In regard to depth, some ships are now being built too deep for this dock, but the Dock Company intend in any future extension that the depth shall be 36ft. The two entrances at Galleons are almost at right angles to the river, but no difficulty is experienced in locking the longest vessels that can come to the dock as the jetties or timber piers are carried well out into the river. The depth of the water at the new Galleons entrance on the sill is sufficient to pass any ship that in the present state of the river can come up so high, as the sill is deeper than the bed of the river. At many ports similarly situated ships when unable to enter the docks at neap tides are able to lie off the entrance and there be lightened by discharging a part of their cargo. This cannot be done in the Port of London, except at Tilbury, where it is never necessary.

See 874–7

843. If the Thames were deepened throughout to 30 feet as far as this point, would that assist the docks?—Very materially, because, although ships can, on the top of the tide, come up now, it would be a very great advantage if they could remain in the river a longer time. Now they have just time to get up on the top of the tide and go in. It would be very much safer, and would avoid a good deal of risk, if they were not afraid of being caught if they were a little bit late.

844. And you would find that the ships that want 30 feet of water would come in there if the river was deepened, in preference to going to Tilbury?—Yes.

845. For many reasons?—Yes, for many reasons.

846. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) If a ship is caught by fog between Gravesend and the Victoria Docks, she is in a very awkward position, is she not?—Yes, she is in a very dangerous position.

847. She may not be able to work backwards and forwards?—That is so. I remember once two ships on two different occasions trying to get into a dock and something went wrong, and one of them fell back and had to be beached further down. Besides that there is the time. Although if you work out the number of ships in each dock in the course of a year it will only come to a very few per day, still it may happen that six or seven will come on one day. Of course, they would be very much pinched for time, and if anything happened to one of them, with others behind, the others would have to drop down stream as quickly as they could with the falling tide.

848. (*Chairman.*) There is rather a rush of vessels at certain times, I suppose, instead of having them distributed evenly during the year?—Yes.

849. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) How much land would be required over and above what you have now got?—Do you mean for the extension of the Albert?

850. Yes?—45 acres.

851. You would have to purchase 45 acres?—Yes.

852. Would that be all the land available which is not built upon?—No. It would be all that we should require.

853. Would other land remain unbuilt upon?—Yes, a considerable area would remain unbuilt upon.

854. Can you give us an idea how much land would remain which would be suitable for dock extension?—I do not think you can extend practically the docks any further down on that side.

855. No further southwards?—No, because at one part we come just on to the margin where they are building, and although there would be a large number of acres left it would not be sufficiently wide to make a third dock, as it were.

856. These plans which you have put in do not show the building land?—No.

857. Do you find that there are many ships now that approach 30 feet draught of water?—No.

858. Do you know what your dockmasters demand in the way of water under the keel when coming over the sill?—They generally say 6 inches.

859. Do they run it as fine as 6 inches?—Yes. We know they do run it as fine as that, because they sometimes cut the chains of the gates at the bottom, and they do not stand up more than 3 inches or 4 inches.

860. I was just going to ask you are your sills diminished in depth by a chain?—Yes. That could soon be got over, because in our new gates we have put hydraulic rams instead of chains. In the South-West India Dock I am carrying the chains down. You know the system?

861. Yes, to avoid going on to the sill?—Yes.

See 643-650

362. You heard Mr. Cater Scott saying that he could take into the Albert Docks all the biggest ships that have been built. He gave us a list?—All except 30.

863. He mentioned the "Oceanic" and the "Lucania?"—The 30 that would not go in are over 536 feet in length. We cannot take anything more than 536 feet in length into the Albert Dock.

864. Because of the lock?—Yes. The lock is only 550 feet, and you want about 12 feet clear.

865. For the gates to move?—Yes.

866. Therefore they cannot take in any of those large ships that were mentioned?—No, they cannot take those in.

867. I understood Mr. Cater Scott to say they could take them into the Albert Dock?—No, Tilbury. He said: "Only 18 English and 9 foreign ships out of the above 120 are over 536 feet in length." I think there are about 30 ships afloat that could not get in as regards length.

868. These large ships could not be taken in without an alteration and a new entrance?—No.

869. Is it the experience at the Albert Docks that the sheds are wide enough for all purposes?—Yes, I should say that they are too wide. Of course the modern way is to land things on to the quay, sort them in the shed, and then pass them out at the back. I think 120 feet is quite a maximum for trucking purposes, and we would far sooner have the double-floor sheds. They were not originally built, because in the first place such a very large proportion of the cargo goes over the side that they are not necessary, and, secondly, in the first instance it would have been a very costly thing to build these double-floor sheds, because there would have had to have been so much more foundation.

870. I suppose you will agree that the great tendency of modern trade is to get the ships unloaded and away again with the greatest possible despatch?—Yes.

871. And do you consider, with the experience of the Royal Albert Dock, that the quays and sheds are wide enough for modern practice?—No, not if all the cargoes had to be landed on the quays; but the London practice is to put a certain portion over the side and a certain portion on to the quays. If it were compulsory to put all the cargoes on to the quays then the sheds would have to be extended.

872. Made wider?—Or have an upper floor. I should recommend an upper floor—not have them made wider.

873. And you say that so long as the traffic remains as it is now, and so large a proportion goes over the side into lighters, the sheds are adequate?—Yes, ample.

See 842.

874. Now, with regard to the dredging in the dock, which you gave the figures of, is that exclusively inside the dock, or do you dredge outside?—No, we never dredge outside the Albert Dock.

875. Do you give the cost of that particular dock?—I do not give it in this paper, but it is in the other evidence. I cannot give you that at the moment. I can give you the total for the docks.

See 5580

876. Perhaps afterwards you can give us your table of all the docks?—Yes.

877. Distinguishing from any dredging inside and outside?—Yes.

878. I do not know whether you heard the evidence of Mr. More as to the programme which the Thames Conservancy have set for themselves as to deepening the river?—No, I was not here.

879. The programme which the Thames Conservancy have now in view is to dredge from the Nore to Gravesend to a depth of 26ft. at low water; from Gravesend to Crayford Ness to a depth of 24ft., and from Crayford Ness to Albert Dock to a depth of 22ft. I do not know whether you are aware how much has been done towards that programme?—I fancy very little has been done. Down below Gravesend they have done a great deal of dredging, but I do not think they have done much above.

880. You are not aware of any?—I am not aware of any above.

881. What do you say as to the adequacy of the depth of 22ft. at low water for the conduct of the trade at the Albert Dock?—I do not think it is sufficient, but my opinion is that if the river was deepened very much up to the Albert Dock, it must be continued and tapered off a certain amount. I am afraid that if we deepened the river down below and stopped suddenly at the Albert Dock, the check to the tide would be something like as at Chepstow—the tide would go up suddenly and flood the banks.

882. There is a further programme from the Albert Dock to the Millwall Dock of 18ft.?—Yes; I should think that up there it would be sufficient.

883. Then I think you told us that the depth of water at present in the centre of the river at low water is 20ft.?—At the Albert Dock.

884. At Galleons Reach?—Yes, but it is not 20ft. up to that point. The pool is 20ft. There is shoal water lower down.

885. Do you know anything at all about the number of shoals below that?—I know nothing beyond the Admiralty Chart.

886. Have you refreshed your memory with the Admiralty Chart, so that you can tell us what the limiting depth is?—Yes. Immediately opposite the Albert Dock it is 20ft. in the centre, but at either side for quite one-third of the river it is only about 14ft. or 15ft. That is rather serious, because all our big vessels swing just below the entrance. The way they enter is this. On a rising tide they swing round and then drop down stern foremost across the entrance, come against the timber jetties, and then are hauled in round the curved jetties. Therefore they require a considerable width below the dock entrance for them to swing round safely, and it is only just the very centre of the river that is 20ft. That would not allow a ship to swing.

887. The Thames Conservancy propose a width of 500ft. and a depth of 22 ft.?—That would not be sufficient, because these ships will be, we hope at any rate until we get a new entrance, 536ft., so it would hardly allow a ship to swing safely.

888. They would want something more than their length to swing safely?—Yes. Then below the entrance there are many places where there is not more than 15ft. or 16ft. right across the whole width of the river.

889. As I say, the programme of the Thames Conservancy is to make a channel 500ft. wide and 22ft. deep up to the Albert Dock?—I think the 500ft. would be wide enough until we reach the swinging place, if we widened it to enable vessels to swing.

890. Have you any idea of the depth of water the pilots allow under the keel of vessels when they go down?—I do not know at all.

891. Something must be taken off the 22ft. for safety, I suppose?—Yes, and of course in gales of wind the water runs sometimes lower or higher.

892. (*Mr. Ellis.*) To sum up this matter, may I take it that you wish to leave us with the impression that in your opinion as an engineer a great and continuous deepening of the channel of the Thames ought to take place?—Certainly.

893. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With reference to what you have told us about the possible extension of the Albert Dock, what would you consider should be the depth of water in the river? You must bear in mind, of course, that you say that you are going to bring deeper ships in?—I think, as far as the docks are concerned, if they could have a pool there of 30ft. at low water, it would not matter very much what was down below; but still we know from experience that it is very difficult to keep pools free from mud. As far as the Dock Companies are concerned, they would like to have water opposite their entrance, so that if anything went wrong—if a ship ran into their gates, or anything happened—the ship could be taken away, so that she would not run aground; otherwise we much prefer that they should come in on the top of the tides. We do not want them to come in at low water, because the mud is a disastrous expense now, and if they came in at low water it would be worse.

894. In answer to Sir John Wolfe-Barry with regard to the depth required and the width required for the ships swinging, you would require a greater depth of water, I take it, for the new entrances?—Yes; except that of course the ships would still be able to come in on the top of the tide.

895. And you say that the depth of the pool that you wish to have outside the entrance would be 30ft.?—I should like to have the pool so deep that at low

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water the largest ship that could come up would be able to float if anything went wrong.

896. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Of course, a pool of that kind does not get rid of the difficulty of delays by fog or other causes?—No.

897. (*Chairman.*) Now will you go on to the next part of your evidence?—The East India Docks were commenced in 1803 and completed in 1806. They are situated in a sharp bend of the river near the mouth of the River Lea, and are about 6½ miles from London Bridge by water, and nearly 4 miles from Fenchurch Street by rail or road. The total area of this property is 71 acres, including a water area of 33 acres. The docks consist of a basin, an import and an export dock, and are entered from the river by two locks. The depth of water in the centre of the river opposite the entrances is 15ft. at low water, the depth shoaling to about 8ft. at low water at the piers. The principal entrance for ships is the lower lock, which is 100ft. long, and 65ft. wide, with a depth of 31ft. on the sill, which would give 27ft. at high water at neap tides. The Joint Committee dredged the river bed at the entrance to 31ft. 6in. below Trinity. That is immediately opposite the gates. All ships enter the dock through this lock on a level. The upper lock is only 210ft. 6in. long, 47ft. wide, with a depth of 24ft. 10in. on the sill. This lock is used by barges only. It is impossible to lengthen either lock to any extent, owing to the narrowness of the strip of land between the basin and the river. The basin has an area of 6 acres, and a depth of 33ft. in the centre, and alongside the two quays, and provides two berths for large ships, one being about 400ft. in length, and the other 500ft. These two berths have warehouses running their whole length, and behind these are other warehouses. A line of railway over a swing bridge connects the basin with the lines in the dock. The upper dock in the plan is the import dock, and the lower one is the export one. The import dock is approached from the basin by a lock 209ft. long, 47ft. 9in. wide, and 24ft. 10in. deep. The level of the water in these docks is not maintained by pumping, therefore a deduction of 4ft. or 5ft. must be made for neap tides. The import dock has an area of 17¼ acres, with a depth of 26ft. Its length is 1,410ft., and width 535ft. Eight timber jetties project from the quay on the north side, and the dock is surrounded with sheds, behind which are warehouses. The export dock is entered from the basin through a passage with gates 60ft. wide, having a depth of 30ft. The area of the export dock is 8 acres, being 778ft. in length and 436ft. in width, with a depth of 26ft. 10in. There are two jetties projecting from the west quay of this dock. There are sheds on the north, south, and west quays, with large warehouses behind the sheds on the north quay. There are about 8,000 lineal feet of quay space available for discharging ships in this dock system, or, in other words, quay berths for 23 ships of an average length of 350ft. There are no lines of railway in the import dock, but rails are carried along the north quay of the export dock. The terminal station of the London and Blackwall Railway is between the south quay of the export dock and the river. In front of the station is the Brunswick Pier and wharf, where steamers conveying passengers up and down the river call regularly, and continental steamers discharge and load horses and cattle. The total floor area of the sheds and warehouses is 871,200 square feet. There is also in these docks accommodation for the storage of wine, etc., in the vaults. There are 26 hydraulic cranes and 51 hand cranes in this dock, 12 hydraulic lifts and 19 hydraulic jiggers for dealing with cargoes of ships. I daresay your Lordship knows that a jigger is like a crane, but instead of having a jib the chain is passed over a pulley. It is merely a hauling engine for dealing with cargoes of ships. Hydraulic power is laid on all round the quays, the power being furnished by four pumping engines. The dredging amounts on the average to 65,000 tons per annum, which gives about 2,000 tons per acre. This large amount is caused by the necessity of working the ships and barges in and out on the level, the locks being too short for locking as explained above.

898. Are these docks sufficiently large for that class of trade up to the present time?—Yes, up to the present time. They are always well filled with ships. They supply a demand. They take ships of a certain class only; a great many small sailing vessels go into the East India Docks.

899. Are there many dutiable goods in the warehouses?—That I cannot say.

900. Are there any vessels with wines and spirits?—Yes; of course they must be dutiable, but I cannot speak anything about them. There are vessels for wines, of course—quite small vessels. In the basins ships of considerable size go, ships of 450ft. by 50ft. beam go into the basins.

901. Is that always full?—Yes, that is always full, but there are only two berths there. They are always used by Donald Currie's boats.

902. Are there any assigned berths to a particular company?—Yes, I believe those are assigned to them. I have just been informed that the wine I have mentioned that there is accommodation for is more or less for the shipping companies, and not the trade. It is not used much by the trade.

903. It is for the purpose of provisioning ships?—Yes.

904. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Could these docks be improved to any extent, in your opinion?—Yes, they have been improved of late years. The cut from the basin into the export dock was made some four or five years ago, which has enabled much larger vessels to go in, and it has once or twice been in the contemplation of the Joint Committee to remove the lock that now separates the basin from the import dock, and put a deep cut there instead, so as to take a larger class of vessel into the import dock. But that has not been necessary, nor is it necessary, at the present moment, because the dock is well filled with small ships.

905. Therefore it fulfils a want?—Yes, and if there is a further want it can be dealt with.

906. And I presume it could not be altered to any great extent without a very large cost?—I suppose it would cost about £100,000 probably.

907. That is only to make that one alteration?—Yes, that one alteration.

908. But the whole dock itself could not be deepened and enlarged in any possible way with regard to the surrounding land, I take it?—Yes, in the same way as in the case of the West India Dock, which we are coming to next. A false quay is put in front of the masonry quay at a lower level, and then the ground is dredged up to that point only, and slopes up to the old wall. By slightly reducing the area of the dock, with a false quay you can get the centre part deeper without undermining the foundations of your walls. That has been done in several cases. In fact, in the export dock a few years ago we found the foundations slipping a little, so we drove timber piling in front, and that might be safely dredged down to 28ft.

909. My question was more with regard to the power of enlarging the docks?—No, not enlarging.

910. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is the basin used as a lock?—It is practically used as a dock for these larger vessels, because the ships must all pass in on a level, so that we cannot keep the water above the tide of the day, and, of course, then all the other gates can be opened; so it makes no difference.

911. At neap tides do you lower the water in both the docks down to the level of the river?—Yes, practically.

912. I see it is marked here that the depth is 33ft. on the plan, but I suppose you must deduct from that 4ft. or 5ft. for neaps?—Yes.

913. Therefore the available depth is 28ft.?—Yes.

914. I mean ships after discharging in the basin would be exposed to the fact that the water might be lower than the 33ft.?—Yes.

915. And there is no power of extension of premises here?—I think not, unless it was some very big scheme of taking up the River Lea. There is a very great bend in the Lea there, which, of course, might be converted into docks, but I do not think it is quite practicable.

916. (*Chairman.*) Now, will you go on to the next docks?—The West India Docks are the oldest docks in London. They were commenced in 1799, and completed in 1802. They are situated a short distance up the river from the East India Dock, and are six miles distant from London Bridge by water, nearly three miles distant from Fenchurch Street by rail, and about three miles from the busiest part of the City by road. The total area of this

dock system, including Poplar Dock (which is let to the North London Railway Company on a long lease), is 231 acres, with a water area (exclusive of the Poplar Dock) of rather more than 100 acres. The system comprises three parallel docks extending across the Isle of Dogs, the two upper ones being connected with the river on either side by cuts into a basin, which in turn communicates with the river by a lock. The lowest or South-West India Dock is the old City canal. This also communicates with the river on both sides, on the Limehouse side by a cut, and on the Blackwall side by a cut into a basin, and thence by a lock into the river. This latter basin is connected with the above-mentioned basin on the Blackwall side by means of a junction dock. In this way the three docks are all interconnected. The depth of water in the centre of the river opposite the "Blackwall" entrance is 17ft. at low water, shoaling to 12ft. at lock gates. The lock, which was rebuilt five or six years ago, is 480ft. long (and not 430ft. as figured on the plan)—there is a clerical error on the plan—60ft. wide and 30ft. on the sill, giving a depth of 26ft. at neap tides. This entrance leads into a basin, called the Blackwall basin, which communicates by passages with the import and export docks, and also with the junction dock. The import and export docks are also connected with the river through Limehouse Basin by a lock into the river. This lock is not now used. The level of the water in these docks is always kept up to Trinity level by pumping, and whenever the draught of vessels demands it, the level is maintained at 18in. above Trinity. This is effected by powerful engines placed near the Blackwall entrance. The river entrance to the South-West India Dock is 300ft. long, 27ft. deep, and 55ft. wide. When I say 55ft. wide, that is on quay level. There is a slight batter on the walls, which reduces the width at sill level to 52ft. The lock is at present being deepened to 29ft. and lengthened to 480ft. This dock has also an up-river entrance at Limehouse, which is not now used. All the locks are crossed by public road swing bridges. These bridges, which cross the centre of the locks of almost all the Joint Committee's docks, except at Tilbury and at Galleon's, cause considerable delays to the locking, and are a continuous source of trouble and annoyance. I will now pass to the basins and docks. The Blackwall basin has an area of 6¾ acres, with a depth varying from 30ft. to 32ft. The passages from the basin into the import and export docks are 60ft. wide and 30ft. deep.

917. Is that at spring tides, or at neap tides?—It is always maintained at Trinity, or rather, I should say, it is a foot and sometimes 18 inches above Trinity. These passages are crossed by the Millwall Railway, which is carried on swing bridges. Passenger trains run in each direction every quarter of an hour during the daytime, in addition to the goods trains. The passages are also crossed by the Joint Committee's swing bridges for cart traffic. Out of the Blackwall basin there also lead a lock into the Poplar Dock for the North London Railway Company, a graving dock which is let to the West India Graving Dock Company, and a passage into the Junction Dock. This basin is only used as a passage for ships and barges going into the docks, there being no quay accommodation there for ships of any size. The import dock has an area of 30 acres. It is 2,600ft. long, 500ft. wide, and has a depth of 25ft. on the north side, but at present only 20ft. on the south side. That may be taken as an illustration of how the docks are being deepened as required. It was 20ft. before. On the north side, by putting a false quay, it has been deepened to 25ft. Some four or five years ago a false quay on timber piles was built on the north side, which has enabled deeper water to be obtained. A similar quay is now being constructed on the west end to provide an additional deep berth. As already stated, this dock can be and is, when necessary, maintained 1ft. or more above Trinity, which would give a depth of 26ft. at the quay. Six of the larger class of vessels can be accommodated at this false quay. There are 11 large warehouses on the north side of this dock, capable of accommodating 95,000 tons of goods, each warehouse being fitted with hydraulic cranes. In front of the warehouses there are open sheds for the protection of goods, and lines of rails are carried at the back of the warehouses. On the south side of the import dock at each end are large wood wharves. The centre of the quay is set apart for the storage of rum and spirits. There is extensive vault accommodation here, also vats capable of holding from 500 to 25,000 gallons for mixing, blending, &c. There is also a cold storage building capable of containing 100,000 sheep on the north quay. The export dock has an area of 24 acres. It is 2,600ft. long, and 400ft. wide, but has only a depth of 22ft., which can, however, be raised to 23ft. 6in. by pumping. It is in the contemplation of the Committee to deepen this dock, and place false quays in front of the existing walls. There are six jetties projecting from the southern quay. At present this dock is only used by a smaller class of vessels. There is communication between the import and the export docks at the west end through the Limehouse basin, which has an area of about 1½ acres. This basin is only used at present for the passage of barges and as a convenient place for the repair of the Committee's floating craft. Between the Blackwall basin and the South-West India basin is the Junction Dock before mentioned. It is 1 acre in extent, being 320ft. long and 150ft. wide. There are lock gates at either end, the passages being 45ft. wide, with a depth of 25ft. Around this Junction Dock and along the quays of the export dock are extensive wood sheds, furnished with travelling cranes on overhead gantrys, many of them worked by electricity. There are also slipways where vessels with timber cargoes can discharge from portholes. The South-West India Dock basin has an area of 5¼ acres, with a depth of 29ft. The water in this basin and also in the South-West India Dock itself can be raised 18in. by allowing the water to flow from the Blackwall basin, where it is pumped. This basin has on the south side sheds and lines of railway. The passage into the main dock is 55ft. wide—that is, 52ft. on the sill with the batter I should say—and 27ft. deep, with a pair of gates. This passage also is crossed by the Millwall Railway and a footbridge. The South-West India Dock itself is 2,650ft. long by 450ft. wide, and has a depth of 29ft., with a water area of 26⅔ acres. On the north side there are seven timber jetties projecting from the quay, which will, as ships grow longer, probably be removed, so that the ships may lie alongside the quay. On the north quay there are lines of rails and single floor sheds. On the south quay there are extensive warehouses and double-floor sheds with lines of rails running behind them. There is a cold storage warehouse here capable of holding 14,000 carcases of mutton. The length of quays available for ships discharging in this group of docks is 21,000ft., and the quays can accommodate between 50 and 60 ships of the class that use these docks. The floor area of the sheds and warehouses is no less than 4,377,780 square feet, and is capable of storing 180,000 tons of goods; 37,000 puncheons of wine and spirits can be stored in the vaults connected with these warehouses. To provide for the carriage of the goods, there are 12 miles of railway and 4 locomotives, the lines being connected with the Great Eastern Railway at Millwall Junction. There are two installations of hydraulic pumps, and hydraulic mains are laid down on all the quays. The docks are illuminated by electricity, which is generated at an installation on the north quay of the Import Dock. There are 20 steam cranes, and one electric crane at these docks, 135 hydraulic cranes and lifts, 120 hand cranes, 23 electric travellers for moving timber, and 29 hydraulic jiggers, also a floating crane that will lift 20 tons at 29ft. radius, and another that will lift 6 tons at 35ft. radius. Of the swing bridges, of which there are 13, 10 are worked by hydraulic power and three by hand; there are also two drawbridges worked by hydraulic power. The dredging in these docks amounts on the average to 63,000 tons per annum, equal to about 630 tons per acre. These docks, the oldest in London, are an illustration of the foresight of those who were responsible for their design, as at the present day there are few docks anywhere built on so good a plan for accommodating large ships of various lengths. It is true that as ships have grown in length and altered in shape it has been necessary to reconstruct or enlarge the dock entrances of nearly all the docks in London, and this has in fact been done at these West India Docks at the Blackwall entrance, and is now being carried on at the South-West India Dock. But it has not been necessary in London, in order to meet the demands of modern shipping, to wipe out the old docks and construct new ones, as has been necessary at many other ports in the kingdom. There are few docks in the kingdom so suitably planned for accommodating large ships as the Albert Docks and the West India Docks. It is in depth only that ships are beginning to outgrow them, and this can be remedied should improvements in the river enable deeper vessels to navigate the river to them. Tilbury, as before stated,

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is deep enough for all present purposes. There are no docks under the control of the Joint Committee that have become obsolete, as even the smaller and shallower docks are well filled with shipping of the smaller class which has to be provided for. What is now required is additional accommodation for the largest vessels, not to replace small docks by larger ones, as the small docks still serve a useful purpose.

918. Are you satisfied with the present depth of the river opposite these docks, or do you think it ought to be deepened?—Only for the same reason that I gave before. I think that the general approach up to these docks is sufficient.

919. You apply to these the same observations that you made to us on the other docks?—Yes.

920. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is there any limitation of depth of dredging in the river over the Blackwall Tunnel?—I am afraid I forget what the depth is.

921. You do not know what depth it is below the bed of the river?—No.

922. What depth of lock are you going to construct at the South Dock?—We are going to make the sill 29ft. below Trinity, which is the same depth as the dock itself, and make it 480ft. long instead of 300ft.

923. You consider 480ft. long enough?—Quite long enough I think for that position of the river.

924. You take off something, I suppose, for the gates and for the manœuvring of the vessels?—Yes. It will take the class of vessels likely to come up there. I do not think any ship over about 450ft. is ever likely to come up there under any circumstances.

925. With regard to the railway, it seems an extraordinary arrangement, closing all these passages. Which traffic has to give way—the railway traffic?—I cannot say legally exactly what it is. I know practically that the trains are stopped by the ships, very often, by agreement.

926. The railway, I suppose, came there after the docks were made?—Yes; a portion was made by the old West India Dock Company.

927. Where does it terminate?—It goes down to Millwall Docks. It would be a good thing, some day, if now that the western entrances are not used, they could take the railways down there, and keep the eastern side clear.

928. I was going to ask whether there has been any proposal of that kind?—There has been no proposal, but I have often thought of it. But it would be rather a costly business, I am afraid, to acquire the property.

929. It is a great improvement, you think, to the working of the dock?—Very great. Take a ship going now into an import dock. There is a public road across the lock; then she has to wait for the railway bridge as well as the Dock Company's bridge (which latter is of course nothing, because that would have to be opened). There are two trains in every quarter of an hour, one in either direction, in addition to the goods trains.

930. Of course, once a train is signalled, the railway bridge is hopelessly stopped against ships?—Yes.

931. Is there any land belonging to the Company here which is not occupied?—A very small piece on the south side of the South Dock basin, and just a little at the south-west corner which is not occupied. It is a low piece of ground just behind the sheds, near the angle, but a very small area.

932. Did you say you were constructing a new lock to the South Dock?—No; we are altering the old one.

933. At what cost?—£40,000. It will be about £50,000 altogether, because we shall put in a sewer for the County Council. The whole cost will be about £50,000.

934. You spoke of other things being in contemplation, such as deepening berths?—Yes, in the export dock.

935. What is the total amount of money that you have in contemplation to spend at the West India Dock?—I have not seen any estimate later than the one I made a year ago. That was £90,000.

936. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I think it is in respect of these docks that you have electricity as an agent of motive power. Are we to take it that you have not it at Tilbury at all?—We only use electricity at Tilbury for lighting purposes.

937. Not for motive power?—No.

938. Nor at the Victoria and Albert?—No, I do not think we use it there at all. It is chiefly used in the West India Dock for the wood. I beg pardon. I have just been told that recently a firm have put up some electric cranes at the Albert Dock, and the Joint Committee are supplying power. I did not know that.

939. At the East India Dock have you any electrical motive power?—No. Practically, apart from what I have just been told, the West India Dock is the only place where the power is used in that way. But we do supply power to small works. Perhaps a man has a grindstone to work, or something of that sort.

940. Are you satisfied with it for dock purposes?—I think so. I do not say that I should introduce it for many purposes at those old docks, because the hydraulic pipes are laid down, and there are many expenses. At the wood wharves we find the electric cranes are very useful. The 6-ton cranes lift these large baulks. Twenty of them have now been either built or converted from old steam, and are working wonderfully well.

941. You tell us very little about the Poplar Dock. Is that leased to one of the railway companies?—It was a lease granted by the East and West India Dock Company to the North London Railway of Poplar Dock, then known as the Timber Pond Dock. That was a lease of that land and land round it connecting with the dock for 999 years from 1st July, 1850, at a yearly rent of £1,200 a year.

942. Then the Joint Committee that now is the owner has no control over that?—No, not beyond the 999 years' lease.

943. For all practical purposes it has passed out of their hands?—Yes, excepting this: they have the control of a ground landlord to prevent them doing certain things, although they cannot interfere with their business in any way.

944. They cannot extend it, or incorporate it for their own purposes, without cancelling the lease?—No.

945. (*Chairman.*) Except, of course, by applying to Parliament——

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Quite so.

(*Witness.*) I am told that certain rates for passing through the basin, and so on, are charged.

946. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Who built the Poplar Dock?—I believe they built it themselves, on an old timber pond.

947. The railway company went to the expense of making the dock, and the £1,200 a year is in the nature of a ground-rent?—Just so.

948. (*Chairman.*) Now, will you go to the next dock?—London Docks. The area of this property is exactly 100 acres, 40 acres of which represent water space. It is situated at a short distance below the Tower Bridge, and therefore close to the City. The docks were commenced in 1800 and completed in 1805. There are four entrances, two at Shadwell, one at Wapping, and the Hermitage entrance; the last-named is now closed, and not used. The depth of water in the river opposite to Shadwell is 11ft. at low water. The lower entrance at Shadwell, known as the new Shadwell Lock, is 350ft. in length, 60ft. wide, with a depth of 28ft. on the sill, which gives an available depth of water at neap tides of 24ft. The old entrance, which is very little used now, is 180ft. long, 45ft. wide, and 24ft. on the sill. Both these locks are crossed in the middle by swing bridges carrying a public road, and this naturally interferes very much with the locking of vessels and causes delay. At the Wapping entrance the depth of water in the centre of the river is about 15ft., shoaling to about 9ft. at the dock entrance. The lock is 170ft. long, 40ft. wide, and 23ft. at the sill. This entrance is almost entirely used by barges, and most of them pass in and out on the level. Starting from the Shadwell entrances there are two basins, Shadwell new basin, and Shadwell old basin. Between these and the Eastern Dock are locks; that from the old basin is not now used, but the lock between the new basin and the Eastern Dock is 350ft. long and 60ft. wide, with 28ft. on the basin sill and 21ft. on the dock sill. These locks are also crossed by swing bridges carrying public roads. Shadwell new basin has an area of 5 acres, and a depth of 28ft. It has quays with large warehouses and sheds on three sides of it. The old Shadwell basin, which is connected with the new basin, has an area of a little more than one acre, and a depth of 25ft. This basin is not

much used by ships. The Eastern Dock has an area of 6¼ acres. It has a depth of 21ft; but as the level of the water is raised by pumping from 1ft. to 18in. above Trinity, the available depth is greater. The depth could not be increased, as the Thames Tunnel passes underneath. In this system of docks the water level is maintained by pumping, in rather a different way from what it is at the other docks. The basins are not pumped, only the docks, and that enables vessels to go in through the basin lock on the level without lowering the water in the docks themselves. This dock also is surrounded with spacious warehouses. It is connected with the Tobacco Dock, which is only about half an acre in extent, and practically affords only one berth, but there are very large warehouses built on either side of it. Between the Eastern and Tobacco Docks is a passage 200ft. long, 45ft. wide, and 21ft. on the floor. This passage is crossed by a public road-bridge. From the Tobacco Dock to the Western Dock is another passage 200ft. long, 45ft. wide, and 20ft. deep. This passage is only crossed by a dock bridge. The Western Dock has an area of 20 acres, the depth being 21ft. There is an export jetty projecting from the western quay, and the whole dock is surrounded by sheds and very large warehouses. There is communication from the Western Dock to the river through Wapping basin. Between the dock and this basin there is a lock 170ft. long, 40ft. wide, with 23ft. on the basin sill and 20ft. on the dock sill. Wapping basin, which has an area of three acres, and a depth of 23ft., is entered from the river by the Wapping lock already described, and is provided with quays and sheds, and the company's workshops are situated here. The level of the water in these docks, but not in the basins, is maintained by pumping. I have already mentioned that. The method in use is rather different from that at the other docks, as there are two sets of pumps, one drawing water from the river and the other pumping it from the basin, both delivering into the dock. There is a great advantage in this arrangement, as the water in the basin, having deposited its mud there, but little mud is carried into the docks themselves. It is much more economical to remove mud from the basins and entrances than it is from the docks. At the quays, which run along the entire docks, vessels are berthed up to 330ft. in length and 24ft. in draught in the basin and 20ft. in the docks. The quays are about 12,000ft. in length, and will therefore accommodate 36 ships of this size. But although the lock will only dock shorter vessels, vessels up to 400ft. go up the lock into the basin on a level. Any ships that want to go into the Western Dock, which is a very important one for wool, if there is not water enough in passing through the tobacco cuts, where the navigation is a little difficult for ships of certain shape, owing to the inverts being rather sharp there, they lighten in the basin, and then go on into the dock after they have reduced their draught a little. There are no railways in these docks, as the quays were covered with warehouses nearly to the water's edge long before railways were invented; but at the western end of the Western Dock goods can be received by railway from the East Smithfield depot. This is situated on the opposite side of the road, and from it wagons can be brought by a bridge over the road into the docks, and lowered by a lift. The immense floor area of the sheds and warehouses, which is no less than 3,092,000 square feet, is capable of containing 174,000 tons of goods; 83,500 pipes of wine or spirits can be stored in the vaults in these warehouses. In rear of the warehouses and vaults are the cart areas, in which vans and carts receive their loads direct from the warehouse and vaults. This dock has within the last few weeks been illuminated by electric light, the installation having been made near the Hermitage entrance. Hydraulic mains are laid all round these docks, the power being obtained from pumping engines recently placed in the St. Katharine Dock. There is one steam crane capable of lifting 25 tons, a hand crane to lift 20 tons, 118 30-cwt. hydraulic cranes, 14 hand cranes, and one small steam crane. There are, in addition, 18 hydraulic jiggers and 22 hydraulic lifts. The average amount of dredging carried out in the London Dock is 24,000 tons per annum, equal to 600 tons per acre.

949. You say this dock is always full?—Always full.

950. And you do not think that it wants any alteration to meet the requirements of the trade?—No, I think not. I think that any alteration should be in the form of addition, not alteration.

951. Are the warehouses full?—That I cannot say, but the warehouses on the quays are practically sheds. They take the goods out of the ships and put them into the warehouses. In fact, you may consider them so many storage sheds.

952. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are the walls battering in the various entrances?—Not as a rule. The south dock entrance batters from 55ft. at the top to 52ft. at the bottom.

953. Do you say the south dock?—The South-West India Dock.

954. I was talking of the London Dock. Are the entrances at the Tobacco Dock and the Eastern Dock and the Western Dock battering in size?—Yes, they are to a certain extent. The only ones really that are very bad in that way are the cuts into the Tobacco Dock, the one on the western side and the one on the eastern side. There there is a very sharp invert, and a sort of curve batter. So much so that at the extreme edge there would not be more than 10ft. of water in depth. It comes up with a very sharp curve.

955. As you know very well, the modern ship is like a square box in cross section?—Yes; but fortunately the very modern ships built in that way do not go into the London Docks.

956. Perhaps that is because they could not get in there. At any rate they could not go into that dock if they wanted to?—No.

957. Therefore, these widths and depths are, to some extent, more favourable to the dock than would appear?—They are not, except in the case of these old passages in the London Docks. In all the other locks you practically get an efficient depth of the depths given. Take the Albert Dock, for instance. It only comes up 18in. just at the edges, which would not affect a ship in any way, but in the lock that is now being altered at the South West India Dock, it came up 5ft., and that is why the alteration is being made; the new invert will be flat.

958. I was drawing attention particularly to the London Docks?—In those passages they are very much narrower at the bottom through the curvature.

959. Are there any proposals to spend money at this London Dock in the way of improvements?—It has often been thought of to try to open up those passages, but it has always been looked upon as too costly.

960. Therefore you think they will remain as they are?—I think so.

961. And to that extent the London Docks will always be subject to limitation in accommodation of vessels?—Yes, unless improvements were made through the Wapping entrance. Of course they might be made in that way, but the present route is to go in at the Shadwell entrance, and pass through the Eastern and Tobacco Docks into the Western.

962. I suppose the Shadwell is a very much more convenient entrance for ships?—Yes.

963. It points better?—Yes, and not only that, but it is so much larger. No ships can enter Wapping or those higher entrances except on the level.

964. Why should it be so expensive to make these alterations?—The ground is very bad.

965. The foundation is very bad?—Yes.

966. No estimate has been made of the cost, I suppose?—No.

967. Therefore there are no proposals for improving the London Docks?—No, I am not aware of any.

968. (*Chairman.*) I suppose that in course of time the new style of vessels, the square beam vessels, will eventually prevail?—Oh, yes.

969. And these docks, which are only suited to the old style of vessel, will, in time, become obsolete?—The entrances will have to be altered.

970. Not yet, but in course of time they will become obsolete?—The entrances will, not the docks themselves.

971. I mean the entrances. Of course, you cannot get into the docks without altering the entrances?—Just so.

972 Then will you go to the next dock?—The St. Katharine Docks are situated immediately below the Tower Bridge, and are united to the London Docks by bridges across Nightingale Lane. They were commenced in 1825 and completed in 1828. The property contains 23 acres, including a water area of 10 acres. It is entered from the river by a single lock. The

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depth of water in the centre of the river at low water is 12ft. The lock is 180ft. in length, 45ft. wide, with 28ft. on the outer sill and 24ft. on the inner sill. There is a public road swing-bridge across the entrance. This entrance is a case in point. The invert tapers up to only 20ft. at the edges. It is 45ft. wide, but immediately on the edge of the walls it is only 20ft. instead of 24ft. deep. As the level of the water in this dock is not maintained by pumping, there is only an available depth over the inner sill at neap tides of 20ft. The basin has an area of 2 acres, and a depth of 24ft. The quays of this basin are not used by ships for discharging. From the basin there are passages into the Eastern and Western Docks 58ft. long, 45ft. wide and 24ft. deep. The Eastern Dock has an area of 4½ acres and the Western Dock an area of 3¾ acres, with a depth of 24ft. The length of quay available for discharging ships is 5,300 lineal feet, and vessels up to 250ft. in length, with a draught of 24ft., can be berthed here. These docks are entirely surrounded by large warehouses which practically cover the whole of the land area. They are many storeys in height, and are built up to the line of quay at the water edge, the upper floors being carried on massive iron columns over the quay area; that is to say, the quays are underneath the upper floors. There are no railways in this dock, the dock having been constructed before the days of railways. The floor area of the warehouses is 1,655,000 square feet, with accommodation for 86,000 tons of goods, and in the vaults for 37,500 pipes of wine. The hydraulic pumping engines which have recently been placed in this dock provide the power for the hydraulic cranes in this and the London Dock. There is electric light in this dock, which is supplied from the installation in the London Dock and supplemented by some small dynamos situated at the basin. There are 55 hydraulic cranes and 27 hand cranes, 21 hydraulic lifts, and 6 hydraulic jiggers. The dredging of these docks averages 16,000 tons per annum, being equivalent to 1,600 tons per acre.

973. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose there are no proposals for deepening or extending the St. Katharine Dock, or improving it?—No.

974. (*Chairman.*) Does that conclude your evidence?—Yes, on this particular point.

975. Without going into the other questions which we shall deal with hereafter, we may consider that that concludes this portion of your evidence?—Yes.

Recalled 6696.

(Adjourned to Thursday next, November 15th, at 12 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

FOURTH DAY.

Thursday, 15th November 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The EARL EGERTON OF TATTON (*Chairman*).

Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

(*Chairman.*) I will call upon the Secretary to read a Resolution of the Commission.

The Secretary read the following resolution:—

In order to carry out the decision of the Commissioners, announced at their last meeting, they have resolved that any persons or public body deeming themselves interested, who wish to appear by counsel, shall make application in writing to the Secretary on or before Tuesday, December 4th, stating the grounds upon which they desire to appear.

That the Commission propose retaining the conduct of the inquiry referred to them entirely in their own hands, but will accept the assistance of such counsel as and when they think necessary.

That all witnesses except as hereinafter mentioned will be called and examined by the Commission.

That if the evidence of any witness shall affect the interest of any persons or body represented by counsel, application may be made to the Commission for leave to cross-examine such witness.

That if it be desired to call any witness not examined by the Commission, counsel must apply for permission to call such witness, who will be examined as the Commission may think fit.

That the extent to which counsel may address the Commission will be determined at a later stage of the inquiry.

Mr. FREDERIC ELIOT DUCKHAM called and examined.

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976. (*Chairman.*) You are general manager and engineer of the Millwall Docks Company?—Yes; I am a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and I have been engineeer of Millwall Docks since 1868; I was formerly at the Victoria (London) Docks. Last year I was appointed general manager and engineer of Millwall Docks. The Millwall Dock Company was incorporated by the Millwall Canal, Wharfs, and Graving Docks Act, 1864, as the Millwall Canal Company. The property of the company is situated on the Isle of Dogs, on the northern shore of the Thames, adjoining the India Docks on their south side. It comprises an area of 233½ acres, of which 205 acres are freehold, and 28½ held on long leases. It may be divided into three parts: (*a*) The part lying to the west of the East Ferry Road, which has been quayed and formed to a level of 5ft. 6in., above high-water mark, and which, with the water area of 35½ acres, the warehouses and other buildings, constitutes the Millwall Dock proper; (*b*) on the other side of the East Ferry Road, a tract of some 58 acres of freehold land and wharf property, originally acquired with a view to its forming part of the docks, but at present partly let on lease and partly applied to various uses in connection with the docks; (*c*) a long-leasehold estate of about 7 acres lying in the fork between the East Ferry Road and the Millwall Extension Railway towards the north-eastern end of the dock property. The river entrance to the docks is 3½ miles below London Bridge. The Millwall Extension of the Blackwall Railway is partly owned and worked by the Millwall Dock Company; it connects the docks by passenger service with the City, via Millwall junction, and for goods with all the railways in the northern and midland districts of England. The docks were constructed between 1865 and 1868, the engineers being Mr. (afterwards Sir) John Fowler and Mr. William Wilson, and the contractors Messrs. Kelk and Aird. The entrance from the River Thames is 80ft. wide, with 28ft. of water over the sills at Trinity high water. It is furnished with three pairs of gates, forming a lock 450ft. in length which can be divided by the middle gates into two locks of 250ft. and 200ft. in length respectively. The depth of the fairway channel of the Thames off Millwall Dock entrance is about 14ft. at low water.

977. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) At spring tides?—Yes. The dock is ⅃ shape, and the principal portion is 350ft. wide; the depth of water varies from 28ft. in the fairway to 24ft. alongside the quay walls. The walls are of brick backed with concrete and coped with blocks of Bromley Fall Stone. The total length of the quay is 3,040 yards. Near the south-east corner there is a dry dock 450ft. long by 65ft. wide, with 20ft. over the blocks at Trinity high water. This is emptied partly by discharge of the water through a culvert into the Thames; the remainder is cleared by pumping. When the undertaking was originated the design was not that it should be an ordinary dock, but should provide convenient sites for wharves, granaries, manufactories, shipbuilding, and other premises requiring large space and constant deep-water frontage. In 1864, when the powers were granted by Parliament, the shipbuilding trade on the Thames was in a very flourishing state, and the river frontage of the island was occupied by shipbuilding yards and other manufacturing premises. The company's works were commenced in the autumn of 1865, and occupied about three years in completion; but in the year 1866 the great financial crisis occurred, which, among other effects, destroyed for the time the shipbuilding industry of the port, and changed the position and prospects of the Millwall Canal Company (as the undertaking was originally called), so that in 1867 the directors were advised to adapt the works for ordinary dock business, and for this purpose equip them with sheds and other appliances, such as a complete system of hydraulic machinery, with a view to more economical working than was possessed at the time by other docks in London. On this footing the docks were opened in 1868, and since then the bulk of the business of the company (the name of which was changed by Act of Parliament in 1870 to Millwall Dock Company) has been ordinary dock business: but some land has been let from time to time for factory

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and other purposes. Hydraulic power is used at Millwall Docks wherever applicable. At the entrance lock there are 30 hydraulic machines used respectively for opening and closing the three pairs of dock gates, for operating the sluices, and for working the capstans which pull the vessels and craft through the lock. These capstans have haulage power varying from one to five tons each. Distributed throughout the docks are 65 hydraulic cranes, most of them of 35cwt. capacity, and movable on rails placed at 7ft. 6in. gauge. Some of these cranes are on the masonry quays, and others are on dolphins. These dolphins are peculiar to the Millwall Docks; they are constructed of timber piles, driven into the bottom of the dock, leaving a width of 40ft. between the dolphin and the quay. They vary from 200ft. to 360ft. in length, and are equipped with hydraulic cranes as well as appliances for use in the discharge of grain. The leading advantage in this arrangement is, that goods requiring to be lifted by crane can be transferred immediately from the barge into the ship, or *vice versa*, at one operation, and where the ship is brought between the dolphin and the quay, the quay cranes as well as the dolphin cranes can be put into use for dealing with the cargo. When grain is being discharged at the dolphin, the cranes are used together with either the self-acting Priestman's skip or a self-discharging bucket. The skip fills itself on board the ship; the bucket has to be filled by hand, but both discharge themselves into hoppers on the dolphins, which have a storage capacity of twenty or thirty tons each, and outlets to a number of weighing machines. These outlets are under the control of the weigher, and the grain, after being weighed, is delivered either in bulk or in sacks into barges. The company has also pneumatic machinery for discharging grain cargoes. For the purposes of lifting heavy machinery, etc., a set of sheer legs of Day and Sumner's patent, having a height of 100ft., and a capacity of 80 tons, is erected on the southern quay. There are also hydraulic cranes of 5 and 15 tons capacity for heavy goods. Hydraulic power is likewise employed for moving the swing bridge, of 500 tons weight and 80ft. span, over the entrance lock for the drawbridge at the entrance of the inner dock, and for working sundry capstans, turntables, lifts, etc. There are five engines available for the production of hydraulic pressure, namely, three collectively of 1,080 horse power at the hydraulic engine house, supplied with steam at 65lbs. per square inch by 10 Lancashire boilers 7ft. in diameter by 22ft. long. From this engine house cast iron hydraulic mains, most of them of 6in. diameter, are laid so as to form a complete circuit of the dock, and have branches as required to the various sections and machinery. There are connected with this circuit three hydraulic accumulators, loaded to a pressure of 720lbs. per square inch. Hydraulic power is also obtainable from the two steam engines of collectively 360 horse power which are situated at the pier head, and are usually employed for lifting water from the Thames into the dock, as I shall describe later on. The buildings on the dock property include the eastern granary, having a storage capacity of 31,000 quarters of grain; the three western granaries, having collectively a storage capacity of 68,000 quarters of grain, and 40 warehouses, chiefly of brick, having one or two floors, and possessing a total floor area of 720,000ft. There are also corrugated iron buildings, having an area of 253,000 square feet, for timber storage, and one of 5 acres in extent, forming a depôt for storing grain in specially designed railway trucks, from which deliveries are made to buyers' vans or railway waggons. This shed has in connection with it 10 miles of railway sidings and a delivery platform 300 yards in length. The granaries are fitted with elevators and other appliances. There are 48 miles of railway lines on the premises, which connect every part of the dock with the Millwall Extension Railway, and thus via the railways north of the Thames with the entire railway system of Great Britain. In addition to 1,500 railway waggons for dock purposes, the company has 10 locomotives. Seven of these are used for haulage of goods, and three for working the passenger traffic on the Millwall Extension Railway. During the last 10 years the goods traffic from and to the Millwall Docks has averaged 190,366 tons, and the passenger traffic over the line 819,129 passengers per annum. This is the railway that was referred to by Mr. Baggallay in his evidence the other day. There is a considerable goods traffic not included in these figures between the West India Docks and Millwall Junction. The Graving Dock with its engineering works is let. The principal trade of the Millwall Docks is grain, of which they receive and distribute about 3,000,000 quarters per annum, or about one-third of the total grain imports of the Port of London. About 57 per cent. of the grain discharged in Millwall Docks goes overside. There is also a considerable trade in the import of wood of various kinds, and in the produce generally of America, Russia, Sweden, and Norway. The export trade is of a general character, and chiefly to the Baltic, Mediterranean, and Canada. From the opening of the docks in 1868 down to the end of 1899 there entered them 46,148 sea-going vessels, representing a gross registered tonnage of 37,219,587. In accordance with a wish expressed by the Royal Commission the following further figures are given showing the number and tonnage of vessels using the Millwall Docks in the years 1869, 1879, 1889, and 1899:—

	Number of Vessels.	Gross Registered Tonnage.
1869 - - -	1,344	517,836
1879 - - -	1,471	1,125,665
1889 - - -	1,672	1,491,649
1899 - - -	1,337	1,457,375

See 1002 1011.

It might be interesting for me to add there that in 1869 the average per vessel was 385 tons; in 1879 the average was 765 tons per vessel; in 1889 the average was 892 tons per vessel; and in 1899, 1,090.

978. That is the registered tonnage, of course?—Gross registered tonnage. Among the vessels that have used the docks during the Canadian season are the steamers of the Elder Dempster Line, measuring 470ft. by 56ft.; 7,300 tons gross and 4,770 net registered tons. Comparing the present year up to the 11th instant with the corresponding period of 1899, there has been an increase so far of 51 vessels, representing 196,604 gross registered tonnage; there have been also passed through the lock—not admitted, but passed through—an annual average during the past ten years of 46,520 barges or river craft. May I explain here that those barges have been numbered twice. They have been numbered for coming in and going out. If you take it for those going through the lock, that is to say, those going in and those coming out, it would make up the 46,520.

979. Could you give us the maximum and minimum per day?—Yes, I will give you that presently. Of those barges coming into the dock 60 per cent. came in light, that is to say, without cargoes, and of those leaving the dock 25 per cent. of them went out light, that is to say, they brought in cargoes and went out empty. As many as 22 ships, representing 29,648 tons, and 146 barges have passed through the lock within one tide. The average number going through the lock in a tide was something like 100 barges in and out, but that was on an exceptional day for shipping. It was not an exceptional day for barges, but it came after four or five days fog, and then they wanted to get into the dock. To carry out the operations of docking and undocking it is necessary that work should commence considerably before high water, and to enable this to be done the water in the lock has to be emptied between the level of the dock and that of the river at, say, half-tide, and frequently this is repeated six or seven times during the period of working. The necessary consequence is that a large amount of water which has made itself comparatively clear by the settlement of its impurities in the dock is passed out into the river, and when the tide rises and so restores the level of the water in the dock, it brings in from the river a large quantity of mud in suspension, and this mud deposits itself over the dock bottom, extending to 300 or 400 yards from the entrance gates. This deposit has to be continually removed by dredging. The quantity so dredged in 1899 was 169,800 tons, representing an average of 4,783 tons per acre of the dock water area.

See 1057-62.

980. (*Chairman.*) At what cost?—It is done by our own dredger, and costs us about 4d. per ton. I will describe the vessel to the Commission presently, and that will give you an idea as to how it is that it costs so little.

981. Is the 169,800 tons generally at 4d. a ton?—That is so. The amount of dredging has, however, no direct connection with the area of the dock; it is rather attributable to the frequency with which the dock gates have to be opened to dock and undock vessels and craft. The total net tonnage that entered the dock during 1899 gave an average of no less than 63,825 tons per acre of water space in the dock. That is taking the tonnage of the barges in addition to the tonnage of the ships. Of this dredging done by the company's dredger in 1899, 16,800 tons or about 10 per cent. was done outside the river entrance so as to keep the entrance channel clear. In addition to this ordinary dredging a large quantity of debris accumulates in the dock, mostly in consequence of what is dropped overboard from ships and barges. For the removal of this it is necessary to obtain the assistance of hired plant, and the amount spent in this kind of dredging since 1897 inclusive has been £10,060. The amount of this deposit may be put at 3,000 tons per week, which has to be continually removed by dredging. And in addition a large quantity of debris accumulates which has been dropped overboard from ships and barges. It is sometimes necessary to obtain the assistance of hired plant for this dredging, but the company owns a specially designed dredger, whereby the mud which is raised, instead of being deposited in barges and taken to sea, is dropped into two cylindrical tanks on board the dredger, having a capacity of 200 tons, and when these tanks are full the dredger steams to the east end of the dock. By closing the inlet doors the tanks are made air-tight, except as to the outlet pipe which is connected by flexible hose with a pipe on shore. This passes for about 200 yards under the wharf, railway, and public road to the company's open land beyond. The engines which were used to lift the mud and propel the dredger are now coupled up with an air compressor, air at 25lbs. pressure per square inch is forced into the tanks, and the freight of mud is expelled on to the land in about 40 minutes. This machine enables the company to cope with its dredging at a net saving of about £5,000 per annum, as compared with what would be the cost of dredging and taking the material to sea. The loss of water by the docking and undocking operations, more particularly by the necessary admission of barges early on the tide leads to a very large loss of water from the dock, and so as to restore this at other than spring tides, and be enabled to keep vessels of deep draught afloat, special water-raising plant has been provided at the dock entrance. This comprises two vertical engines of 360 horse power, supplied with steam by five Lancashire boilers, and working two wheels of 34ft. in diameter, which scoop the water from the Thames through a culvert of 9ft. in diameter into the dock. These wheels are capable of raising 30,000 tons of water per hour, and so adding 1ft. 6in. to the water level of the dock during the two hours at the top of the tide. Reference has already been made to the pneumatic grain elevators. There are two of these manchines afloat in Millwall Dock, each on its suitable barge. The apparatus consists of a vacuum chamber, from which the air is partially exhausted by means of steam engines situated under the deck of the barge. Flexible tubes pass from the vacuum chamber into the ship's hold. A strong current of air rushes up these tubes to replace that which has been pumped from the chamber, and by a special arrangement of inlet nozzle the air carries with it its load of grain. This grain deposits itself in the chamber and discharges itself automatically through a special apparatus into a garner. This feeds a number of weighing machines, which deliver the grain to barges in sacks or in bulk. This pneumatic arrangement has many advantages; it is more economical for working, as it dispenses with the labour of trimming the grain to the hatchway on board. The suction pipes occupy so small a space in the hatchway that cranes and other tackle may be simultaneously employed in loading or discharging other cargo. The machine works regardless of light or weather. The usual waste of grain on deck is entirely avoided. I will here put in some tables containing some of the principal statistics in relation to the Millwall Docks.

The Witness handed in the following tables:—

(Table showing the vessels loading outwards in the Millwall Docks from 1st January to 30th September 1900. See Appendix, 4th day, No. 1.)

(Table showing the number of craft docked and undocked in the Millwall Docks during 10 years from 1890 to 1899 inclusive. See Appendix, 4th day, No. 2.)

(Table showing the number of vessels and gross tonnage entered the Millwall Docks each year from 1868 to 1899 inclusive. See Appendix, 4th Day, No. 3.)

(Table showing the tonnage and number of passengers from opening of Millwall Extension Railway to 30th June 1900. See Appendix, 4th day, No. 4.)

(Table showing the rates on shipping levied by the Millwall Dock Company. See Appendix 4th day, No. 5.)

(Table showing the charges on barges levied by the Millwall Docks. See Appendix, 4th day, No. 6.)

(Summary of the statutory powers of the Millwall Dock Company. See Appendix, 4th day, No. 7.)

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One of the features which makes itself prominent is that an average of over 40,000 barges pass through the lock every year, bringing in goods direct to vessels or taking out goods direct from vessels. Of the amount of cargo exported from Millwall Docks 90 per cent. is received in this way. Of the goods brought into the dock by sea-going vessels, about 60 per cent. similarly passes overside into barges and is taken out of dock. In neither case does the Dock Company receive a penny from the barges or the goods they carry towards the expenses that it is put to in connection with the provision and maintenance of the dock and the dock master's staff, police, tugs, hydraulic power, ropes and other costs and risks connected with the establishment. Another matter which affects the earnings of the Dock has arisen from the increasing difference between the net register tonnage upon which dock dues are charged and the carrying capacity of the vessels. Years ago, probably when measurement of ships for tonnage was first introduced, the intention was that the measurement should represent, for harbour dues and other general purposes, a conveniently established figure equal in amount to the ordinary carrying capacity of the vessel. With the introduction of steamers a large addition was made to the hull to accommodate the propelling engines, and the tonnage due to the actual size of the ship requiring dock space became so much more than the net tonnage upon which the dues were paid. During recent years the designers of ships have chiefly aimed at so forming them as to carry the greatest amount of cargo on the smallest amount of registered tonnage, and so it comes about that steamers having a carrying capacity of 4,000 tons, and a gross register of 2,500 tons, now pay dock dues upon a net register of 1,600 tons only. I think you follow there that the net registered tonnage is referable only to the cargo-carrying capacity of the ship. The gross tonnage includes not only the cargo-carrying capacity, but the engine room and crew space and so on of the ship. These together make the gross tonnage, and for all purposes so far as the ship coming into dock is concerned she is a 4,000 ton ship in this case and she requires dock room necessary for a 4,000 ton ship, but we only get paid on the 1,600 or thereabouts, which is the net registered tonnage.

See 1012-22.

982. Has the altered shape of the steamers anything to do with the increased tonnage?—That is so.

983. But while the shape of the vessel has been altered the calculation upon which the tonnage is founded remains the same?—Yes; that is to say that whereas the formula by which the measurements were taken in the old days when the ships were rounded was a very good one for arriving at their cubic contents or their carrying capacity which closely compared with their registered tonnage, in these days, when they are box shaped instead of being round shaped, that method of calculation is altogether wrong for arriving at the same result. You will notice that when a ship is advertised as to be built one of the things put forward is that she will carry, *e.g.*, 4,000 tons upon 1,600 tons registered tonnage.

984. Has there been no alteration in any of the shipping Acts to meet that difficulty?—Practically none.

985. Is that a grievance on the part of the dock companies?—It is a decided grievance, because if we were working on the old lines we ought to get tonnage dues on the 4,000 tons instead of on the 1,600 tons.

986. And you lose so much in dues?—Yes.

987. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) That is partly due to the mode of measurement?—Yes.

988. And the fact that certain portions of the ship allocated to the crew are excluded?—The crew, and propelling power.

989. Are they not measured as having a larger amount of cubic capacity than actually exists in the ship?—That is so.

990. In deducting from the gross to arrive at the registered tonnage, certain portions of the ship are deliberately measured twice over, in accordance with an Act of Parliament?—Yes, and then struck off the tonnage.

991. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I do not understand you to suggest that this is specially and particularly applicable to the

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Millwall Docks?—No, it applies to all docks and harbours.

As regards the size of vessels which they can receive, the Millwall Docks are limited by the depth of water over the entrance sills, namely, 28ft. at Trinity High Water; it is impossible for the Company to alter these, and the existing channel of the River Thames may therefore be said to be sufficient for the particular requirements of the Millwall Docks.

See 1153-56.

992. (*Chairman.*) Does that mean that you do not require the river to be deepened as proposed?—So far as regards vessels which are coming up direct to the Millwall Docks there is no necessity for deepening the river, but there is this to be taken into consideration:—A vessel may be coming up to go into the Millwall Docks; she will draw, say, 20ft. of water, and she will have only 14ft. at low water in the river. Supposing a fog comes on; that vessel has no safe anchorage in the river, and she will necessarily have to ground, because she cannot get back through the fog into deep water. Another thing:—Suppose a vessel comes up on the top of the tide, and for some reason we cannot admit her into the dock, instead of being able to wait at Deptford or Greenwich Reach for the next tide, she has to go down the river to Long Reach or somewhere where there is deep water—she has to go back perhaps 15 or 20 miles to wait for the next tide. That is where the inconvenience exists in our having only 14ft. at low water in the Thames.

993. What depth of water do the grain ships require?—21ft. as an average, but some vessels want 23ft., 24ft., and 25ft. even.

994. Then is it the opinion of your company and your own opinion that the river should be dredged to the depth of 30ft. up to the Millwall Dock or not?—No, I do not say 30ft. up to the Millwall Dock. I think 24ft.—10ft. more than we have now—would be enough. Of course, many things have to be taken into consideration. The river bed now has formed itself to its natural slope. If you dredged a channel 10ft. deeper than the present channel you might possibly bring down the foreshore on the two sides, and so get into difficulty with the wharves. But from our point of view, and from the point of view of the vessels using Millwall Docks, we should certainly like to have 24ft. at low water right away up to our entrance. It is, however, very difficult to make these, or any docks in London, remunerative under the present conditions of the trade of the port. The efforts of the Board are continually directed to economy in the working of the different branches of trade, and at the present moment plans are in a forward state for the provision, through the instrumentality of a subsidiary company, of (*a*) an additional warehouse for grain, capable of storing 100,000 quarters, with special appliances for reducing to a minimum the operations and costs involved in discharging, housing, and delivering grain; (*b*) a large yard on the company's land east of the Millwall Extension Railway, with sheds for the storage of timber, sidings, and roadways, and thoroughly equipped with modern electrical machinery for transporting timber from the quay side to the pile. It is anticipated that a considerable saving both in time and cost of working will result.

See 1066-67 and 1134-38.

See 1027-29.

995. What proportion of the goods which enter your dock go by lighters, and what by railways. You seem to have better conveniences than some of the other docks for sending grain, for instance, away by railway. Can you give us any idea as to what is the relative proportion?—Of all goods that come in by water 60 per cent. goes away by lighter.

996. Does your grain go away by lighter or by rail? Some portion by lighter and some portion by railway. I can put that in afterwards.

997. What proportion goes by railway?—I can give you full particulars of what happens to the grain. Suppose you take the quantity out of the ship as being 100. The quantity delivered overside (this was during 1898) was 57·3 per cent. The quantity landed would be the difference, 42·7 per cent.

998. That is landed on the quays?—That is landed on the quays.

999. And it is not again put into lighters, I suppose; it goes then by road or rail?—I have given you there the quantity put on the quay. Some of that went into warehouses, some of it afterwards went into barges, and some of it went to railway. The quantity that went to railway direct was 13 per cent., but the total that went away by railway, including what went subsequently from the warehouses, was 19 per cent.

1000. 19 in addition to the 13?—No, including the 13; that is the total. Then what went away in vans or carts was 12 per cent., and what went away in craft (that is to say off the quay in addition to what went away in craft overside direct) was 12 per cent.

1001. That is barges from the quay?—From the quay. If you will allow me I will put in a small table showing the disposal of grain cargoes discharged in the docks during 1898. (*The witness handed in the following table.*)

Disposal of Grain Cargoes, 1898.

Of the quantity discharged ex ship,
57 per cent. delivered direct to barges,
43 per cent. landed.

Of the 43 units landed,
13 units delivered direct to railway,
30 housed.

Of the 30 housed,
6 delivered to rail.
12 delivered to vans and carts.
12 delivered to barges.

1002. (*Sir Robert Giffin.*) About these figures of gross registered tonnage. Can you give the figures of net registered tonnage as well?—Only for the last year or so, because until last year it was the practice at the Millwall Docks to take only the gross registered tonnage of the ships in all our statistics, but when the change took place last year in our administration, it was decided that we should adopt the same system as that which is adopted at the other docks, and deal with the net registered tonnage instead of gross registered tonnage.

See 977

1003. Still your accounts would always show the net registered tonnage upon which the dues were to be charged?—Yes, that is so. We could get that for you if you wanted it, but I have not got it with me.

See 7037

1004. I think we should like to have that. I would not ask you to take the trouble to give it for every year, but for those four years it would be advisable to show what the net registered tonnage was?—We will get that for you.

1005. (*Mr. Ellis.*) We should have the same figures on the same basis that the accounts apply to in all these cases. The accounts are of very little use if they refer to a different kind of measurement to that referred to in the statement?—I quite follow you.

1006. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Then do these figures include coasting vessels as well as vessels in the foreign trade?—They include coasting vessels that pay dues, that is to say, the coasting vessels that trade outside the Port of London. There are a large number of sailing barges and schooners, and so on, that trade with Faversham, and the Medway, and Sittingbourne, and those places, that do not pay dock dues.

1007. They have the privilege of being lighters?—That is so.

1008. Can you give us any idea of how much that is coasting trade is included in these figures, and how much is foreign trade?—That I can get for you; I have not it with me.

See 7037

1009. Can you tell us the figures for 1899?—I cannot give you that now; I did not think that would be asked.

1010. Have you any idea what the proportion is—it is a small amount, I suppose?—Oh, it is a small amount; I should not think it was 5 per cent. of the total tonnage.

1011. Then the coasting trade is not a very big thing?—It is a very small thing. We get very little coasting trade, except schooners and so on, that would come to Millwall Docks for parcels of grain, and so on, to take round to the outports, but there is not very much in it.

1012. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You said just now, "Steamers having a carrying capacity of 4,000 tons and a gross register of 2,500 tons, now pay dock dues upon a net register of 1,600 tons only." That, I presume, is a general average?—That is an average of three steamers that I know something about.

See 981.

1013. It is an average, not an actual statement?—I will give you the actual statement, if you like.

1014. I do not want that. What I ask is, this is only an average?—It is an average of three actual ships. I have put it in round figures, otherwise it is quite right.

1015. I only wanted to know whether that was an average. Will you give us the three steamers?—Yes. There is one steamer of 1,539 net registered tonnage, 2,431 gross registered tonnage, carrying capacity 4,050 tons.

1016. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) By "carrying capacity," do you mean the displacement?—No; that is the weight of the goods that she will carry.

1017. Then her displacement would be much higher?—Yes, because the weight of the ship would be in addition to the weight of the cargo. The second vessel is 1,491 net registered tonnage, 2,336 gross registered tonnage, carrying capacity 3,580 tons. The third vessel is 1,717 net registered tonnage, 2,685 gross registered tonnage, and 4,280 tons deadweight capacity.

1018. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Are we to infer that those measurements apply generally to all the steamers that come up to the dock, or are those three ships specially selected?—If you take modern steamers—steamers, that is to say, such as have been built in the last three or four years—you will find that these proportions will generally apply.

1019. That does not quite answer my question. Does that represent the general run of the steamers coming to the docks, because you must recollect that many of your steamers are not three or four years old, but much older?—It applies to recent steamers, and not to the same extent to older steamers.

1020. The statement made here apparently is based on comparatively very recently built steamers?—I have a steamer here that was built fourteen years ago, and her net registered tonnage was 1,204; her capacity 2,500.

1021. Then you mean to say that, taking the total number of steamers entering the dock, that gives a fair guide as to the gross registered and net registered tonnage?—Of all the vessels that we get now that would apply, I should think, to one-third. With the other two-thirds the figures would not be the same, but the difference has been an increasing amount for some years past, and the three vessels that I have given you are those built within the last two years. There is another one that I can give you if you like.

1022. No, I think this is quite sufficient?—It does not go quite to the same extent, but it is in the same direction.

1023. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You refer to "dolphins" as being peculiar to the Millwall Docks. How long have they been in operation?—About twenty-eight years.

1024. Were they a part of the original plant?—No.

1025. What are the special reasons for putting them there?—For convenience in discharging ships direct into barges. A large quantity of the grain that we discharge, as I was saying just now, some 57 per cent. of it, goes direct into barges from the ship—does not come to shore at all—and for the convenience of working the grain into barges we have these dolphins; they are narrow structures of about 12ft. wide. We get the ship on one side and the barge on the other. The grain is lifted out of the ship by the cranes and delivered into hoppers, whence it can be delivered either in sacks or in bulk through the weighing machines into the barges.

1026. Are these specially applicable to the trade of Millwall Dock?—That is so.

See 9943

1027. You said in your evidence "the efforts of the Board are continually directed to economy in the working of the different branches of trade, and at the present moment plans are in a forward state for the provision through the instrumentality of a subsidiary company," etc. What is the reason of your requiring a subsidiary company?—It is because the Millwall Dock Company have exhausted their resources, and have no capital.

1028. It is a matter of finance?—Yes, and it is proposed to have a subsidiary company to raise a sum of money to provide the things immediately required.

1029. Supposing you had not that difficulty of finance you would prefer to do it yourselves?—Undoubtedly.

1030. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I notice in describing your lock you describe the depth of water as 28ft.; that is at high water spring tides?—That is so.

1031. From that from 4 to 5ft. would have to be deducted for neap tides?—Yes.

1032. Is the sill flat?—No, it is curved.

1033. What is the available depth alongside the wall?—The entrance is 80ft. wide; the vessels going in there very rarely exceed 56ft., and do not at any time come close to the wall; but for these large vessels of 56ft. beam—vessels 470ft. long, the Canadian boats—we have to allow from 2ft. 6in. to 3ft. under their keels, that is in addition to their draught, for clearance when coming into the lock.

1034. Then they cannot get in at neap tides?—They cannot get in at neap tides.

1035. And similarly I suppose a loaded ship cannot get out?—That is so.

1036. Therefore your dock has fallen rather behind modern requirements in the way of the admission of large ships which desire to use it?—That is so.

1037. In fact nothing has been done I suppose to improve the dock since 1868 in the way of access?—That is so, but one thing I may say, it is a very rare thing indeed for us to have a vessel detained in entering the dock or in going out of the dock because of our not having sufficient water.

1038. But does not the knowledge of shipowners that there is that difficulty limit the number of vessels going there?—Just so.

1039. Shipowners do not like to run the risk of delays?—No, because it sometimes means £100 a day.

1040. Have you considered the Thames Conservancy programme? They propose to dredge to a width of 300ft., from the Albert Docks to Millwall Docks, with a depth of 18ft.?—Yes, I saw that.

1041. I gather from your evidence that you consider that insufficient?—18ft. would be an improvement, but it would not be enough for the reason that I was giving you just now. Vessels that are fog bound would probably get stranded or have to go back, say, 20 miles down the river, and then come up again.

1042. Do you want more than 18ft.?—We want more than 18ft.

1043. You suggest 24ft.?—24ft. would do it—either a 24ft. channel all the way down or a lay-by if it could be arranged for, though I am afraid it would be a mud trap; but if a lay-by could be provided a vessel could anchor there without having to go down to Long Reach.

1044. Speaking as an engineer, have you any doubt as to the capacity of the Thames to maintain such a depth if a channel were once made?—I think it would. I do not see why it should not. The amount of detritus coming down the river is not so very great; it appears to me that the greater part of what comes down is dredged by the Dock Companies. There is very little dredging done by the Thames Conservancy in the upper parts of the river.

1045. With regard to entering the dock do you open for the tide of the day?—We open every tide, but we lock in.

1046. You do not open at neap tides, do you?—No.

1047. What is going to happen to a ship longer than 450ft.?—She would have to go in on the level, but you will notice that I refer to some pumping that we do at the entrance. We have two large old-fashioned scoop wheels, which raise something like 30,000 tons an hour. That gives us an increase of level of 1ft. 6in. during the two hours at the top of the tide for the purpose of keeping the proper depth of water when deep draught ships are in the dock, but that does not lengthen the lock, nor does it facilitate the docking of large ships.

1048. And from the 450ft. you have to deduct something for the swing of the gates and the necessary margin?—About 20ft.

1049. Therefore your limit would be 430ft. unless you opened on the level?—That is so, but we get a level, I suppose, two tides out of three.

1050. Have you any additional land adjoining the Millwall Docks available for any purpose?—We have 58 acres of land on the Cubitt Town side.

1051. That is to the eastward?—To the eastward.

1052. But that land is separated by the road and the railway?—There is a road, but our original Act gave us power to carry the dock through Blackwall Reach over that land, and it was for the purpose of the extension, or, rather, of the larger dock, that was then proposed, that that land was acquired.

1053. Have those powers expired?—Practically, yes.

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1054. Then, in order to extend the dock in that direction, you would have to divert the road and the railway?—That is so, but the directors now have a scheme for utilising that land, not by extending the dock upon it, but by converting it into a timber yard, and putting there machinery by which they will be able to take timber very rapidly from their present quay side and from the ships in our present dock, and put it on to that land.

1055. Do you do a large timber business?—We do about 10 per cent. of what comes up the river.

1056. 10 per cent. of the total?—10 per cent. of the total coming into the river.

See 979.

1057. I was rather struck with a statement in your evidence that you had to begin locking at half tide?—That is so.

1058. With the limited amount of depth on your sill that appears to mean that you begin at half tide for the purpose of accommodating the barges?—That is so entirely.

1059. And with the limited amount of depth on your sill, I suppose for ships you would only be able to use the lock for perhaps an hour before and an hour after high water?—Yes, perhaps about three hours at the top of the tide. We do not like to lock after high water, because of danger in docking a ship on a falling tide; but we lock for about three hours at the top of the tide, and we find that that is certainly doing all that the ship work requires.

1060. Three hours instead of six hours?—Instead of six hours. The other three hours are spent entirely in letting barges in and out. The barges come and make fast about the entrance, and we have to clear the barges in and out before tackling the ordinary ship work of the tide.

1061. Does it not follow that if the amount of dredging that you have to do is strictly proportioned to the number of hours during which the gates are opened, then half the quantity is due to the barges?—That is so; it is rather more than that. You will follow what I mean. If we are working the lock at half tide the quantity of water that is locked out from the dock would be very much greater than if we were working the lock only for three hours at the top of the tide. In the one case we throw out half a lock full of water, and in the other we throw out only a quarter, or less.

1062. The amount of dredging, therefore, would vary with the depth of water as well as with the number of hours?—That is so.

1063. Has it ever been considered by your company whether the railway should be diverted?—It was an old scheme to take it down on the western side of the island and to follow the river bank away to the eastward side, but it was considered desirable to adopt the same route that we have now.

1064. We have heard that it is highly inconvenient to the East and West India Docks that you should go across?—That is so, but we say that it is a very great inconvenience to us that the dock should be there, because it stops the trains.

1065. The dock was made before the railway, was it not?—That is so.

See 992.

1066. You say it is very difficult to make these or any docks in London remunerative under the present conditions of the trade of the port. Would you a little enlarge on that statement and tell us what you have in view as to the difficulties of making the dock remunerative?—If I may confess it, those were not my words, but I have adopted them. The difficulties we have found at Millwall and the other docks too are these:—First of all, I think it is only due to those who have been connected with the docks for a great many years to say that if anybody knows how to handle and work the docks they certainly do. We have been struggling (and they have been struggling at the other docks too) year after year to make both ends meet, and we have scarcely done it. Something may be done to help in the matter by having better machinery—machinery which will work with less reliance on manual labour. In that way the profits may be increased, and that is what we are trying to do with the arrangements that I was speaking of just now; but apart from that there are other things connected with the trade that make difficulty. For instance, this matter of dealing with the barges is one of great importance to us because we are dealing with goods, and we are dealing with trade, and we are spending money for which we do not get one penny in return. Whether it ought to be in the shape of charges on craft or otherwise I am not prepared to say.

See 2812–18

1067. Apart from finance, are there any special circumstances of a physical nature which render it difficult to work the docks in London at a profit?—No, I think not. I am, moreover, of opinion that the docks have already sufficient water area for their trade, but improved appliances and methods are required for dealing with ships and their cargoes, so that a vessel at present occupying a week in dock may be turned round in three days. This would practically double the capacity of the docks, and be an enormous advantage to shipowners.

1068. Who works the railways round the dock?—The Millwall Dock Company do their own haulage round the dock. All our domestic haulage, if I may use that expression, is done by our own engines. We have seven engines there. The goods, which are loaded up in Millwall Docks are collected by the Millwall Dock engines, and taken to the Millwall Extension Railway at the north east corner of the Millwall Docks. They are then hauled by the West India Dock authorities (that is the London and India Joint Committee) engines from the Millwall Dock boundary to the Millwall Junction at Poplar. There they are handed over to the several railway companies on the sidings at Poplar. So far as passenger service on the line is concerned, it is all worked under the Millwall Dock Company. We have our own engines and carriages for running on that line, and the receipts from passenger service are divided between the Millwall Dock Company, for their portion; the West India Dock Company for their portion, and the Great Eastern Railway (as to the piece at the south-east corner of their docks down to North Greenwich) for their portion. It is divided according to the mileage.

1069. Do you find the rolling stock?—Yes. The trains run every quarter of an hour each way.

1070. For your docks who takes the ordinary terminal allowed by railway companies for terminal services?—The Millwall Dock Company.

1071. For instance, take grain going from here to say, Birmingham, there would be a terminal conceded out of the gross rate?—Yes, the Millwall Dock Company receive the rate from that line on all goods coming to their dock.

1072. Up to the north-east corner?—Yes.

1073. Is that a mileage proportion?—No. In that case we should take the full toll on the goods that come through here; we get 2s. a ton payment for goods out of the dock.

1074. For all the services you render?—For all the services we render. Out of that we have to pay the Joint Haulage Committee for haulage through their dock, and for their toll.

1075. How much is that?—It amounts to 8d., including our haulage.

1076. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have all the railways that have access to the other docks, the East and West India Docks, access to your docks?—They have over the Millwall Extension Line. They have no running powers over the Millwall Extension Line, but they hand over the traffic at Poplar, and it is brought over the Millwall Extension Line.

See 11570

1077. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I see this line belongs to the Great Eastern according to the colouring on the map, but you say it does not?—The Great Eastern are interested in it to some extent. The Great Eastern made one portion, the Millwall Dock made another, and the West India Dock made another. This leads to a very complicated apportionment of profits.

1078. What is the present condition of repair of the Millwall Dock. Speaking generally, has it been kept up?—No, certainly not.

1079. Is there a considerable sum of money required?—At the present time, yes.

1080. Can you give us any idea how much money has been in contemplation as required to put the Millwall Docks in a thorough state of efficient repair?—Well, it is something like £40,000 a year that we want for a year or two.

1081. That is £40,000 a year, but how much capital expenditure?—The estimate has been about £50,000 or £60,000 to make up for leeway.

1082. That is quite apart from any improvement?—Quite apart from any improvement, and quite apart from the ordinary work which ought to be done. There are buildings which have been demolished, and which ought to be rebuilt; roads which are impassable almost, and there are warehouses which want pulling down and rebuilding. Some want large repairs done to them. Then, again, there are repairs to machinery wanted.

1083. Would it be correct to say that the Millwall Dock is certainly deteriorating at the present time for want of money?—That is so. That was especially so till about two years ago. Since that time we have practically paid no dividends to the shareholders at all, and we have spent in repairs and maintenance the money which would otherwise go for dividend.

1084. There are certain special reasons connected with the Millwall Docks Company which we need not go into now, why you have stopped the payment of dividends?—That is so, but dividends would be payable if we worked on the same lines as before in respect of revenue; that is to say, if every penny earned was paid out in dividends; but the directors now, very wisely, I think, consider it necessary to make the dock in a fit state to live, so as to earn dividends in the future. At present it is very much starved.

1085. Then you think after a term of years you may once more begin to pay dividends?—Well, my hopes are in that direction.

1086. But that expenditure that you have indicated would not deal with any such question as the question of improving the access to the river?—No.

1087. That would be a very expensive affair?—That would mean £100,000, or £70,000 at all events.

1088. To deepen and lengthen the lock?—Yes.

1089. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You pay dividends on debentures and debenture stock, although you do not pay dividends to the shareholders?—Yes, we do pay dividends on debentures and debenture stock—£24,500 a year.

1090. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Your whole system is dependent on one lock?—That is so.

1091. Therefore you are placed in a somewhat critical condition if you do not keep up the repairs of that lock?—Yes.

1092. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What is your total capital?—£2,094,157.

1093. And the debenture capital?—The debenture capital is £503,457.

1094. So that you have one and a half million at the present moment receiving no dividend?—That is so.

1095. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you happen to know whether that amount of capital represents cash?—Do you mean whether it has all been received in cash?

1096. Yes?—I do not know about that. There were some financial arrangements, I believe, at the beginning of the company, but it was before my connection with them.

1097. We must not take it for granted that that is money expended?—No, I do not know what can be said about that.

1098. (*Chairman.*) Have you made any calculation as to what extra cost the company is put to in consequence of having to let the large number of barges in, in the way you have mentioned?—Not such a very close calculation.

1099. In the way of dredging, for instance?—In the way of dredging, I should say that quite three-fourths of our dredging is due to that. Our dredging during last year I have as £4,186.

1100. Then three-fourths of that would be about £3,000 a year?—Yes, about 3,000 a year. I may conclude my evidence by saying that the principal firms and shipping lines using the Millwall Docks are as follows:—

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Firms.	Trading with—
Bailey & Leetham	Adriatic ports, Baltic ports, and Mediterranean ports.
W. E. Bott & Co.	Christiania, Gothenburg, Riga, Stockholm and Norrkoping, and occasional boats from other ports.
Cayo Line (Cuban S.S. Co.)	New Orleans and West Indies.
Elder, Dempster & Co.	Montreal and New Orleans.
R. McAndrew & Co.	Spanish ports.
Paul & Shellshear	St. Petersburg (Red Cross Line).
Westcott & Laurance	Black Sea, Danube and Mediterranean.
Andorsen, Becker & Co.	Stettin, and casual vessels from German and Baltic ports.
Phillips & Graves	Gothenburg, Stockholm and Norrkoping.
Tegner, Price & Co.	Copenhagen and Libau, and occasional boats from Baltic ports.
Thos. Wilson & Co.	Baltic ports.

In addition to the foregoing, there are many casual vessels trading from North and South America, European, Mediterranean, Black Sea, and its tributary ports, which use these docks.

1101. Are you able to speak to the tables you put in?—Yes. See 981.

1102. Then we will go through them?—The statement contained in Table 1 was got out with a view of arriving at the proportion of goods sent by craft alongside. We have taken it for the last nine months, because that was within range, and we could get the information which for a more remote period we should not be able to get. These are vessels loading outwards in the Millwall Docks from January 1st to September 30th, 1900. The total tonnage of cargoes of 350 vessels loading outwards (exports) for the nine months was 250,077 tons. Of this tonnage 25,759 tons were taken off the quays, and 224,318 tons were taken on board direct from craft. Then with reference to vessels which came into the docks with cargoes, I might say that 630 vessels came into the docks with cargoes, and the weight of their cargoes was 936,614 tons. The total landed out of that quantity, including 40,654 tons landed on the London clause and on ships' account, was 390,731. So that out of those vessels there was a tonnage of 545,883 delivered overside direct into barges, upon which the company received nothing whatever. See 2812–18.

1103. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) If those quantities had come in by rail you would have received 1s. 4d. per ton?—It is a varying scale—2s. for grain, 6d. for coal, 1s. for minerals, and so on.

1104. (*Chairman.*) Do you charge anything for goods landed on the quays and then taken from the quays by lighter?—Yes.

1105. But only a small proportion, as I understand, is landed?—About 40,000 tons for the period to which I have just referred.

1106. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) How does the number of 630 vessels with cargoes compare with the number of vessels which came in in ballast?—There are 630 vessels there which came in with cargoes, and 350 loaded outwards; that is 980. The total number of vessels that came in during the nine months was 1,068, so there would be a difference there of about 88 vessels which have to be accounted for otherwise. Some of those would be coasters, of which we do not take account in these figures; some would be perhaps vessels to go to dry dock, and some would be vessels for other than the purposes of this statement.

1107. I wish to know, as a matter of fact, how many vessels come in in ballast as distinguished from the number of vessels which come in with cargoes?—There are very few that come in in ballast now. We get them now and then. The 630 and the 350 overlap each other to some extent, because some of those are vessels that came in with cargoes and went out with cargoes.

1108. If 1,068 came in altogether and only 630 with cargoes, the others must have come in without cargoes or in ballast or in some other way?—We can get those figures more precisely.

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1109. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What is the nature of the outward cargo chiefly from Millwall Docks? Is it mixed cargo?—In the majority of cases it is a mixed cargo by vessels which trade regularly between the Millwall Docks and St. Petersburg, the Baltic ports, and the Mediterranean. During the Canadian season we have vessels loading at the docks for Montreal. Sometimes they and others take a large quantity of Portland cement, but, generally speaking, it is general cargo which is sent out.

1110. The staple cargoes inwards being grain and timber, and the outward cargoes being general?—Yes.

One thing I should like to point out to you with regard to the charges on barges, contained in Table 6 which I put in, is that the schedule refers to the penny per ton gross that we can obtain for barges under a few special circumstances.

1111. (*Chairman.*) How does that work? Do you get much revenue from them?—The total revenue that we have received for the six months ending 30th September is £163, so it represents £326 per annum.

1112. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are the charges strictly enforced?—Yes, when we can do so.

1113. (*Chairman.*) Is it worth while enforcing them sometimes?—Yes. If we did not enforce these charges we should have the barges lying there for an indefinite period. We give them 72 hours from the time they have finished loading to get out of the dock. There are various rules and regulations which show when we can charge the penny per ton.

1114. And you only get £326 from the barges in that way, whereas they cost you £3,000 a year to get them in?—That is so, £3,000 in addition to a large share of Dock Master's and other expenses.

1115. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With regard to the dolphins, you stated that they were placed there for the convenience of discharging grain from ships into lighters?—Yes. See 2815.

1116. And therefore to a great extent they are placed there for the convenience of lighters as well as for the convenience of ships?—Yes; that is so—grain and general cargo. I may say that the first dolphin we made at the dock was for discharging iron ore. We had a number of vessels from Spain with iron ore, and we found a dolphin a convenient way of discharging. That was developed afterwards for the convenience of grain ships, and those bringing general cargo to the docks.

1117. Are many ships detained in the dock after loading from want of water on the sill?—No. They manage their loading so as to get out before the neap tides come on.

1118. (*Mr. Ellis.*) One question with regard to finance. You came to Parliament last year for a kind of consolidating Act. That regulates your finance, I suppose?—I had rather Mr. Trotter, our Chairman, dealt with that.

1119. I asked you about a subsidiary company, and I rather understood from you that you had exhausted your powers?—Mr. Trotter can speak to that also better than I can.

Mr. JOHN TROTTER called and examined.

Mr. J. Trotter.

1120. (*Chairman.*) You are Chairman of the Millwall Dock Company?—Yes.

1121. How long have you been Chairman?—Since July, 1899.

1122. Did you obtain an Act last Session?—It was obtained before I joined the company.

1123. But perhaps you can speak to it?—Yes.

1124. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You came last year for a consolidating and regulating Act respecting your finance?—Yes.

1125. The Act of Parliament of last year is your authority now as regards finance?—Yes.

1126. You have perhaps heard Mr. Duckham speak about the reason why you were going to ask a subsidiary company to make certain works?—The company has practically exhausted its capital. I think there is about £6,000 not yet expended, and there are borrowing powers to the extent of £40,000. Beyond that it has no resources of its own. The Board are not disposed to go quite up to the limit, in case we should require that sum for any special purposes that might arise unexpectedly, and therefore it is deemed advisable in the scheme that we have for improving the docks to have it done by another company.

1127. Turning to the figures that are given at the end of Appendix 7, against the Ordinary Stock you have £700,000 authorised and £590,000 received?—Those figures were correct at the passing of the Millwall Dock Act of 1899. The Act, however, provided for the issue of a further £51,000 Ordinary capital stock at par to the late Directors of the Company; that amount has since been subscribed for, and paid up in full by them. The total amount of Ordinary stock, therefore, now issued is £650,700. Turning to your question, the Stock is so depressed that it would be impossible to issue it at the present time.

1128. That is what I was coming to. It is not quite unexhausted powers: it is exhausted credit?—Yes, that is so really.

1129. Then with regard to the total received there would be £51,000 to be added to the £2,043,157, making £2,094,157. Have the sums that go to make up that total actually been received?—Yes, those sums have been received.

1130. I will put it in this way:—Does any stock that has been received at a discount appear in your books?—I believe there was a sum of £100,000, that was paid as commission for issuing and guaranteeing the issue of the original capital.

1131. Then of this £2,094,157 everything has been received in cash, except about £100,000?—Yes, as far as I am able to state.

1132. And all that has been spent?—There was a sum wrongfully spent amounting in round figures to £230,000 prior to last year, which was not spent on improvements of the dock. It was distributed in dividends, and the expenditure was afterwards authorised by the Act of 1899.

1133. Then we may take it that £1,764,157 has been spent on the property?—Yes, if that is the difference.

1134. (*Chairman.*) Now I want to ask you if you have any general statement to make. In the evidence of Mr. Duckham he puts in this paragraph, "It is, however, very difficult to make these or any docks in London remunerative under the present conditions of the trade of the port." Have you as chairman any suggestion to make for the improvement of the trade of the port?—The barge question is a very serious one. It entails great expense, and takes away a very large amount of goods that otherwise would come to the dock, and we get nothing for it. See 994. See 2815-18; 7108.

1135. Is that the only part that you think requires alteration?—I think there are a great many improvements capable of being made in the Millwall Docks which the present Board is endeavouring to carry out to the best of their ability, as is evidenced by this plan that we have got increasing the granary accommodation, and providing timber accommodation on the land at present unused. Those improvements would materially affect the condition of the company if carried out.

1136. But do you think that under present conditions you are likely to be able to carry them out?—Yes.

1137. In what period?—I do not know how long it would take actually to carry the works out, but I should think within a year or two years certainly.

1138. Then you are not in favour of a general trust for the river?—One does not want to be exterminated.

1139. I want to know whether you have sufficient vitality in you to enable you to keep going on?—I think there is a sufficient amount of vitality in us.

1140. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you tell us the market value of the different stocks that your company has issued?—In considering these values the Commission will understand that the Millwall Dock Company is not at present in its normal condition. It is naturally very much affected by the disasters that fell upon it prior to 1899. The 5 per cent. Debenture Stock is now at about £133; the 4 per cent. Debenture Stock is about £105; the 5 per cent. Preference Stock is about £96; the 4½ per cent. Preference Stock is about £71; the New 5 per cent. Preference Stock is about £62; and the Ordinary Stock is about £22.

1141. What is the aggregate market value of all those stocks put together?—£1,567,851.

1142. Against a capital of £2,094,157?—Yes.

1143. And against an actual expenditure of £1,700,000 or thereabouts?—Thereabouts.

1144. You have not put in any statement of your income and expenditure?—I have the balance-sheets that have been issued since the new Board took charge. The balance-sheets prior to that are not reliable.

1145. But those balance-sheets are half-yearly balance-sheets?—Yes.

See 7037. 1146. We should like the statement of income and expenditure annually, to compare with the other figures that we have got from the Joint Committee?—For the last year do you mean?

1147. Yes. I think that should be prepared for the Commission so as to have it on the same basis.—I will have that prepared.

1148. I should like to ask you with reference to the first item of your income in the revenue account. You put together the import and export rates and tonnage dues and rent from goods and shipping. I should like to ask you if you could put that in the same form as the Joint Committee have given it us. They divide theirs into import and export rates and tonnage dues. Can you give us the same classification?—Yes, that shall be done.

1149. Could you tell us what the tonnage dues on shipping are?—No, I could not tell you offhand.

1150. But you can give us the same classification?—I can put it in the same form.

1151. Could you separate the warehousing from the other business?—I cannot say. I should hardly think we could. It might be possible to do it; if it is I will have it done.

1152. (*Chairman.*) If you deducted the dues the residue, I suppose, would be mainly warehousing, would it not?—It would take a considerable time to get it done, but if it is possible I will have it done.

1153. (*Mr. Ellis.*) One question of general policy. Mr. Duckham in his evidence said: "It is impossible for the company to alter these"—that is the sills—"and the existing channel of the River Thames may therefore be said to be sufficient for the particular requirements of the Millwall Docks." Now assume that you could alter the sills, and assume that the channels were deepened, would it benefit your company?—We could, of course, take in vessels that we cannot take in at present, but as things stand at present we have quite as much as we require to fill the dock. It would undoubtedly be an advantage if the sills were deeper in case we wished to take in other vessels, but at the present moment we have quite as much to do as we can manage without having these large vessels.

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1154. Do you think, looking to the future and the requirements of commerce, it would be an advantage to you?—Undoubtedly it would be an advantage to be able to take any vessel that would come to us, instead of having merely to take those that are not of the largest size.

1155. (*Chairman.*) I presume you agree with the Engineer that 24ft depth would be better than your present depth?—Undoubtedly.

1156. Though not absolutely necessary?—It is not necessary at present, and since I have had experience of the dock we have had no difficulty on that score at all. We have had difficulty in regard to certain large vessels that would have come to us if we could have taken them in, but it was not a very serious one.

1157. You have no further suggestions to make?—No, I have no other evidence to put in.

Recalled 7036.

Mr. JOHN INNES ROGERS called and examined.

1158. (*Chairman.*) You are Deputy Chairman of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce?—Yes, and in that capacity I desire to submit the general statement of evidence adopted by the Council, and I also wish to formally hand in a return comparing the dock charges at various ports. Mr. Coke will, however, deal with the tables in this return.

(*The Witness handed in a return showing a comparison of dock charges at various ports. See Appendix, 4th day, No. 8.*)

1159. We wish you to understand, of course, that we are very much obliged for the trouble you have taken in collecting this information, which will be very valuable to us, but we cannot accept it as incontrovertible evidence?—Do you mean these tables?

1160. Yes, unless they are supported. As far as London is concerned, of course, you may be able to support them?—I think Mr. Coke will be able to give you full evidence as to the care which has been taken in drawing up the figures. In each case they have been compiled by practical people, and they have been checked by each trade as well.

1161. The difficulty is that there is a certain amount of evidence with regard to other ports?—I think they are actual rates, collected and compared.

1162. We shall be glad to know exactly what the evidence is?—If the dock companies question any of them they can be gone into.

1163. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You must remember that the Report of a Royal Commission comes before Parliament. Members of both Houses of Parliament know that all the evidence has to be taken according to the Rules of either House, and one of the Rules laid down is that you must have evidence at first hand. This is information, not evidence?—I understand.

1164. (*Chairman.*) As I said at our last sitting we cannot take second-hand evidence unless you can show us exactly where your evidence comes from. The same thing applies to this?—We shall be able to tell you where the evidence comes from.

1165. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That is not quite enough?—If you wish that some one person should take an oath as to all these figures it would be impossible. We only depend on the general result.

1166. (*Chairman.*) You put this in as your view. It is very valuable information, but it is not absolutely incontrovertible?—They are the official rates in each case taken from the various dock books.

1167. You must prove them?—Mr. Coke will take that portion of it.

1168. We are very much obliged to you for taking the trouble of preparing this information, but we are bound of course to get the very best evidence we can?—I understand.

1169. (*Mr. Ellis.*) If we were to found a statement in our Report on figures given secondhand, it would vitiate the figures at once for Parliamentary purposes?—I understand. I wish to place the statement of my evidence before you as our general statement of the case, and I wish to be cross-examined upon it. This statement has been modified in order to suit the many interests represented in a body such as the London Chamber of Commerce. Shall I read it paragraph by paragraph?

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(*Chairman.*) Yes, perhaps you had better. There may be points in it which raise questions of future policy, which will have to be reserved till we are prepared to receive them.

1170. (*Mr. Ellis.*) In the first place I think it would be convenient to have on the notes exactly what the London Chamber of Commerce is?—It is an association of mercantile men, shipowners and others in the Port of London, consisting of nearly 4,000 members. Our main business is, so far as practicable, to promote the trade of London and, after that, to promote the general trading interests of the country.

1171. It is an incorporated body?—Yes, it is an incorporated body.

1172. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Who is the Chairman now?—The Chairman is Mr. Blackwell. He will give evidence before you on special matters which interest him. I appear because I have a more general knowledge of the custom of the port than he has. Our President is Mr. Sandeman of the firm of Sandeman and Sons. I should say that this statement of evidence was drawn up by, or it has passed the ordeal of, the Special Committee, who are more or less specialists in this subject; and it has been passed by the Council of the Chamber of Commerce at a very full and long meeting where the general principles were considered. Therefore this is the official utterance of the London Chamber of Commerce.

The London Chamber of Commerce has for a number of years viewed with anxiety and increasing alarm the gradual diminution in some branches of trade in the Port of London——

1173. I should like to ask a question at this point. What branches of trade do you allude to?—Transhipment for one, and re-export of foreign and colonial produce. In my own trade, which I can speak to, that is the sugar trade—which has left London——

1174. In what way has the sugar trade left London?—It is imported into other ports. When I said the sugar trade I meant the general sugar trade. It is imported through other ports to railway and similar centres all over the kingdom.

1175. But the actual trade for London is what it was before?—Yes, except what comes by way of Southampton and the other railway ports. They attribute this

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diminution, in some branches of the trade, to a variety of reasons, among which may be given the decrease in the price of commodities, which has rendered economies in distribution essential, and has caused direct importations to other ports both within the kingdom and abroad. The opening of the Suez Canal has also had, as was anticipated, a great effect by diverting supplies formerly sent to England and then re-exported. Submarine telegraphs and quicker methods of communication, coupled with the increase in the number of standards of quality, and the system of forward purchases, by which goods can be dealt in without samples, etc., have also affected the trade of London. If it is desired that I should explain that more at length, I would say that goods have been very much more standardised, so that now you sell goods by number, or by average quality, or something of that sort, and it is no longer necessary to see the goods themselves.

1176. May I ask you what goods that formerly came to London have been diverted and are not re-exported as they used to be?—Coffee very largely, wool, I believe cotton, tea in some cases, and spices. I am speaking more of my own trade, where I know it perfectly.

1177. Will you give us your particulars afterwards?—I believe those would have to be compiled by the Customs.

1178. (*Chairman.*) You say cotton. Cotton never came much to London except for re-exportation, did it?—No. I was speaking more generally of the kingdom then. The Suez Canal affects that sort of thing.

1179. But since the Suez Canal has been open cotton has gone direct to the Levantine ports?—Yes. The argument that this is leading up to is that we acknowledge that there are these general causes at work, but the state of the Port of London has aggravated it instead of helping. As a result of these and probably many other causes the old system under which large mercantile houses imported goods into London in heavy quantities, stored them in the docks, and then held them for a favourable market, has almost entirely died out. London has to some degree ceased to be the *entrepôt* of the world, and its trade is increasingly confined to local business. Outports have gained proportionally, as compared with London, in supplying our own country. Then the next head is "Defects of the Port of London." While these general causes have, no doubt, seriously affected the trade of London, their operation has been greatly aggravated by the bad system which prevails in the Port of London, both as to ships and as to the steerage and delivery of goods for home use and export. Above all, London has suffered by the excessive charges levied upon goods in this port, and by the insufficient facilities for conducting the trade on an improved basis.

See 7009.

(*Chairman.*) That we should like to have more in detail.

(*Mr. Cater Scott.*) My Lord, may I interrupt? This gentleman is entering on controversial subjects. At your request I have kept back my evidence. These matters that this gentleman is dealing with are matters of vital importance not only to myself as Chairman of the Joint Committee, but to all the dock companies.

(*Chairman.*) We cannot allow anybody from the body of the room to interfere with the evidence that is being given. If you have anything to state you may state it in writing afterwards. You must not interrupt a witness.

(*Mr. Cater Scott.*) Shall I have the opportunity of dealing with it afterwards?

(*Chairman.*) You are bound by the decision which you have heard read, and that ought to be sufficient to meet all the cases which you mention.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We must not have anybody interrupting.

(*Chairman.*) It is quite out of order for anybody to interfere. You must not interfere at the present moment between the Commission and a witness whom they are examining.

(*Mr. Cater Scott.*) I am very sorry, my Lord.

(*Chairman.*) You are quite out of order.

(*Witness.*) With reference to corroborating that general statement as to excessive charges, our committee at very great expense and labour has compiled this return of 93 pages of the rates in the named ports of the United Kingdom as compared with London. Those rates will be entered into in detail by the witness who follows me, Mr. Coke, who has been mainly responsible for them. They are compiled as far as practicable—and I believe in every case—from the official dock books of the various ports. Also they have been reduced to a common denominator for the purposes of comparison, and they have been checked, not only by the special experts whom we have engaged for the purpose, but by specialists in the different trades interested.

1180. That does not answer my question with regard to the first part of this paragraph. You state that the defects are "aggravated by the bad system which prevails in the Port of London both as to ships and as to the storage and delivery of goods for home use and export." I should like to know what you mean by that?—I can deal with it in great detail if necessary.

1181. We want to know what the facts are?—As regards the defects of the port, as a port, I think the evidence which your Lordship has heard from the Thames Conservancy and also from the various dock companies is perfectly sufficient for our purpose.

1182. What we want to know is what from your own knowledge is the present state of things with regard to the trade of the Port of London. We do not want merely a general statement. We only want you to put in facts which you know of your own knowledge as a body?—We know these facts; that in the first place the docks in London are conducted in the interests of shareholders, instead of in the interests of the general public.

1183. That is a fact which we all know, but we do not want to enter into any questions as between the Chamber of Commerce and the Docks?—We then hand in these tables in great detail to show what we believe the comparison of charges to be. We then complain of delays in berthing ships and discharging ships. I can give you facts with regard to the latter point.

1184. Any facts with regard to delaying ships is a matter which ought to be laid before us in the first instance?—And insufficiency of the method of dealing with traffic, want of co-operation with the railways, and so on. I can give you a case in our own trade. We import a great deal of salmon from Alaska and British Columbia. We send that in sailing ships, in some cases to London, and in some cases to Liverpool. We find that in Liverpool the ships can be unloaded in from two to three days. In London they take the same number of weeks. The average time they take to unload these ships is as much as four weeks in London, instead of a similar number of days in Liverpool.

1185. You had better furnish us with the exact evidence on that point. We must have somebody to show that?—I think the shipowners will show that.

1186. We shall be very glad to hear any evidence of that kind?—Would not this be admitted as controversial matter for enquiry simply?

1187. All these matters are liable, at some future time, to be used as matters for cross-examination. These statements are subject for cross-examination if they are controverted statements. What we want you to state at present is what you know of your own knowledge, or what you are prepared to prove as the Chamber of Commerce. Perhaps you had better not go on any further with this point except that you have stated a case from your own knowledge?—I can state also from my own knowledge that I am fully aware of the fact that the charges in Liverpool are very much lower than in London, because we have a branch house in Liverpool.

1188. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You are speaking now not as Deputy Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, but as an individual?—As an individual. I have a great deal of evidence of that description here, but our idea was that you wanted the general opinion of the merchants of London as to this question.

1189. Before leaving this point, I should like to ask one general question on this paragraph. This statement of yours is partly argumentative and partly recitative. For instance, you describe the position of the Chamber of Commerce?—Yes.

1190. That is evidence. Then you make very broad general statements. The question I want you to answer is this:—Do you come here greatly aggravated by the bad system which prevails in the Port of London. Do you come here as a witness, the Deputy Chairman of the London Chamber of Commerce, prepared to substantiate hereafter by facts and figures that general allegation that you made?—I think so.

1191. By evidence at first hand?—I think so.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) This is more or less a counsel's statement; it is not evidence.

1192. (*Chairman.*) As I understand, this document has been passed by the Chamber of Commerce, and, as such, as a general statement we can receive it as the opinion of

the Chamber of Commerce, but any statements they make, if they are to have any weight, are liable to cross-examination, and must be supported by direct evidence?—We have evidence coming forward. We have forty witnesses coming forward, and I think you will find this will be established in detail. I acknowledge that this is a statement of opinion.

1193. With regard to your own experience, you can state that, independently of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce. You might now go on?—The London Chamber of Commerce has made several efforts to approach the Joint Committee upon this subject. I can give you two cases—tobacco and coffee. We endeavoured to approach them, and we were told unofficially that it was no use, and therefore we gave it up. Our representations have not always been received in a friendly spirit.

1194. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Is it worth while your coming from a public body to make these statements? You open out such a controversy if you say they refused point blank. We shall have everybody here. Is it worth while to make these statements from your own point of view?

(*Chairman.*) I think we are bound to receive the evidence of the Chamber of Commerce, whether it is right or wrong. They put it in.

(*Witness.*) Our desire was to act with the docks in as friendly a manner as possible. We endeavoured to approach them, but we felt ourselves more or less rebuffed.

1195. That, of course, is a matter for proving, or it will be a subject for cross-examination?—In the year 1896 an attempt was made to introduce generally a system analogous to that which had been introduced by shipowners in the North American trade, by which all goods entering the docks have to be placed upon the quays, and are there sorted out. Under this system a charge is levied of from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per ton——

1196. Is it levied, or was it proposed to be levied?—It is already levied, and they proposed to extend it to all goods. Under this system a charge is levied of from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per ton upon all goods discharged, whether lightered or delivered from the quay. When this proposal was brought forward the London Chamber of Commerce convened one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings of merchants and wharfingers ever held in the City of London, and the agitation was so great that the proposal was withdrawn. Subsequent to this meeting no special development took place until the Dock Company suddenly imposed charges upon sailing barges in 1898.

1197. Perhaps you will be able to put in as evidence a certified report of that meeting. That is absolutely necessary before we can receive it as evidence?—Very well, my Lord. The Cement Section of the Chamber promptly took the matter up, inviting the co-operation of other sufferers. An action was brought on the 31st July, 1899 (Burham Brick, Lime and Cement Co., v. London and India Docks Joint Committee) before Mr. Justice Mathew, when judgment was given against the Docks Committee, whereupon the recent proposal of the allied companies to impose new charges was brought before Parliament, and negatived on the second reading, with the result of the appointment of the present Royal Commission on the Port of London.

1198. Again, you will have to put in the report of that judgment of Mr. Justice Mathew?—The next witness will put that in. See 1278.

1199. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You say, "brought before Parliament and negatived on the second reading." You must say before which House of Parliament it was brought, and the date. You must give the whole story if you make a statement of that kind?—It was last Session.

1200. We shall want the date. It is not sufficiently precise?—In offering the following general evidence it must be distinctly understood that the London Chamber of Commerce is not in the least degree inimical to the Dock Companies. The Chamber, on the contrary, sincerely regrets that, owing to changes in circumstances, the position of the allied companies, from having been one, for many years, of extraordinary prosperity, has become one of financial embarrassment. The Chamber only challenges the advisability of the changes proposed by the allied companies, and thinks they are altogether inadmissible, particularly while there are remedies for the existing depression which have not been tried, and which the Chamber believes might improve matters, or even solve the difficulty, so far as the finances of the docks are concerned.

1201. (*Chairman.*) That is a controversial point which the Chamber of Commerce may apply to be heard on whenever the question is raised?—Yes.

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1202. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You speak of the dock companies. Does that refer to the Millwall Dock and the Commercial Dock, or to the docks under the control of the Joint Committee?—We call them the allied dock companies.

1203. You are not speaking of all the companies?—No. The allied companies we intend to apply to the docks under the control of the Joint Committee.

1204. Are you satisfied with the other dock companies?—They have not attacked us, but we are not satisfied with them.

1205. (*Mr. Ellis.*) If you make charges against people you must be more precise?—We are not making a charge here; we are simply saying that we believe there are methods of dealing with the question like the Liverpool quay rate.

1206. (*Chairman.*) We do not want to go into that now. That is a question of finance. What we want to know now is the opinion of the London Chamber of Commerce with regard to the present state of things. All controversial points with regard to raising money and so on must be dealt with at the proper time?—Then the statement goes on to deal with the importance of the trade of London. The Chamber is not by any means satisfied with the defeat of the Bill recently introduced into Parliament by the allied companies, for while it is convinced that something will have to be done in their interest if they are not to sink into bankruptcy, what the Chamber is mainly concerned about is the permanent interest of the Port of London. The metropolis is, of course, of special importance to those who trade within its limits, but its prosperity, as representing something like a seventh of the population of the kingdom, and as the financial, social, and political centre of the British Empire, and to a large degree of the world, renders anything which affects its interests a matter of national concern. The maintenance of the trade of London as compared with the volume of business transacted in the United Kingdom and in the world, are thus subjects, not only of anxiety to those immediately concerned, as the Chamber of Commerce is, but to the nation at large. Then the next head is, "Sections of the Chamber of Commerce." As the membership of the Chamber of Commerce consists of nearly 4,000 firms or individuals, it represents very important and somewhat varying interests in London. For instance, some members of the Chamber and of the Dock Charges Committee are shipowners, public wharfingers, owners of private wharves (that is, premises occupied for the interests of the owners in their own businesses, and not for the reception of goods for others), lightermen, manufacturers, and wholesale and retail distributors of goods. All these various sections desire a reform in the system of the Port of London, but they have not in every case the same remedy to propose; in fact, their interests are in some cases divergent. Where these differences of opinion exist, it is proposed by the Chamber that the different interests, although appearing under its auspices, should tell their own tale to the Commission, and propose their own remedies.

1207. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you any representative of the docks upon the Chamber of Commerce?—We have. A member of our council (Sir Neville Lubbock) is one of the dock directors, but naturally he is not taking any part in this matter, though he has heard all that has gone on. Now I come to "Objections to the present system of the Port."

The chief objections to the existing state of things are:—

(1) Insufficient width and depth of water in the navigable channels of the Thames and in the docks themselves.
(2) The number of authorities under whom the control of the port lies.
(3) The difficulty of berthing ships and of loading or unloading them quickly.
(4) The lightering system of the port with the control through the Watermen's Company.
(5) The excessive charges of the docks.
(6) The inefficient appliances in the docks.
(7) Slowness in delivery of goods, and the centralisation of the dock system.
(8) Defective communication with railways and canals.
(9) The financial position of the allied dock companies, which renders reform difficult.

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then we deal with these points numerically. "(1 and 2) Insufficient depth of water and multiplicity of authorities." These points are sufficiently dealt with in the invaluable statistical return compiled by the London County Council, which the Commission have, no doubt, before them.

1208. (*Chairman.*) That is not evidence. It has not been put in as evidence?—I thought that probably, being an official document, it had been.

1209. It has not been officially put before us?—It appears to the London Chamber of Commerce that the question of adequate depth of water in the channels of the river and of the docks themselves lies at the root of the prosperity of London. Unless the river is so deepened as to admit of the most modern ships, such as the "Oceanic," and also to allow of the berthing of them in the docks——

1210-11. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) In all the docks?—No, I should not say in all the docks.

1212. In which docks?—I should say the Victoria and Albert. Tilbury is so far away that it is not much good for our purposes. As I was saying, unless the river is so deepened as to admit of the most modern ships, such as the "Oceanic," and also to allow the berthing of them in the docks, the position of London will steadily retrograde, and the sceptre of international trade must pass to Hamburg and to Antwerp, where these things are properly seen to.

1213. (*Chairman.*) Are you going to give any evidence with regard to Hamburg and Antwerp?—There is a return just published by the Foreign Office.

1214. That, of course, we have before us. But you have no further independent evidence, have you?—I have personal evidence as to lower charges in Hamburg as compared with London, which I can produce if necessary.

1215. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You are speaking of the size of ships especially now. Have you any evidence as to what the state in Hamburg is, of your own knowledge?—No, I see that the Foreign Office have not given us the depths of the rivers.

1216. (*Chairman.*) No; it is not sufficient for our purpose. It is a very interesting report, but it does not contain all the evidence that we shall require?—It is obvious that the first necessity in dealing with this question is to have one single authority which shall control the whole tidal waters of the Port of London. As it is a matter of life or death to London to have its water accommodation brought up to the level of the age, the London Chamber of Commerce believes that, in the interest of the Metropolis, the work should be undertaken in the public interest, and if necessary, out of a special rate, so far as the deepening of the channels in the river itself is concerned. As regards the docks, so long as they are private institutions, trading only for the profit of the shareholders, no expenditure of public money would be justified; but on the formation of a public trust things might assume a different aspect.

1217. The question of raising funds for any purpose connected with the port is of a controversial nature, and therefore must be relegated to those subjects which must be dealt with in the way we have suggested. Therefore we do not intend to enter upon those subjects now?—Then objection number (3) is the difficulty of berthing ships and of loading or unloading them quickly. It is understood from shipowners that there is very often difficulty and delay in finding berths, or suitable berths, for ships, and this of course is a very serious matter. It points to the dock accommodation of the port being insufficient.

1218. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is that at all the docks—or at which docks?—In the river goods are waiting their turn to get into the various docks. We have had a number of complaints before us from shipowners of the great delay in finding berths for them.

1219. Does that apply in the same degree to all the docks?—I could not say that, but it applies to the upper docks—not to Tilbury.

1220. Does it apply to the Victoria and Albert?—I should say it did.

1221. (*Chairman.*) That, of course, must be supported by independent evidence?—Yes.

1222. (*Mr. Ellis.*) We shall have the shipowners?—Yes, you will have the shipowners. It is necessary to have some general statement, because it is impossible for one witness to know all these facts of his own knowledge.

1223. (*Chairman.*) The Commission are quite willing to receive this as the expression of opinion of the Chamber of Commerce, and as such they receive it, and are glad to receive it?—There are complaints on all sides from importers and exporters of goods of the delay in loading and unloading ships; this points to the want of adequate appliances and also, it is believed, to the want of promptitude and despatch on the part of the dock officials.

1224. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Do these complaints apply to the docks of the Joint Committee exclusively?—Yes.

1225. Not to other docks?—No.

1226. You have had no complaints from other docks then?—Yes, but we are dealing with the allied companies only.

1227. But we are asking for information from the Chamber of Commerce as to all the docks, and the state of the river generally?—I should say that it applied just as much to Millwall.

1228. And the Surrey Commercial Docks?—That is a timber dock. I cannot answer that. As regards unloading, the allied companies excuse themselves by saying that a considerable portion of the delay is due to the system of free overside delivery into the barges and lighters, which renders the sorting of goods more difficult. That I believe there is a great deal of truth in.

1229. (*Chairman.*) What I have said just now applies to this paragraph?—Quite so. I think I thoroughly understand. You are simply admitting this as you might a counsel's speech.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Yes, it is worth absolutely nothing until it is substantiated by evidence.

(*Witness.*) Then objection No. 4 is "The Lightering System." The plan of lighters going up and down with the tide involves very frequently considerable delay when tides are missed. In one way, no doubt, the small number of men required for the navigation of the barges effects economy, but, on the other hand, the uncertainty of the system is very great, and it is a question whether it should not be more largely supplemented by steam. Since the statement of this evidence was drawn up, I observe that in one of the Acts of Parliament governing the Thames the only artificial power provided for is steam. Therefore, if people wanted to use electricity or petroleum it would appear to be illegal.

1230. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You do not know that of your own knowledge?—I found it in one of the Acts of Parliament.

1231. (*Chairman.*) You can refer us to the Act of Parliament?—Yes, I can supply that. Again, it is not the custom for lighters to make calls at a number of places for the collection and the delivery of goods, and while the present plan of moving them with the tide continues, it would be very difficult to bring about an improvement. The result is that very frequently the cheap water transport cannot be taken advantage of, because a whole barge load has to be paid for, however small its cargo may be. Apparently it would be advantageous to supplement this system or supersede it by the employment of steam barges calling at a number of places, to collect and deliver goods in the same way that land carriers do. One great difficulty in the way of the reform of the barging system of the Thames is the control of the Watermen's Company. Under an Act of Parliament no one can navigate barges or other vessels on the Thames, or even, it is believed, be employed on one of the steamboat piers on the river, without being a member of the Watermen's Company. As regards the lightermen, the existing system raises the cost of transport upon the river. The wharfingers along the river bank, whether receiving goods for others on rent, or trading in their own goods for their own business, very generally complain that they cannot employ their own people in this work of barging up and down the river. I have had a personal exemplification of that to-day in our own business. There is a lightermen's strike at the present moment in the Thames, and we have a large quantity of dates coming from Persia, part of which have to be transhipped to the Continent. The lightermen have struck: we have undertaken to deliver these goods on the Continent, and we have no means of getting them from the import ship on to the export ship. The lightermen suggested to us that we should employ our own men for the purpose, but I have been reading the Acts recently, and I believe it is absolutely illegal for us to do so, though we have our own men who could do the work.

See 6638-39.

In the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce, the control of the Watermen's Company should be put an end to, and this is one of the first reforms required in the conduct of business on the Thames. I now come to (5.) "The Excessive Charges at the Docks." The London Chamber of Commerce appointed a special committee to prepare, for the consideration of the Royal Commission, a comparison of the charges in London with those of the other chief British ports. The result I have already handed in. It will be seen from the exhaustive returns given that the charges in London are enormously in excess of those in the other chief ports of the kingdom.

See 1158.

1232. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But it is quite open to us to draw the inference that they are not enormously in excess when we come to examine it?—Yes, if you find the figures are wrong.

1233. No, I do not mean that. We may draw a different conclusion, because figures are not strictly applicable always to the same thing, and they require a great deal of consideration?—That is so.

1234. I am merely suggesting that as a point for debate?—Certainly. At the request of the London Chamber of Commerce the Foreign Office some time ago instituted a comparison between the charges in London and the charges in the chief continental ports, such as Hamburg and Antwerp, to see whether the excess of the London charges accounted for the loss of the London transhipment trade. It may be asked how it is that the allied companies with such very high charges are in a bad financial position, while the other public wharfingers of the Port of London are prosperous, although the charges of the latter are on the average below those of the docks, and although the wharves have to pay out of their charges the cost of lightering goods to and from their premises and the docks. In our own trade we have had the figures taken out, and the average charges at the wharves are some 10 per cent. less than the charges at the docks—I am referring to the public wharves in London.

1235. That is warehouse rent?—Warehouse rent, landing, and so on. Goods are brought up by lighter and taken into these wharves and dealt with as they are at the docks, in fact. The lightermen pay the cost of lightering up, and still are able to undersell the docks. That is the point we have in view. The explanation of this seeming anomaly of the financial position of the docks is to be found in the fact that the allied companies, through their excessive charges, have lost a very large proportion of the warehousing trade of the Port of London, which has been transferred to the other public wharves up the stream. As a matter of fact, merchants would prefer storing goods at the docks at equal rates, because there would not be the delay of barging them up to the various wharves. That delay is found very considerable. The cost of the insurance at the docks is also less. With reference to this point of insurance, the allied companies state that their charges are above those of the wharfingers, because this is only equivalent to the extra insurance that people have to pay at the latter places. This, however, is a mistake, as the surcharge is much more than an equivalent to the saving in insurance when policies are taken out on what is called "floating terms." That is a matter of fact. I have worked it out myself. It will be observed that the charges in London when goods are not housed, but simply landed on the quays and then delivered, are enormously in excess of those made for similar services in Liverpool. This points to the great defect of our system in London, viz., the absence of a low quay rate, such as prevails in Liverpool. The Liverpool Dock Board do very little of the general warehousing trade of the port. Warehouses are provided for special trades, such as grain, tobacco, wool, and some of the smaller trades which require expert treatment and accommodation in their general warehouses; but, as a rule, goods are placed on the quay, sorted, and taken away in carts within three days from landing, but frequently, on payment of special rent (and when convenient to the dock managers), time is allowed for sales to be effected, and the goods are taken away by the buyers; payment of inward dues and quay rate being obligatory on the importer. The result is that although the Liverpool docks have little warehousing business, they are enormously profitable, although the rates upon goods have been and are being continuously reduced. The Liverpool Dock Trust is managed by a committee mainly elected from members of the actual trades who pay the dock charges. This committee thus consists of practical men actually employed in business, and who gratuitously advance the interest of the port, as well as of their own trade. I should tell you that in our own business we have frequently endeavoured to obtain quay rates on the Liverpool system in London, but we have been refused by the dock companies.

1236. They have refused to give you a quay rate?—They would make you house it, which is the same thing. Directly goods touch the quay for practical purposes they have to be housed. The trade of London has been undoubtedly seriously injured by the heavy secret discounts formerly given off the dock charges at the time of payment of accounts. This diverted a large amount of trade from London, because the agents who received these discounts were in some cases not in the habit of accounting for them to their employers abroad, the result being that the London charges appeared to be far more in excess of other ports than they really were. At length this scandal reached a great height, and, on the facts being publicly mentioned, the Joint Committee took the proper steps, and published the rates of discount in their books; and the amounts at the same time were greatly reduced, after the mischief was done.

1237. At what time was this?—I cannot give you the exact date. It is very clear in my memory, because we were unfortunately sufferers by it in the dry fruit trade.

1238. (*Chairman.*) You will be able to put in the actual date?—Yes.

1239. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is it ten years ago?—Something like that. It would be quite clear on the rates published by the Dock Company.

1240. (*Chairman.*) Your own books would show it if it was only ten years back?—I do not think we keep the books. The old books after a few years are no good, when you have paid the accounts. The Dock Company's rates would show it. They are now put in the book; the discounts are printed. I do not see any object in discounts myself, because if you are going to pay £100, you had better pay £100 and not get £10 back at the time you pay it. It is important to point out that while the tonnage of ships entering in to the allied docks has increased nearly 50 per cent. during the ten years ending 1898, the income from shipping dues has remained almost stationary, and only forms 26 per cent. of the income of the allied companies.

1241. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*)That is to say the tonnage of ships entering in the foreign trade—is not that what you mean?—In the foreign trade.

1242. It does not include all the tonnage?—I am not quite certain of that. The singular anomaly shown by the above figures calls for careful investigation, the more so as, while the London rates are in this respect lower than those of Liverpool, shipowners complain generally of the dearness of London. The dock rates are much more oppressive in some goods than in others; for instance, the rates for tea, in which London has practically no competitor in England, are enormous. For example, they are double as heavy as in coffee, although the average bonded value per pound of coffee is greater than that of tea. I should say not greater, but about the same as that of tea, because circumstances have altered. This is largely due to a combination of the various people interested, and who have formed an association called "The Tea Clearing House."

1243. Does that apply to the wharfingers' rates as well?—That applies to the wharfingers' rates as well, and on the system being recently questioned, the dock companies and the wharfingers attempted to form a pool or combination for seven years—to pool their profits in certain proportions, and apparently to maintain these exorbitant rates on tea to the detriment of the Indian planters and of the home trade.

1244. At what date was that pool?—I have it here, and I can hand it in if necessary. I do not know if it has been concluded. It is dated the 16th August, 1900, and there have been alterations since made from time to time by the Pooling Committee. I should say that the tea trade objected very much to that pool, and I hope it is dropped, but I have no means of knowing. As regards the dock rates generally, it is proposed that the special interests or sections concerned shall give evidence under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce with regard to the rates on particular goods. We propose to send in 40 witnesses, I believe, to estab-

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lish all these rates. (6 and 7): "Insufficient appliances and Slowness of Delivery." There is a general impression, which justifies official inquiry, that the appliances, such as cranes and so on in the docks of London, are much behind those in other ports, particularly in Hamburg and Antwerp. If so, this accounts for the slow unloading of ships, and the slowness in sorting goods, and in delivery. The matter is a constant source of complaint in the home trade, where it is found that goods take much longer to get away from the docks than from the public wharves. That I can substantiate myself, and the chief carriers can do the same. This is believed to be largely due to the extreme centralisation and red tape system of the dock company, but, at any rate, the fault exists, and ought to be seen to.

1245. You say that from your own knowledge?—I can say that from my own knowledge; it is very present to my mind. (8) "Railways and Canals." All the docks ought to be fully connected with the main railways leaving London, so that, as in other places, goods could be unloaded and immediately sent away in trucks direct to the many inland centres of trade. That applies very much to the case of sugar, where they have better appliances at the outports, and sugar, instead of going through London, as it might reasonably be expected to do, in some cases goes through places like Harwich, and places further north. There is practically little or no co-operation between the dock companies and the railways, but the latter have for many years past pursued a policy of developing ports of their own to the injury of the Metropolis.

1246. Can you mention cases?—We go on to mention them. A striking example of this fact will be found in the purchase of the Southampton Docks by the London and South-Western Railway. Southampton is only one port which may be cited, because a similar policy is pursued all round the coast from Littlehampton to Harwich, Grimsby, and Hull; the whole of the railway companies concerned with London, in fact, adopt similar policies, and it is a question whether an error has not been made by Parliament in granting to the railway companies the control of seaports. I should mention with reference to the railway companies that until the late inquiry into railway rates the terminal rates in London were very much higher than at other places, and by the exertions of the Chamber of Commerce on the railway rates question that anomaly was removed. It was of very vital importance to the Port of London in connection with this question, but in the past a great deal of the trade no doubt was sent to other ports in consequence of that. The result of that policy may be seen in the sugar trade, which formerly centred in London, and where wholesale traders are now forced to hold stocks all over the kingdom. That I can speak to from my own knowledge. We have from 40 to 50 stocks of sugar stored all over the kingdom now, which in former days would have been stored in London. I am quite aware that the development of trade would have caused a great deal of scattering of sugar in consequence of the Continent being opposite different ports, and there are other reasons, but at the same time we feel positively certain in our own business that that scattering of the sugar trade, which is very injurious to us, which involves more capital and more risks, is largely due to the heavy rates in London, and to the system of the port generally. In business these opinions are formed over a course of years, and very often the individual facts which lead you to form the opinion are forgotten.

1247. That is your own personal opinion now?—That is my own personal opinion. The mistake has already been recognised in the case of canals, which the public, to a certain degree, allow to be spoiled or to be undeveloped, in the supposed interests of the railway companies. Hamburg and other Continental ports are in communication with the whole of the canals of the country, which give them cheap water transport. In France the Government during the past generation has spent over forty million sterling on the canals of the Republic, which are entirely free from tolls, and are brought up to the age in every respect.

1248. Have you the reference for that?—I have not, but it is a matter of common notoriety and knowledge.

See 8703.

1249. I distrust matter of common notoriety and knowledge very much when it comes to evidence before this Commission. I should like to have the reference?—I will endeavour to find it.

1250. (*Chairman.*) An international report published some years ago would give you a full account of the canal system in France?—In Germany, it is not only the sugar bounties that promote cheap exports of sugar, but the canalised Elbe which brings supplies of sugar in very large barges at extremely low rates down to Hamburg. In our own case from Aussig, which is on the Austrian frontier, we get sugar conveyed at 10s. a ton; it flows down with the stream. Our own canals are not only unconnected with the docks, but the whole system is absolutely behind the age.

1251. They are connected, but not used?—They are used; I mean they are not adequately connected.

1252. They are physically connected?—They are physically connected, but the connection is at a considerable distance, and there is no co-operation between them. The docks of London should (this is what we mean by co-operation), if practicable, be in complete and full communication both with the canals and with the railway system of the country. Now we come to objection 9, "The Financial Position of the Dock Companies." The financial embarrassments of the docks are mainly a matter for the shareholders to consider, but they have an important bearing on the port, by preventing improvements. Poverty, of course, renders reform very difficult indeed, but at the same time it is no excuse whatever for the proposition made by the allied companies, as a result of which this Commission is sitting, which, while increasing their own revenues, would depreciate the property of others, in order to make up for their own losses. When the docks were constructed it was on the express condition that the freedom of the river was preserved, and the provision was probably based on the old common law, that where a boat will float there navigation is free. It is true that the first docks on their construction were granted a partial monopoly for 21 years, but on condition that they compensated the waterside property owners of London for the temporary loss of their privileges. I believe it was £1,000,000 that they were granted. At the expiration of the monopoly Parliament, finding that the dock company had sufficiently profited, refused to renew it, and again threw the river absolutely open, as it had, indeed, always continued to be for certain classes of goods. Parliament has twice refused to give the dock companies power to charge lighters and barges entering the docks. I should say that since the last refusal, which was in 1853, I think, more than half the water area of the docks in the Port of London has been constructed, so that the dock companies did it at that time with their eyes open. Circumstances no doubt have changed since then. It is hoped that the Royal Commission will effectually put an end to the revival of a scheme which would be injurious to the trade of London, as well as detrimental to the enormous waterside interests of public and private wharf owners along the banks of the Thames. I can put in a personal point there and confirm it. We have private wharves on the banks of the Thames in my own firm, and taking out the particulars we find that we pay one-third more rent per foot occupied than we do inland for the facilities of barging—importing goods by barges up the river without paying the dock charges. If the barges were charged the tolls proposed by the dock companies in the late Bill before Parliament—which is apparently about to be revived, as I see by the papers, with some modifications—if they made those charges on barges, the extra value of those warehouses would be lost to us. That is our own case, but it is still more the case with the public wharfingers of the Port of London, who are almost entirely dependent on the transfer of goods by barges. Speaking generally, the scheme recently proposed to Parliament by the allied dock companies would, in the opinion of the London Chamber of Commerce, inflict the gravest loss on the trade of this city as a whole. I now come to the subject of a "Dock Trust." The London Chamber of Commerce believe that the only effectual remedy for the existing disastrous state of things is to be found in the formation of a Dock and Harbour Trust resembling that which has been so successful in Liverpool. It is thought that it would be practicable to deal with the matter by separating the water basins of the docks from their warehouses, and constituting them into the Port of London in conjunction with the river itself. We discussed the matter very fully, and we came to the conclusion that it would be absolutely impracticable to incorporate in one scheme the docks, the dock warehouses, the public warehouses, some 50 or 60 in number, and 300 odd private warehouses along the Thames, which do not take goods for rent.

1253. They are not so in Liverpool?—No, the inland ones are not. The Dock Trust owns the warehouses belonging to the docks, but not the inland docks.

1254. There is a separate Warehouse Company?—Yes.

1255. Is your suggestion that all the docks would go into the scheme?—Yes; not the allied docks only, but that there should be a Water Trust for the Port of London.

1256. That is not so in Liverpool. The Bridgwater Docks never belonged to the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board. They have only recently purchased some portion of it during the present Session. Therefore, if you take the analogy of Liverpool, it is not necessary that all the docks should be in the hands of one trust. I only interpose that as a matter of fact within my own knowledge?—I understand there were difficulties with the Bridgwater Canal, but when I went down to Liverpool, where I spent a long time looking into the whole of this question, I understood that arrangements had been made by which the docks would buy out the Bridgwater influence. It is thought that it would be practicable to deal with the matter by separating the water basins of the docks from their warehouses.

1257. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have the County Council gone into the question of how it could be done?—I am not in a position to say.

1258. Or the Chamber of Commerce?—We should be quite prepared to go into it if the principle were accepted, but at the present moment we have not done so. It would require an Act of Parliament obviously, and a proper scheme of compensation by arbitration. Beyond that I do not know what more would be necessary.

1259. Take the case of warehouses overhanging the dock waters?—We are quite prepared to draft a scheme if we are asked to do so, but at present we have not gone as far as that.

1260. But if it cannot be done at all—if there are physical difficulties in the way of separating the warehouse business from the other?—I do not think there is any physical difficulty; it would require a slip on the quays. The warehouses are quite separate, they are some way back.

1261. I do not wish to argue the matter out now, but it is really very important to know how far the question has been considered, and how far you are prepared to say that it is practicable in the case of some of the docks to separate the warehouse business from the other business?—We have not gone into it in detail; we have only gone into the general idea. A Dock Trust could then be formed for the water area of the port, on which shipowners, importers, exporters, the dock warehousing companies, and the various wharfingers of London, as well as the Government and local bodies, should be represented. If the whole tidal basin of the Thames were under one authority, allied with, or including, a trust for the navigable waters of the port, the necessary revenues would be found, firstly, in the present sources, as paid to the Conservators or others; secondly, if a tonnage rate on ships were found to be insufficient to bring the port up to date, the merchants of London would not object (under a trust) to a reasonable rate being charged on all goods, whether taken to dock warehouses or the public or private wharves. Such a charge would be differentiated from the late proposal of the dock companies by the fact that it would affect all interests alike, and would give no one any preferential treatment. That is a very important departure. It is a different proposal to what the docks have made with reference to barges and so on, but it would give the amount of revenue, probably, that might be required; that is, that all goods landed in the Port of London should pay a certain charge, whether they are landed at the docks or at wharves or at private warehouses. The London Chamber of Commerce is, however, inclined to think that the port has fallen so much behind the age, that a temporary rate on all property in the Metropolis may be necessary to bring the Thames up to date; and that the vast importance of the question would justify such a tax if it be found needful.

See 767–69.

1262. (*Chairman.*) Those are the general conclusions to which the Chamber of Commerce have arrived?—Yes, my Lord, after a great number of meetings and very exhaustive enquiry from our own point of view.

1263. And they would be prepared to support the allegations made in this statement by evidence?—By witnesses, yes. Of course, when they are matters of opinion like this last statement—that a rate in London might be allowable—we cannot support that by evidence. That is a matter of opinion simply. There are some other matters of opinion in the course of a statement of that sort, but as to all matters of fact, we shall be prepared to substantiate them by evidence, or to withdraw them if not substantiated.

1264. Any suggestion as to the formation of a trust by so important a body as the Chamber of Commerce of London should, I think, be supported by some sort of scheme before it is considered by us again?—If you would express that as the opinion of the Commission, we would set to work to try to prepare one.

1265. Of course, there are other proposals for raising funds before us, and the Chamber of Commerce, if they oppose those schemes, must be ready with an alternative. They should be prepared, I mean, to substantiate this statement with a distinct alternative showing how it can be done?—We will undertake to do our best to draw up a scheme. Of course, it is a very complicated matter, because there are all the conflicting authorities at present.

1266. It is one of the objects, I presume, of this Royal Commission to ascertain the views of the parties in London, and therefore we trust that the London Chamber of Commerce—which is one of the most important parties, perhaps the most important party—will assist us?—Our next witness, Mr. Coke, will have a statement to present to you.

1267. We cannot go into the statement at the present time?—Our next witness, Mr. Coke, of Sassoons, was largely instrumental——

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We will hear Mr. Coke when he comes, but I must say a few words on the statement which has been laid before us, because it is a very serious matter. As I understand, the statement made by the witness has been placed on this footing: that it is a sort of counsel's speech, to be substantiated by evidence, and I think that is the right footing upon which to receive it.

(*Chairman.*) That is what I have endeavoured to lay down.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Exactly, and until the very controversial opinions and rather serious charges and allegations in the statement are substantiated by evidence in the true sense of the word, speaking as a Royal Commissioner, they have no effect whatever on my mind. I desire to acknowledge as an individual Commissioner the great care and trouble which the London Chamber of Commerce—so important a body—has taken to lay this matter before us, but under these circumstances I do not propose to ask this witness any question upon the statement, reserving my questions for the time when the witnesses are called to substantiate the statement.

(*Chairman.*) I quite agree with what Mr. Ellis has stated, and I do not propose to ask you any questions beyond those I have already put to you.

(*Witness.*) The Secretary of the Chamber reminds me that we are really following the request of the Commission in putting the general witnesses first, leaving the special witnesses to come afterwards; because this might just as well have summed up the evidence, only we thought it desirable to draw up a general statement of our opinion, and first of all lay that before the Commission.

(*Chairman.*) I do not in the least find fault with the Chamber of Commerce—I think in many ways it is very desirable that we should have their proposals as a whole before us before we go into details.

1268. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) In dealing with the lightering system you refer to steam barges. I should like to ask whether there are any steam barges employed now?—I believe not—a great many barges are towed—strings of barges are towed by tugs.

1269. But there are no steam barges going from dock to dock?—I cannot say of my own knowledge, I think not. But there is one great defect with regard to barges when they are towed.

1270. We had better not go into that now?—This is a matter of fact relating to our own trade. Two people have to go in each barge, which adds very greatly to the expense of barging when barges are towed.

1271. I only asked because in the Committee of 1879 reference was made to steam barges as being actually used, and one of the witnesses spoke of the likelihood of their increasing?—In our own trade they were not used.

Mr. CHARLES CHARLETON called and examined.

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1272. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce?—I am.

1273. How long have you been so?—Some five or six years I should think, perhaps more.

1274. And you are managing director of the firm of Johnson and Co., Limited, cement manufacturers?—Yes.

1275. You are also managing director of the Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers, Limited?—Yes, that is the company which has recently been formed in which my company will shortly be absorbed.

1276. You are chairman of the Cement Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce?—That is so.

1277. And you are also Chairman of their Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee and their Dock Trust Sub-Committee?—Yes.

1278. The general statement of the London Chamber of Commerce contains a reference to an attempt made by the London and India Docks Joint Committee to impose charges on sailing barges. Have you any detailed evidence as to that?—The evidence is principally contained in the judgment obtained in Court, but if any further evidence as to details is required we can furnish it. In the year 1899 the London and India Joint Docks Committee imposed charges upon sailing barges, carrying (amongst other goods) cement to vessels lying in the docks, without further notice than an alteration of their table of rates. The charges were paid under protest, and an action was entered in the Commercial Court in July, 1899, under the auspices of the cement trade section of the London Chamber of Commerce, by a firm of cement manufacturers for the recovery of the money paid to the London and India Docks Joint Committee. I hand in a copy of the judgment of this case. As will be seen from the report judgment was given that such charges were wrongfully demanded and must be repaid.

See 1197-8.

(*The Witness handed in a report of the Judgment in the case of the Burham Brick, Lime, and Cement Company, Limited, v. London and India Docks Joint Committee. See Appendix, 4th day, No. 9.*)

1279. This Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee of which you are chairman was appointed in November, 1899?—Yes.

1280. Have you formulated your scheme for a dock trust?—I think Mr. Rogers to some extent answered that question. The Railway and Docks Rates and Charges Committee appointed a Dock Rates Sub-Committee, and in doing so they empowered them to formulate, if they were able to do so, a scheme for a dock trust. When that matter came before the Council of the Chamber it was altered—I cannot give you the exact words—but it was so altered that the sub-committee were empowered to confer with other bodies with that object in view. Of course, if it is the wish of the Commission, as Mr. Rogers says, that the Chamber of Commerce should endeavour to formulate some scheme they will be only too pleased to endeavour to do so.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We do not ask them to do it.

1281. (*Chairman.*) What I stated was that they have submitted to us a certain statement, and that will be of no value to us unless the scheme is formulated. I leave it in that way. I do not ask the Chamber to do it, but I say that that is their only way of presenting the matter before us in a tangible and substantial form?—I quite understand. I merely wish to explain that the Council altered these words "formulate a scheme" to enable us to confer with other bodies to that end.

1282. You are not prepared to give evidence on any other special points?—No. Witnesses will be prepared—some thirty or forty—to come before you to substantiate the various statements which we have made.

1283. Your committee has been, in fact, empowered to prepare a list of witnesses to be submitted to us?—That is so, of the various trades and interests.

1284. I hope you will have due consideration for the Commission not to accumulate evidence beyond what is absolutely necessary?—We shall be in the hands of the Commission entirely as to that.

Mr. HENRY COKE called and examined.

Mr. H. Coke

1285. (*Chairman.*) You were originally in the service of the Government of Bombay?—Yes.

1286. As civil engineer in the Public Works Department?—Yes.

1287. In what years?—From the year 1855 to the year 1864.

1288. After that date you joined a commercial firm, the firm of Sassoon and Company?—Yes.

1289. The well-known East India and China merchants and bankers?—Yes.

1290. When did you go to Liverpool as agent for that firm?—In 1867.

1291. After being there 25 years you became the general manager of the same firm in London?—Yes.

1292. You have been director of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board?—A member of the Board.

1293. And President of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce?—For four years.

1294. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You are not now on the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—No, I retired when I came to London.

1295. (*Chairman.*) You have had considerable experience not only in Liverpool, but in Bombay in connection with the management of the Sassoon Dock?—Yes.

1296. And also in reference to the formation of a port trust?—Yes.

1297. Will you state what was the condition of the Port of Bombay when you went there?—I submitted to the Secretary of State for India in Council a scheme for the formation of a port trust for Bombay, the chief features of which were based upon the Liverpool system. This was adopted, and the Government of Bombay were authorised, to carry out this scheme which, with slight modifications, they did. It has worked admirably, and the Port of Bombay is now one of the cheapest and best organised ports in the world. The whole of the expenses are borne by the trade, and the facilities provided have continued to keep pace with the requirements of commerce. The capital of the Bombay Port Trust was originally four millions sterling; it is now nearly six millions. The 4 per cent. interest on the Debentures was guaranteed by the Government. There has, however, never been any occasion to fall back on that guarantee. I should say that there has never been any occasion to fall back on the guarantee since the formation of the present port trust, but the Government had a small trust of their own previously, the nucleus of the present port trust, which they tried to manage against the other companies, and they could not do it, and there was default in payment of interest for two or three years, which the Government had to make up.

1298. Default in the interest of another company?—There was default in the revenue of the property which the small trust had in charge for the Government, and the Government were obliged to pay the interest upon the sum that was concerned, which amounted to £2,000,000 sterling, but after the formation of the larger port trust and the union of all the interests there was never any default, and always a very satisfactory income.

1299. That trust was afterwards included in the Bombay Port Trust?—Yes, it was taken over.

1300. How was the money found originally; in the open market by debentures or how?—In the first place the Government had invested £2,000,000 sterling of Government money in the purchase of a small portion of the foreshore property called the Elphinstone property. It would be a long story to go back and tell the whole history of it.

1301. (*Mr. Ellis.*) When you speak of "the Government," you always mean the Government of India?—Yes.

1302. The Bombay Presidency?—We had to deal with the Government of Bombay.

1303. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) But the Government of Bombay did not guarantee the money. The Government of India guaranteed the money?—That may be so. Whatever the Government of Bombay did, it was with the sanction of the Government of India.

1304. (*Chairman.*) It was partly found by Government money and partly by private individuals?—The £2,000,000 sterling which I stated that the Government had embarked, themselves, in that business, was turned over into this new trust, and four or five large properties which had been competing with Government property were taken over at a price, which was agreed upon, 4 per cent. Debentures being issued for the whole.

1305. Instead of being paid in cash?—Instead of being paid in cash. I put this in because it is such an excellent example of what was the result of the formation of a port trust. At the time when these new debentures were issued in payment for the large properties taken over, these debenture bonds were standing at about 86—86 to 90—I cannot remember exactly, and as soon as the idea of the formation of a trust took hold of the minds of the public these debentures went to 94. The properties taken over were paid for by debentures when they were 94, but a few years after — say three years after—these debentures that were at 94 went to over par, so that the people who were paid in debentures and stuck to them got quite as good as, or more than, cash for their property. I do not know that that bears more upon the subject we have before us than just as an example.

1306. You have had experience both in London and in Liverpool?—Yes.

1307. I want to know how you arrived at the knowledge that London is the dearest port in the United Kingdom?—At the time I was engaged in the formation of the Bombay Port Trust and making recommendations to the Secretary of State, I drew up a comparative statement of the charges in eight or nine different ports of the United Kingdom.

1308. What year was that in?—In the year 1878. I drew up a statement for the purpose of indicating to the Secretary of State for India that the charges on trade in the principal ports of the United Kingdom were as stated there, and that if similar charges, or an average, or even somewhat less than these charges, were imposed upon the trade of Bombay, looking at the volume of that trade, there would be an ample revenue with which to pay the interest on the £4,000,000 sterling that they started with. For that purpose I started this idea of a comparison of charges for the different ports. Twenty years ago I found what a difficult matter it was, but I got the general knowledge that such was the case—that London was the dearest, that Liverpool was the next, and so on, and I made out similar statements at that time. When this question of the reorganisation of the Port of London arose, and I myself in my business had come into contact with these difficulties in selling goods from foreign places to London on account of the charges of London, and I had more time to spare, having retired from general business, I undertook for the Chamber of Commerce, with certain assistance, to prepare a more elaborate comparison, and as I say in this evidence, I have done it for the purpose of replying to those people who deny the fact. All the figures upon which these comparative statements are based are taken from the official published charges of the different ports. I declined to go into the comparison of what could be done with private companies or private wharfingers, and so on. I took what were the official charges made by the authorities of the different ports. As your Lordship said at the beginning, it will be necessary to verify all this by cross-examination, but I may say that the charges at the different ports vary very considerably in units of measurements. In wheat you will have the measurement sometimes by the cental, sometimes by the quarter, sometimes by the last, sometimes by the measure, and so on. All this had to be taken and brought down to a common denominator, and compared at so much a ton. That is what we have done, to show what is the difference in the charges of the ports. I do not know whether that may be taken as sufficient evidence of the mere fact, but if you desire me to bring up all the calculations on which the figures have been based, I am prepared to do so.

1309. I can understand that there would be great difficulty in getting at a uniform basis upon which to found the figures?—There always has been. Such as it is, there it is, and as I have said in the preface to the statement, I am not prepared to vouch for every fraction in it, but for the general purposes of this examination it is the clearest and the truest statement of comparison that has ever been made out. Further than that, let me add that, in support of my general statement that London is a very expensive port, I put in my own personal evidence as a merchant of over 30 years standing, selling produce to Liverpool, Hull, and London, and everywhere else, and making out hundreds and thousands of account sales for constituents abroad, that the general complaint abroad is that London is so expensive; we must cut down the charges, or they cannot send the goods there.

1310. Do you know as a fact that ships have gone to other ports rather than London in consequence of these charges?—I do not know the fact of any particular steamers—to be so precise as the Commission wants to be—having done so, but I know perfectly well that when our constituents have had goods in the market for sale, they have preferred to take a certain price to Hull to taking the same price to London, and they always require 3d. a cwt. more on 9s. to send their goods to London than they would to send their goods to Hull.

1311. Is there a difficulty in comparing London with other ports in this fact, that in London nearly all the goods are transferred by water carriage, and in other ports (in England—it may not be so abroad) goods are transferred mainly by land carriage—by railway, or trucks, or by road?—I am glad you have asked me that question, because I can give you an answer directly. There is no difference whatever. In Liverpool, with a very low quay rate, a cart with two horses, that will carry 5 tons, comes alongside and takes the goods away, and the dock authority has done with them. That rate is very low. In London the barge comes alongside, and takes the goods away from the ship's side or from the quay, and takes the goods to the warehouse, and there is no difference whatever.

1312. But there is no charge on the lighters at present?—There is no charge on the lighters, or on the carts.

1313. And there is no charge on the carter—quite true—so far as the cart is concerned, but is there a difference in the railway?—Of course, if you want to send the goods away from the port where they are landed by rail to a different place, that is another matter, and I may say there is a very great difficulty in arranging a port in such a way that you can deliver by cart and by rail at the same time.

1314. It has been done with a certain class of goods—grain, for instance?—Of course, if you get a ship load of goods, you can get a truck alongside, and the carts will not interfere. The capital of the Bombay Port Trust was originally £4,000,000 sterling; it is now £6,000,000, so that it has advanced nearly £2,000,000 in providing accommodation to meet the requirements of trade. They have built two very handsome, splendid docks there since the docks were taken over. I have drawn up for the London Chamber of Commerce a return (arranged on a comparative basis) of the charges of the Port of London and nine other ports in the United Kingdom, on 22 articles of Trade. This return was handed in by Mr. Rogers, and I now submit it as evidence. My object in preparing these tables is to remove all doubt on the question of the London charges on goods, for I know that it is affirmed by the parties interested in maintaining the present state of things that London is not an exceptionally expensive port. From my experience as a merchant in London and Liverpool I know that London is the dearest port in the United Kingdom, and with a few exceptions that is now proved by this statement, which is a close comparison of the printed official charges of the ten ports treated of in the tables. If you ask me what those exceptions are, I will say that, for tobacco and bonded goods that remain in the Liverpool Dock Board bonded warehouses for a year, the charge is greater than the corresponding charge in the bonded warehouses in London, a little dearer—a difference, say, of 5s. or 6s. on £2. That is as far as the tables are concerned, and I am prepared to answer any questions that the Commission would like to put to me on those tables. I have written a preface at the beginning of the return.

See 1158.

1315. The preface, of course, can hardly be put in as evidence. It is only explanatory of your evidence. It may be taken as information, and subject of course to further consideration by the Commission, if necessary?—Quite so.

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1316. I presume that these tables will now be public property as they are put in, and of course they will be liable to be cross-examined upon by any parties who wish to challenge the decision that the London Chamber of Commerce have come to. You are fully aware of that?—Yes. We have not allowed those tables to go out of the Chamber of Commerce until they were presented to your Commission.

1317. I understand that you have evidence to give with regard to the lightermen, but that I think had better be given whenever the question is raised by the Joint Companies, who are going to bring the matter before us at the proper time. I do not think it would be desirable to go over the same evidence now that we shall have to take later on. For that reason I will not ask you any question with regard to that point?—At the end of the return of charges I have added two tables (A and B), showing the comparative tonnage due on ships, levied by the dock authorities at the different ports and the extent of the capital involved in providing the present accommodation such as it is, the latter table—that is the financial one—more as an indication of the magnitude of the question referred to this Commission than as a suggestion of the methods to be adopted to meet the existing difficulties.

1318. (*Mr. Ellis.*) We cannot receive the statement, for instance, of the capital of the London and St. Katharine Dock, and the market value from anybody but the dock company?—I may say that this is taken from the last returns.

1319. (*Chairman.*) We cannot take that as evidence?—This is taken from the last published statement. I do not put it in as evidence, but merely as a suggestion. This is the opinion of the London Chamber of Commerce. The London Chamber of Commerce, constituted as it is of members having different interests cannot be expected to be unanimous as to the remedies to be applied for the removal of the present evils, but there is a consensus of opinion that the present state of things should not be allowed to continue. That I can put in as evidence from the numerous Committee meetings and Council meetings that I have attended on that subject.

1320. As you have a scheme, I think we had better defer the next part of your evidence. You will have an opportunity of being heard, and you will have an opportunity of cross-examining on the statements made by the dock companies with regard to the lighters if necessary. The Commission think it is desirable not to go into that at the present time. We will receive what you say with regard to what your belief is as to the cause of the collapse. What is your opinion?—Yes. It is my belief that the cause of the collapse is to be found:—(1) In the absence of any power to make a charge on goods for the use of the docks, and (2) the right of the consignee to demand that his goods should be sorted and delivered by the ship into his special barge without any payment whatever, in fact that the steamer should be treated as if she were a 500 ton wooden vessel discharging into the stream. I have said how that system arose.

1321. That is a matter which we do not want to discuss now?—Whether it would be wise to give such extended powers of levying dues to companies, which might be exercised for the benefit of shareholders, is another question. I think that such powers should be strictly guarded.

1322. That is your opinion?—Yes, that is my opinion. This leads to the consideration of the possibility of establishing a port trust for the whole of the Thames. I am inclined to believe that a practical scheme might be formulated by the co-operation of various influential bodies; but it would not be feasible for any single association, much less any single individual to suggest the outlines of such a scheme, before knowing that the general principle would be supported by this Commission, and by some of the influential corporations whose support would be required to carry it to completion. Looking at the capital involved in the Liverpool Trust (say 20 millions)—at present their debentures standing out are 20 millions, but they have spent a good deal more than 20 millions—and the ease with which the revenue is raised, not only to pay the interest on this capital, but to reduce the port charges from time to time, I think that London, with its much larger tonnage of ships and volume of trade, could with equal ease maintain a trust which would supply all the requirements of the port, within a reasonable amount of capital.

1323. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Referring to these tables, which no doubt have cost somebody a great deal of care and trouble, if you turn to Table 1 the question I want to ask you is to what date the rates or charges apply—London, Liverpool, Hull, and so on?—To the last printed official statement. They are generally about a year old.

1324. Will they all be about the same date?—About.

1325. Then I may take it for granted that they are all within the last year or two?—Yes.

1326. They are none of them antiquated charges?—Not at all. In the case of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board I brought them down to the latest corrected charges. The quantities imported in 1898 were taken from the Customs Report, 1898, because that for 1899 had not been issued when this was drawn up.

1327. Then, taking them for whatever they are worth, they are all of recent date?—Yes, they are all recent.

1328. (*Chairman.*) As far as your own personal opinion is concerned, are you in favour of the deepening of the river to, say, the Victoria and Albert Dock, to at least 30ft.?—I think that, unless that is done, other ports in the United Kingdom must certainly get the trade that is brought by the big ships that are being built at the present time. In the last 10 years the Port of Liverpool has obtained sanction to spend about 7½ millions in meeting the requirements.

1329. We can get that from Liverpool?—Yes. Unless the depth of water is such as will allow these big ships to come up to London they cannot come here.

1330. Have you ever heard that there was any objection to any increased dues, such as those that are levied by the Thames Conservancy for the purpose of deepening the river, which they have not yet done, to the extent that was recommended by the Committee of 1894?—I know this generally: that with regard to any trade that has been accustomed to a charge, however small it may be—absurdly small it may be, compared with other places—if you propose to increase it they will all cry out and object to it. One witness told you that the money that was required for the development of the Tyne was produced by a rate of 1½d. per ton upon coasting vessels, and 3d. per ton upon over-sea vessels. There is a corresponding charge in the Mersey for vessels which do not go into the docks, merely for keeping the navigation open. See 140.

1331. But you know in the Mersey there are two bodies: there is the Liverpool Dock Trust and also the Upper Mersey Conservancy Commissioners. Therefore, in an area which is not greater than that between Tilbury and London Bridge you have two bodies who have control of the waterway. Is it not so from your own knowledge?—That is my own knowledge. I know it perfectly.

1332. And there are docks owned by the London and North Western Railway Company, by the Manchester Ship Canal Company, and by the Shropshire Union?—At Ellesmere Port.

1333. All within an area not greater than what is comprised within the London Docks; and yet it works satisfactorily?—Yes, it works satisfactorily. All the vessels passing up the Mersey to an imaginary line which separates the Upper Mersey district from the Dock Board area pay those harbour dues, and they go towards buoying and dredging.

1334. Improving the whole river perfectly independently of the docks?—Yes. Then with regard to the vessels that go into the docks and pay the large dock dues of 1s.4d. per ton and so on, from oversea, a certain proportion is deducted by Parliament from the general revenues of the Trust, and put over to the credit of the account. I myself took a very leading part in the introduction of the system for dredging the bar. I was on the Finance Committee, and pointed out the financial means of getting the thing done. At that time there was an amount of £60,000 to the credit of the Conservancy account out of all these different sources of revenue. The Dock Board had no difficulty whatever in setting to work with an experimental scheme for the dredging with £60,000 to fall back upon. In the case of any port authority that has command of revenue to do what is necessary there is no fear about starting to do it when their own knowledge is brought to bear upon it and their professional advisers also recommend the scheme to be carried out.

1335. Then I gather that, whatever improvements may be made in the docks, you think that the first improvement, and that of the greatest importance, is the deepening of the Thames to the depth recommended by the Committee of 1894—30ft.?—That is the very first necessity.

1336. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I do not wish to go into the question of the details of your return, which are matters of information which you have been good enough to supply us with, but I should like you to make a little more clear what the bearing of the comparison is, assuming all the details to be true. Are you quite satisfied, as the mode of comparison, that you should lump together all these different ways of doing things which may be important at one port and not at another. For instance, supposing the delivery overside in London, where there is no charge, should apply to three-fourths of the goods, have you allowed for that in making your comparison when you say that London is the most expensive port?—As far as the charge is concerned. But let me go a little further. I see what your point is. Allowing the goods to be taken away free overside, and to pay no inland dues, or no dock wharfage charge, as they pay in Liverpool, when they are put into a barge and taken away, the charge at the warehouses is, by agreement with the dock companies, from 4 to 10 per cent. less than the dock companies charge.

1337. That relates to a warehouse charge?—Yes, that relates to a warehouse charge.

1338. The goods may be taken away and pay nothing?—I have said that for that special branch of the trade of London, as regards manufacturers on the banks of the river, who buy to arrive, and who take the goods away from the ships to their own warehouses, London is practically a free port.

1339. Does not that apply to three-fourths of the trade. That is the point I am putting?—I cannot tell you what proportion goes to private warehouses.

1340. But is not that important; that three-fourths of the goods are dealt with under A, and not under B, C, and D?—As far as the docks are concerned it may be so, but not as far as the merchant is concerned.

1341. These are all the official charges. You are dealing here with the official charges?—Yes, I am dealing here with the official charges, and you ask me with reference to the volume of the trade that comes under these charges.

1342. Undoubtedly?—What I say is of the goods that go away free overside, which in my opinion ought to contribute to the support of the port, but that is beside the question.

1343. You think they ought not to be free?—I think certainly not. They have services rendered; they have water supplied for them; they get all the conveniences of a dock; and if the dock companies could have foreseen the present state of things when they accepted the conditions imposed upon them by Parliament over a hundred years ago they would not have laid out their money in building docks for London. When I tell you of goods that go away without contributing anything towards the support of the dock companies, a portion of them go to private warehouses and a portion of them go to what may be technically called "public" warehouses, where they are warehoused for the merchant. When the merchant gets his goods out of those public warehouses, where he pays rents and charges, he only pays about 5 per cent. less than he would if he left the goods in the docks.

1344. As compared with another port, Liverpool, which delivers very much into carts from the quay, and where a charge is made by the dock company for the delivery into the cart, if those goods have to go to a warehouse afterwards, there is cartage to pay, and warehouse charges to pay, whereas in London the goods are delivered to the lighter for nothing. So that there is a difference to the advantage of London, as far as I can judge from your figures?—Let me say that the whole of the inward dues, and the charges in Liverpool which are called "master porterage," which are the two initial charges upon goods coming into port, are all swamped by the warehouse charges here. They disappear, and the owners of the warehouses and the barges get the advantage.

1345. But still the warehouse charge as far as the Dock Companies are concerned is a charge that simply applies to one-fourth of the goods?—Yes.

1346. And you are dealing here with official charges?—The warehouse charges of the Dock Company are a consolidated rate. Many years ago, when I came back from organising the working of a dock in Bombay, I went over the docks here, and asked how they arrived at that consolidated rate: did they begin with the rate for inward dues, wharfage, and removing goods from the warehouse, and then manipulating them in the warehouse? Did they break them up? They said no, they only made one consolidated charge, out of which they supposed they would get sufficient to pay their expenses and their profit. But we are perfectly justified in supposing that in allowing that consolidated rate the Dock Companies must have considered that the first expense that they had was to pay the interest on the capital involved in giving that accommodation to the goods.

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1347. I am afraid you are getting further away from my point, which is a mere question of fact: whether as regards this portion of the trade—that is to say three-fourths of it—London is not cheaper than almost any other port you have mentioned; that is, as far as the official charge is concerned?—My answer is that whatever portion of that three-fourths goes to a private warehouse ——

1348. That is not an official charge?—It is a question of what is the result to the merchant in the end.

1349. That brings me to the other question, whether the reputation of London as being the dearest port—admitting that that is the reputation of London—does not arise in part, not from the official charges, but from the other expenses connected with the handling of goods, which are not official, and for which the Dock Companies and the other public bodies having to do with the river are not in any way responsible?—I think considering that these charges in the public warehouses are based upon the consolidated charge of the Dock Companies, there is some connection between the dock charge which necessarily involves wharfage, and the charges made by the warehouses.

1350. But still they are not official charges, and they belong to the free movement of the market, with which we have very little concern in this place. We are dealing with official charges?—There is a working arrangement between the wharfingers and the docks. That is how it comes out.

1351. I cannot bring you to see that we are dealing here with official charges by the Dock Companies?—What I have dealt with are official charges by the Dock Companies, and nothing else.

1352. You say that these figures of yours prove that London is the dearest port of all those that you have mentioned; and I am pointing out to you that as far as regards three-fourths of the trade London is the cheapest port as far as these figures carry us?—I can only repeat that as far as those goods go into private warehouses it is a cheap port, but as far as they go into public warehouses, the charges for which are based upon the charges of the Dock Companies, it is a dear port for the merchant who has to bring the stuff to this country, and to sell it and deliver it. I have indicated all the free goods in the table here.

1353. No doubt, but the inference I am now suggesting from the tables is quite different from the inference you have put before us, and I wish to know quite clearly whether you have allowed for the different proportions of the trade?—I have not taken out the proportions, in the first place because I had no means of knowing for a certainty what was the proportion.

1354. Then how could you make a comparison between the ports at all unless you know the proportions. You ought to take the aggregate of each trade and then strike an average?—You certainly can make a comparison of actual charges for work done.

1355. For instance, what is the good of giving us a comparison of London and Liverpool as far as regards delivery from the import quay to the cart, when you have a dock like Tilbury Dock, where the goods would never be delivered into a cart to go to their destination?—Will you let me say that I was dealing with nine different ports that did their business in different ways, and whether they did it or did not, it stood in the first column.

1356. But still, when we come to apply our minds to the tables, we must take into account some of the considerations which I am now putting before you, and as far as I can judge the importance of the thing for London is the Class A. This is the most important class which we have to consider. I do not say that the others are to be disregarded altogether, but this is the important class. Then I ask you how you justify your inference that London is the dearest port?—I justify the inference that it is the dearest port by the charges made for the special work done. If the work is not done, and there is no charge upon it, it does not come into the comparison.

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1357. But there is as much work done in delivering the goods into the lighter by somebody as there is in delivering them over the quay?—Yes; the dock companies do not do that.

1358. I am merely wishing to get to an understanding of what the figures mean?—That is not a question that would arise, and it is such a complex question that it would have been most difficult to find out what would have been the amount multiplied by the volume of the trade. That is what you mean, I suppose.

1359. We as a Commission must do something of that kind, however roughly, to get at the actual truth of the matter, because the charge is that London is the dearest port as far as the official charges are concerned?—I have put down here in the very first column all that London does free, and below that I have put down everything for which a charge is made, and added up the column including the free.

1360. But the things they charge for are not the important things compared with the things that they do not charge for. At least, I wish to know what allowances you have made for the differences of relative importance that there may be?—I have made the comparison by the way in which the goods are handled. For instance, for goods delivered over side from ship to craft I have shown on all that class of trade what is the comparison between the charge for that class of trade done at different ports.

1361. And that shows that London is the cheapest?—No.

1362. It is always free in London?—I beg your pardon. I have got the table for wheat. If you look at the first one you will see that for wheat there is a charge of 1s. 9d.

See 8733.

1363. Is that an official charge?—That is the charge that people have to pay before they can get it.

1364. Is that an official charge? Is that a charge which the dock company are entitled to make and do make?—It is not a charge made by the dock company.

1365. Then it is not an official charge?—It is a charge that the trade of London has to bear.

1366. But the question here is, what are the official charges? Will you excuse me for bringing you back to the point?—Will you excuse me for pointing out that there is a note there, and there is an explanation with reference to that first charge on wheat which does not apply to anything else. If you go to all the other articles you will find they are all put down as free, both in London and Hull, but not for the other places. All the other tables with the exception of that one refer to goods that go free.

1367. Still you will not say that this is an official charge?—The London companies have nothing to do with laying that charge. The ships get that money.

1368. Then it is not an official charge?—I will withdraw it as an official charge.

1369. (*Chairman.*) Would not the best comparison be the actual charges which, before the goods come into the hands of the merchants, each class of goods pays at the different ports? That can only be got at by a comparison of the actual accounts sent in, so much at one and so much at another port?—That is what I have done here.

1370. They may not be all official charges?—That is the only case.

1371. But is not that the right comparison—to take each different trade, and to take what is actually paid by the merchant, whether it is an official charge or not?—That is what I have done.

1372. If you call them official charges, we will take them as official charges. If you take them as genuine charges which everyone has to pay before he can get his goods into the hands of the consignee, that is another thing?—Take the case of one article—East India cotton——

1373. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Excuse me interrupting you so early, but cotton is not a very important article for the trade of London, while it is an all-important article for Liverpool?—It tells you here how much it is. It is only a few thousand tons; it is nothing at all. But take anything else.

1374. Take hides. "(A) Delivered overside from ship to craft, London free, Liverpool 10s. per 100 hides. (B) Delivered from import quay to cart, London 13s. per ton, Liverpool 14s. 4d. (C) Delivered from dock warehouse, including four weeks' rent, London £1 1s. 7d., Liverpool £1 2s. 4d." Do you say London is dearer than Liverpool?—I do not know whether you have examined this. This is, no doubt, excellent cross-examination. I have said in the tables that, with a few exceptions——

1375. But you have very few articles altogether?—I have put down in my report, "With a very few exceptions," such-and-such a thing will be found, and you have pitched upon one of those exceptions.

1376. Then I should like to put this question to you: Whether you have not very few articles altogether, not sufficient to justify general inferences such as you have given unless they are illustrated by more than the few exceptions you have given in each case?—I have taken 22 articles, and that is only one. That is exactly what a cross-examining counsel would say. He would take one, and try to upset the truth of all the others by this one; whereas I have stated distinctly that "with few exceptions" that will be found to be the case.

1377. Take tobacco?—I have said that tobacco in bonded warehouses——

1378. Allow me to say that the list of 22 articles is really a short list, and one or two exceptions in such a list, when we do not know how the articles have been selected, may become very important. I am speaking here from a general statistical point of view.

1379. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In describing the Port Trust of Bombay you said that the Government, previously to the formation of the Trust, had invested two millions, which did not pay?—It did not pay previous to the formation of the Trust.

1380. What was that invested in?—In the purchase of the Elphinstone property.

1381. But that had never been developed in those days, and consequently did not pay. I am asking you this question with reference to the point which you have brought forward about the two millions as a justification for forming the Trust. That two millions really I do not think can be considered, because the Government had to pay that money for the Elphinstone estate, which had not been developed. They then handed it over to the Port Trust at that figure. In any case that property would have been developed, and houses would have been built upon it, whether the Port Trust had taken it or not. Therefore, I do not think your plea as to the two millions goes very far to prove the success of the Bombay Port Trust. Do you follow what I mean?—Yes, I think so. It points exactly to the demonstration that I intended to make—that as soon as that property came into the hands of a body that was able to finance it and develop it, it began to pay. The Government were in exactly the same position. What you call the original Port Trust—I think you were on the subsequent Trust——

1382. I had fifteen years of it?—The original Trust which handed over the two millions of property was exactly in the same position with regard to their property as all the others, the Mazagon, the Colaba, and the Sassoon Company were with reference to the receipt of revenue from their places, and the Government were going into a fierce competition with the other people, and the other people's property could not pay, and the Government property did not pay.

1383. My point is that in anybody's hands that property must have paid?—Yes, if they had the money to develop it.

(Adjourned to Tuesday next, November 20th, at Twelve o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

FIFTH DAY.

Tuesday, 20th November, 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The EARL EGERTON OF TATTON (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Sir FREDERICK DIXON DIXON-HARTLAND, Bart., M.P., called and examined.

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1384. (*Chairman.*) You are chairman of the Conservators of the River Thames?—Yes. I was first appointed on the 27th October, 1893, as a representative of the county of Middlesex, on the Thames Conservancy Board under the London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1893. On the reconstitution of the Conservancy by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, I was appointed member of the Board to represent the Middlesex County Council, and at the first meeting of the reconstituted Board, on the 7th January, 1895, I was unanimously elected chairman, and since that time I have been annually re-elected to that position. I have read the printed minutes of Evidence given before the Commission by the Secretary, the Engineer, and the Solicitor of the Board. I observe that the Commissioners expressed a desire to be further informed as to what had been done by the Conservators to carry out the recommendations contained in the Report of the Thames Traffic Committee, 1879. This information has been obtained by me from the minutes and records of the Board, from which it appears that on the appointment of the Thames Traffic Committee in 1878 the Board of Trade asked the Conservators to appoint a member to serve upon it, and Admiral Sir F. W. E. Nicolson, Bart., the Deputy-Chairman of the Board, was nominated. When the Report of the Committee was issued the Conservators were requested by the Board of Trade to assist Her Majesty's Government with their advice with respect to any legislation which might be proposed in connection with the Report of the Committee. The Conservators thereupon submitted to the Board of Trade a statement of the various points upon which legislation was in their opinion desirable. The Conservators proceeded at once to revise their Navigation Bye-laws then in force in conformity with the recommendations of the Committee so far as their powers admitted. Such revision was, however, limited almost exclusively to the rules relating to ships, as the rules respecting barges and other recommendations of the Committee, which included compulsory towage, could not be effectually dealt with without further Parliamentary powers, and the Conservators so informed the Board of Trade by letter on the 10th November, 1879. The Board of Trade replied that whenever the state of public business and other circumstances permitted, they would take into careful consideration the various points above referred to, as well as any others which might require legislation, and would propose to Parliament such amendments of the law as appeared to them to be necessary. The Board of Trade added that the concurrence of the Conservators in the Suggestions of the Thames Traffic Committee added much weight to these suggestions, and when the time came for legislating on the subject Her Majesty's Governement would no doubt give due consideration to this fact, whilst at the same time the Government were in no way committed to such suggestions and were perfectly free to deal with the same in such manner as justice and the circumstances of the case might appear to them to require. The Board of Trade stated that they "observe with satisfaction that the Conservators are publishing a draft of amended Bye-laws which they doubt not will contain all the provisions which their powers enable them to make." Early in 1880, these Bye-laws were submitted to the Board of Trade for the approval of Her Majesty in Council, and were approved on the 18th March, 1880 coming into force on the 1st June, 1880. In October, 1880, the Conservators again sent to the Board of Trade a statement of the points on which they considered legislation desirable in the ensuing session for the purpose of carrying into effect the recommendations of the Thames Traffic Committee. To this the Board of Trade replied asking if the Conservators would pay the cost of introducing the Bill into Parliament, and this the Conservators agreed to do. The Bill was thereupon drafted, and the Board of Trade and the Conservators agreed on the desirability of introducing it as a private measure, the Conservators stipulating, however, that the Board of Trade should have sole charge of it, and that the names of the President and Parliamentary Secretary should be put upon it. The Bill was introduced, and embodied the whole of the recommendations of the Thames Traffic Committee, which had not already been dealt with by the revised bye-laws. On the 29th March, 1881, following a debate in the House of Commons, at which I was present, the President of the Board of Trade withdrew the Bill and introduced it as a Public Bill on the 4th May, 1881. It was not considered right that it should be a private Bill. This Bill was withdrawn on the 4th July, 1881, by the President of the Board of Trade. The expense incurred by the Conservators in promoting these Bills amounted to over £1,100. In November, 1881, the Board of Trade informed the Conservators that the President had given directions that notices should be given for the introduction of a Bill or Bills for carrying out the object sought to be attained by the Thames River Bill of 1881, which, owing to the pressure of other public business, had to be postponed. The question of the expenses of promoting these Bills was raised by the Conservators, and the Board of Trade took up the question with the Treasury by a letter dated 16th November, 1881. The Board of Trade therein stated they proposed that in the Session of 1882 the questions should be dealt with by two public Bills, and suggested that the Bill for the abolition of the Watermen's Company and compulsory pilotage should be considered a Government measure, and paid for by the Government, and that the Bill for regulating the navigation should be paid for by the Conservators.

See 76 and 155.

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After much correspondence the Treasury agreed to the expense of the first-named Bill being borne by the Government. In November 1882, the Conservators issued notices for their proposed Thames Navigation Bill, which ultimately became law (Thames Act, 1883), and which dealt with the following points raised by the Thames Traffic Committee, viz.: (1) Increase of penalties for breaches of rules as to navigation of Thames; (2) Metropolitan Police to assist in detection of breaches of Conservators' Acts and Bye-laws. A letter was received from the Board of Trade stating that the President of the Board had given directions for notices to be prepared for the introduction in the Session of 1883 of a Bill to abolish compulsory pilotage and to discontinue certain privileges of the Watermen's Company; that the Bill would be similar to the one which, owing to the pressure of other public business, could not be proceeded with. Such a Bill has not up to the present time been introduced by the Board of Trade or other Government department. Before leaving this subject I should like to call attention to the fact that the Thames Conservancy Bye-laws of 1898 cover the whole of the recommendations of the Thames Traffic Committee under the head of "Rule of the Road," and, moreover, adopt all the revised Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea of 1897 so far as they are applicable to river and harbour. With regard to lights on barges the recommendation of the Committee has been accepted by the Conservators, and Bye-law 31 of our Bye-laws of 1898 prescribes that all lighters below London Bridge when under way and not in tow between sunset and sunrise are required to have a white light always ready, and to exhibit the same on the approach of any vessel. With regard to the Committee's recommendation as to the navigation of barges by competent men, I should like to point out that Bye-law 27 of the Thames Bye-laws, 1898, provides that lighters above 50 tons burden shall have two, and above 150 tons burden three persons to navigate them. I should like also to point out that the penalty under the present Bye-laws of the Conservators has been increased to an amount not exceeding £10, and not infrequently the full penalty has been inflicted, especially in cases where there has been a previous breach of the particular Bye-law. It was brought up that the old penalty of £5 was not sufficient, and that if we could get a £10 penalty we should be more likely to get the law obeyed, and, in consequence, it was increased to £10. That is the end of my evidence with regard to the Thames Traffic Committee of 1879. Then with regard to the Lower Thames Navigation Commission, I have read the report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission of the 25th March, 1896, which Commission was appointed by the Board of Trade under the provisions of Section 189 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, the last paragraph of which provides: "If any dredging or other operations shall be recommended in the report of the said Commission, the Conservators shall, as soon as may be reasonably practicable after a copy of such report shall have been received by them as aforesaid, either proceed to carry out such dredging or other operations, or apply to Parliament for all such powers as shall be desirable to enable them to give effect to the recommendations of the said Commission." I should also like to point out that the sole reference to that Commission was: "Whether any and what dredging or other operations are practicable and expedient for the purpose of improving the navigation of the Thames and the estuary thereof, between Thorney Creek, in the County of Essex, and the Nore Lightship." That is in paragraphs 49 and 38. And further: "As to the probable cost of such dredging and other operations, if any, which the said Commission may deem practicable and expedient, and as to the means by which the funds necessary to meet such cost should be provided." The Commissioners in their Report did not recommend that works in the river between Thorney Creek and the Nore Lightship within the limits of their reference should be carried out by the Conservators, and I should like to refer particularly to paragraph 49 of the Report, in which the Commissioners state as follows—this is a very important paragraph: "Having come with some regret to the conclusion that works in the river between Thorney Creek and the Nore cannot at present be recommended, we have found it unnecessary to proceed with the second branch of our inquiry, namely, the source from which funds shall be provided for works of improvement within that area. We fully recognise, however, that the deepening of the Thames is a matter of great importance, and that the mode in which the necessary funds should be provided demands very careful consideration. It seems to us that the financial powers of the Conservators, whenever the fitting time arrives for undertaking the works, should be dealt with as a whole, for though we think it is expedient to provide a deep water channel to Gravesend (or even possibly to the Albert Docks) it is of equal, and perhaps greater, importance that no financial burden should be so placed as to damage the commercial interests of the Port of London in the present severe competition with other ports in this and foreign countries." I should like to refer also to paragraph 38 in which the Commissioners stated for the reasons given therein that they could not "recommend the immediate expenditure of money between the Nore and Thorney Creek." That is a part their reference referred to. Having regard to the terms of the Report of the Commission the Conservators did not consider it incumbent upon them to apply to Parliament for any further powers, and I should submit to the Commissioners that looking to the inconclusive nature of the Report it could not be held to be mandatory (as it has been termed) upon the Conservators to go to Parliament. The Conservators therefore decided to adopt a scheme of improvement—they always had a particular line of policy, and that policy they have continued and are continuing to the present day—which although involving a large expenditure could by careful management be carried out with the financial resources at their disposal. This scheme provides channels:— See 1903–31.

From the Nore to Gravesend	1000 ft. wide,	26 ft.	deep.
„ Gravesend to Crayfordness	1000 „	24	„
„ Crayfordness to Royal Albert Dock	500 „	22	„
„ Royal Albert Dock to Millwall Dock	300 „	18	„

It is completed at the present moment as far as Gravesend, the remainder being in progress. Then I should like to point out that the cost to the Conservators of the Act of 1894 was as near as could be £12,000, and therefore in any Act we brought up we should have had to look forward to much the same expense, and as it would involve a large quantity of taxation to be put somewhere we knew we should be thoroughly opposed by anybody we proposed to tax, and we might have the Bill thrown out, and probably the whole of the money which had much better be spent in dredging would be thrown away. The Conservators have recently, as desired by the Commissioners, for the purpose of stating the policy of the Board, considered the subject matter of the reference to the Commission, and have arrived at the following conclusions: In view of the tendency to increase the size and draught of ocean going steamers, the Conservators, though not admitting that the Report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission contains a specific recommendation that a navigable channel of 30ft. below low water of spring tides should be provided up to Gravesend, are prepared to deepen the river where necessary to provide such a channel, if Parliament considers it desirable, and will provide the means for raising the necessary funds. With regard to that I may simply say that the Conservators do not consider that the River Thames is a river that is up to date in the same way that many of the rivers are—the Tyne, the Mersey, and various others; and we do consider that it is our duty and it is our wish and our intention to do everything we can to make the Port of London in a satisfactory state, if we can only get the money to do so. The distance in the Thames from the mouth up to London is very much larger than the distance in the case of the other rivers I have referred to. We do feel that it will be an enormous undertaking, but we consider that it is our duty to do it, and we wish to do it if we can only find the funds. At the present moment we have spent every penny we can spend in promoting the navigation and deepening the river. Our estimate for this year has just been brought up to the Conservators, and making allowance for everything which we have to do, and are able to do, it only leaves us a balance of £15 upon the year's income, therefore showing that we are actually doing all we can and all that is in our power. When promoting the Bill of 1894 the Conservators made proposals to Parliament for the reconstitution of their Board, and this subject was considered at great length by a Committee of the House of Lords as well as that of the House of Commons, who after hearing the many claims See 103.

for representation, settled upon the present constitution of the Board. In practical working this constitution has been found in all respects satisfactory, and no complaints have been made as to the administration by the Conservators of the powers conferred upon them by their Act, or as to the general management of the river as a whole. I may say that the upper river is managed by one Committee and the lower river is managed by another Committee, and the whole time that I have been Chairman there has never been a solitary thing which the Lower River Committee recommended which has been in any way upset or interfered with by the Upper River Committee, and *vice versa*. Therefore the constitution as it at present exists is eminently satisfactory for the working of the river. With regard to the extension of the 30ft. channel up to the entrance of the Royal Albert Dock, as
See 2059. urged before the Lower Thames Navigation Commission by the London Association of Shipowners and Brokers I should like to point out that until the depth of the water over the sills of all the docks is very much increased there would be no practical advantage in forming such a channel, as vessels would have to wait at the dock entrances until the tide had risen sufficiently to enable them to enter the docks. I have here a table which I might ask the Commissioners to call upon the Engineer
See 1693. of the Board to explain afterwards. It shows exactly the level of the sill below Trinity high water mark, then the Admiralty low water mark, then the depth of the sill at Admiralty low water mark and the depth of the water in the supposed channel, and it shows that at present we allow at the Tilbury Docks 26ft. Therefore, if we could get 4ft. more at the Tilbury Docks, even as at present, we should have quite sufficient to float the largest vessels that exist. Perhaps you will allow the engineer to give that evidence more fully afterwards. He has also got a diagram to illustrate the table of the detention
See 1683. of ships which he handed in to you the other day, which perhaps you might like to see. It would be most undesirable for vessels of large size to be brought up in narrow parts of the river where they would cause serious obstruction to the navigation. I would also point out
See 1735 -6. that there is no question of divided authority between the Trinity House and the Conservators, their duties being entirely separate and apart. Those of the Trinity House are limited to the buoying for marking channels and the lighting of the river and the control of the pilots, and they do not interfere at all with what we have to do.

1385. I will ask you first of all with regard to the constitution of your Board. Do you consider that the attendances of the members of the Board are thoroughly satisfactory?—Thoroughly satisfactory. I have never seen a Board that attended so well.

1386. I should like to know how many ship owners are on your Board?—Three.

1387. What amount of tonnage would they represent? Do any of them own large sea-going vessels? What we want to know is whether, in fact, they are or are not the largest ship-owners in London?—No, I should think not, because the P. and O. and the Orient, and some of those other lines, would be larger than our ship-owners, I
See 5567-8. should think; but they are appointed by all the ship-owners. One of them retires every year. There is an election in which I am returning officer, and the whole of the ship-owners have the right to appoint the representatives.

1388. Have you never had any representation from shipowners as to the desirability of deepening the bed of the River Thames as mentioned generally in the Report of that Commission in paragraph 35 which I have already quoted in asking questions of your secretary: "We concur then with the view of the shipowners and others that much public advantage would be gained if a navigable depth of about 30ft., suitable for vessels of the largest draught, were afforded at least up to Gravesend." That is an opinion which modifies the view which has been taken by your Board that it was not necessary to do so?—But we have not taken that view at all.

1389. Then why has nothing been done?—We have increased the depth very largely, and we have increased it to the utmost of our means. We have got no further means whatever, and as I pointed out in my evidence it was only a pious wish expressed in the Report—it was not an order.

1390. Exactly so, but it is the opinion of the shipowners and others that public advantage would be gained?—It is the opinion of those very large shipowners, but we have been able to point out to them that it is perfectly useless their having the river deepened beyond what we propose to do until the sills of the docks are altered, because big vessels coming up would lie outside the dock and would block the whole of the river, and it would be no use at all unless they could get in. At the present moment I think there are eight ships only that cannot come up at all tides. But we fully recognise that as the port increases the tonnage of ships will increase, and we ought to increase the accommodation. They complained that they could not come up with all tides—that they had to lose half a tide sometimes. We pointed out to them that it would be perfectly useless their being able to come up unless they could get into the docks. In fact our harbour master could not allow them to come up until they could get in, because they would block the river and upset the whole traffic.

1391. But the question is whether you as a body who are entrusted with the improvement of the navigation of the Thames should not take the lead in the matter. That is a view which may be taken?—We should like to do it if we had the money. We quite admit that it ought to be done, but I do not think it would be much use unless you make a recommendation that the dock sills should be so lowered that the ships could get in.

1392. I do not wish to say anything to disparage in any way the work which has already been done by your Board, but what strikes one is that this is the conclusion which you have arrived at since the sitting of the Commission?—Oh, no, we have always had that view.

1393. Please allow me to finish—if that resolution which you have just submitted to us is one which is desirable now, was it not equally desirable a few years ago?—I think it was, but we have no money.

1394. Have you on your Minutes any resolution similar to this or of a similar nature which would carry out your views?—No, the only resolution we have is this. It was thoroughly discussed after the Report of the Wolfe-Barry Commission—as we call it—was produced. We discussed it; we thought, as I have stated in evidence that there was no mandatory order, but still it was our duty to do all we could, and we fully looked forward that some day we should do more when we had funds. At the present moment we have carried out the ideas of this Commission as far as ever our money has allowed us to go.

1395. Then there is a point which you mentioned last of all, about the question of divided authority between the Trinity House and the Conservators. Is it not generally the case that the buoying and the dredging is in the hands of the same authority. Would it not be an advantage to have the buoying and the dredging in the hands of the same authority?—They do not buoy the river; they only buoy for marking the channels; we buoy the river.

1396. But there must be a place where the two meet. Your authority does not go the whole course of the Thames?—We go up to Yantlet Creek under our general authority and dredge up to the Nore under the authority given us by the Act of 1894.

1397. But it is no use dredging in one part of the river unless an equal amount is dredged in another part, and in consequence of your not having the whole jurisdiction, there is a hiatus, so to speak?—We have the whole jurisdiction as far as dredging is concerned up to the Nore.

1398. Up to the Nore, but not beyond?—That is the whole of the river.

1399. The whole of the river so far as the Customs is concerned, but there is another authority there. It goes further.—Well, perhaps the engineer will answer the question whether there is anything beyond that. It is rather an engineering question.

1400. The question is whether it would not be to the advantage of the Port of London that there should be unification of authority with regard to dredging and buoying the whole of the river?—We are quite willing to take it. We have never clashed with the Trinity House, as it happens.

1401. But has not the Trinity House neglected or refused to buoy the channel which was recommended in the Report of the Barry Commission?—No; not

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that I know of. Perhaps you will ask the engineer that question.

1402. I think we have had it in evidence?—I do not know it.

1403. Is not that one of the results of the buoying and the dredging not being in the same hands?—Perhaps you would ask the engineer that; I do not quite know it.

1404. Then with regard to the previous recommendations of the 1879 Committee, you stated that as far as bye-laws are concerned you have carried out everything you had the power to do?—Everything we had power to do.

1405. But what at present seems not to have been carried out at all is with regard to the powers of watermen and licensing, and so on?—Yes, we had no powers.

1406. From your evidence I gather that the responsibility was taken by the Board of Trade, and the Board of Trade have never carried the Bill which they originally brought in?—Yes; they have never tried to carry it after that one time; but we are quite willing to take that duty if Parliament choose to give it us.

1407. You think it would be desirable that all these minor duties should be in one hand?—I do.

1408. Do you think that the division of the river into two parts is the best way, or is it not rather pointed out by nature and the bridges, that London Bridge should be the limit, the limit so far as the lower part of the river is concerned?—May I ask if you are speaking with regard to the management of the river, or in what way do you mean?

1409. With regard to dredging and so forth, as the funds are kept separate, do you not think the funds of the upper river should be spent from London Bridge upwards and the funds of the lower river should be spent below London Bridge?—No, I do not think that would be best, for this reason: The upper river is a poorer body than the lower river. We have quite as much as we can manage to do down to what we call the fresh water part. A good deal of scouring may be done by the tide, but there is no question that the river ought to be dealt with as a whole. It was thoroughly threshed out in 1894, and it was also brought before Mr. Ritchie again by a body in 1896, and he said it had been settled so recently and worked so well that he utterly refused to have anything to do with altering it.

1410. Do you think it satisfactory for a river like the Thames, which ought to be the great waterway of London, that at Westminster Bridge the water is so shallow that a small steamer drawing about 6ft. or 7ft. of water can only come up there at high tide?—Is that the fact?

1411. I know it is, because the Commissioners were unable to embark in your boat at Westminster Bridge in consequence of the low water, and when we started from London Bridge we grounded under the Bridge?—You were at the very lowest tide, I suppose.

1412. No. We grounded under London Bridge. We could not get up at all with your steamer. Do you think that is a satisfactory state of things for the waterway of a great city like London?—I cannot answer that question; I did not know it had occurred.

1413. I am asking you as a question of general policy. In your opinion, is it right or is it politic that the Thames waterway should be left in such a condition that large steamers carrying traffic backwards and forwards, as is done on the Seine and on other large rivers should be hindered from doing so by the depth of water at low tide—or even at high tide?—My answer to that is this. There are an enormous number of wharves and various things all up the Thames. As to everyone of those, it will have to be considered what would happen to their foundations if the river in that part was very seriously dredged. It is quite deep enough for all the trading purposes for which it is used at the present moment, and I think the amount that would have to be spent to strengthen the foundations of the whole of the wharves down the river on both sides would be so enormous that it would not answer any practical purpose. It is only the pleasure craft that is delayed a little bit; it really does not matter. All the barge traffic is perfect.

1414. I am not speaking of pleasure craft. I am speaking of the Thames as a waterway for business men in London. At present you have no steamers on the river at all?—That is not because of its depth.

1415. The depth prevents a large steamer being run on the river?—No; I do not believe it pays. I think it is far better for the Thames to look forward to having a number of small steamers running every few minutes in the same way as they have on the Seine, rather than a number of large steamers running at very long intervals. The Thames traffic will never pay as long as you have quarter of an hour intervals while you have trains running every three minutes. What you will have to do if the Thames traffic is to be a success is to have a number of small boats running every few minutes, and not big boats that you cannot fill running every quarter of an hour.

1416. But the Seine steamers are larger than any that have ever been up the Thames?—Not for general traffic, I think.

1417. Yes, for general traffic?—The week before last I was in one of them—they call them the "Hirondelle." For general traffic the Seine is used by small steamers.

1418. But they have also large steamers?—I do not know that; I could not speak positively.

1419. We are informed—I do not know whether it is so or not—that slop from the streets is carried on to barges lying at the wharves, that is to say, between London Bridge and Westminster Bridge, or between London Bridge and the upper bridges, and after the slop is carted to the barges a plug hole is opened and a quantity of mud is allowed to flow into the river—is that so?—Certain vestries and various bodies have a right to pass from their wharves the sweepings and all manner of things from the streets into certain barges of their own, which are covered and of such a character that we do not think that anything they contain will get into the river. Many of these barges, when they have got a certain way down the river—it is not until they have gone beyond Crossness Point—then the men are so lazy that they open the plug hole, and instead of going on to Dead Man's Hole, they discharge there. We have a system of police boats to try to catch them, and when we do catch them we prosecute them for very heavy penalties. They have no right to do so, and if they do it they break the law, and we try to prevent it.

1420. But are you prepared to say with regard to the barges laden with the mud from the streets, that in none of them the plug hole is taken out, and that no mud is deposited in the river between London Bridge and the other bridges in London itself?—Not that I know of; it is deposited further on; but if they do it they do it by breaking the law and we try our best to catch them. If we catch them we always prosecute, because of course it is stopping up the river.

1421. I suppose it is difficult to detect, unless you find the water of the river discoloured?—No; we manage it in this way. A barge leaves a particular place, and we know it has to go to another place. It is watched as a rule. If it comes back before the time it could have got to that other place and back, we know that it has done something wrong. We offer large rewards, and if we get sufficient evidence we then bring them up before the Magistrates and they are punished. I think I might just mention that in that part of the river which you mentioned we are not the sanitary authority. The Port Sanitary Authority of the City of London have that part. We are not the sanitary authority for that part; the part for us is lower down the river.

1422. That leads me to ask you this. Is it not desirable that these functions should be united under one body?—I think so.

1423. That whatever is the port authority should also be the sanitary authority?—Yes; I think they should give it to us. We are quite willing to take all the duties, but we cannot take anybody else's place unless it is given to us. See 3662; 5568.

1424. Now I understood from your previous witness that you have never made any inquiries as to what has been done in other ports—with regard to the deepening, say, of Antwerp, or any of the other ports competing with the Thames?—I do not know that the Board have made inquiries. I have taken some steps to inform myself on those questions. See 360-1.

1425. I suppose you know it is a matter of notoriety

that vessels have gone to Antwerp which used to come to London?—I believe so.

1426. You admit, therefore, that it is very desirable that the river should be deepened so as to enable the Port of London to compete in every way with other Continental ports, or even other ports in our own country, such as Southampton?—We certainly ought to bring the Port of London up to date, and if we only had the means we should be glad to do so. Certainly I think it ought to be done.

1427. In your evidence you stated that you "throw upon Parliamentary responsibility of giving your powers to enable you to give effect to the recommendations of the said Commission?"—Yes.

1428. That means that you are not prepared yourself to advocate any way of raising funds. Does it mean that, or have you any scheme?—Oh, we have a scheme, at least we have our ideas on the subject, but of course that must be a Parliamentary order. We cannot tax people.

1429. But what I mean is, you have the power to apply to Parliament?—We have.

1430. Have you ever had any scheme which would enable you to get the funds which you say stop you from doing what you admit are necessary improvements in the river?—Do you mean have I got a scheme that I, should be prepared, if Parliament allowed us, to bring forward?

1431. Not if Parliament allowed you. It is your privilege or duty—it may be your duty—to apply to Parliament for such powers. I ask you whether you have formulated any scheme for raising such funds as would enable you to do that which you admit is desirable?—I have a scheme. You mean to raise funds in case Parliament——

1432. What I want to know is, will you go to Parliament?—No, we have not got any money to go.

1433. We want to know whether you are prepared now to go to Parliament to raise funds to enable you to do that which you admit is desirable to be done?—We are prepared with a scheme, but we are not prepared to go to Parliament. We think it ought to be a public Bill, not a private Bill. We should never be able to get the assent of everybody whom we proposed to tax. Every interest would be against us in the House of Commons, and, as you know, it is a very difficult thing to get a Bill through that treads on everybody's toes. But we are quite prepared to tell the Government what we think should be put into their Bill.

1434. But have you ever told the Government?—The Government have left the Bill untouched. We have never told them.

1435. I understand you to say that the Board of Trade have not carried out their promise; but what I want to know is have you ever approached them with regard to this other promise which you say ought to be embodied in a public Bill and not a private Bill? Have you ever approached them?—No, because we felt that unless they took it up it would have no chance.

1436. But have you ever urged them to take it up?—I have spoken privately to them.

1437. Have you ever passed any resolution as a Board?—No.

1438. Then you have never considered at all what the cost of the new works would be which you admit to be desirable?—Oh yes; we have had a rough estimate given us by our engineer, but that is a very large estimate indeed—over a million.

1439. You told us that you were frightened at it?—Well, I think Sir John Wolfe-Barry's Commission were also frightened at it.

See 5459. 1440. But we are not frightened. We want from your engineer a definite estimate of the cost of the new works to enable the river to be deepened to 30ft. up to the Victoria and Albert Docks?—To get out such an estimate would take months.

1441. We know that if engineers have to do a thing they will do it. Will you give instructions from your Board to your engineer to lay before us within two months, or even one month or any time you may fix, a definite estimate as to the cost of such work as I have mentioned?

(*Witness.*) How long would it take, Mr. More?

(*Mr. More.*) It depends on measurements, but it could not be done in two months or anything approaching that. I think I might ask Sir John Wolfe-Barry to corroborate that.

(*Witness.*) It is an enormous work.

(*Chairman.*) Is it not merely a question of expense?

(*Mr. More.*) Well, it is a question of expense.

(*Chairman.*) And you have declined to go to the expense?

(*Witness.*) No, we have not declined at all.

1442. If it is not a question of expense, why have you not done it already?—Because we found that we have no more money than we are spending.

1443. Then it is a question of expense?—A question of expense in carrying it out, not a question of expense in getting the estimate. The estimate we thought would be useless until we had the money to carry it out. All we have done is to get a rough estimate, and that is between one and two millions.

1444. Do you think any Government Department would bring in a Bill unless you went to them and said: "Here is our estimate of what the thing will cost; will you bring a Bill into Parliament"?—If Government will say that they will bring in a public Bill, we will go to the trouble of getting up this estimate before the time that they want it.

1445. The question I put to you is this: You are the body responsible for the navigation of the Thames, and it is your business—at least, we imagine it would be your business—to urge on the Government to take such steps as would make the navigation of the Thames satisfactory to the ship-owners and the merchants of the Port of London?—I do not think the Government will touch it.

1446. I am only asking you—we want to know what you have done and what you propose to do?—We have done nothing.

1447. We should like to know definitely when you can give the estimate. We shall expect to have it.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) We want an approximate estimate.

(*Chairman.*) We must have an estimate of a kind, of course, a sufficiently detailed estimate to enable us to act upon it.

1448. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Would you tell us a little more fully what you mean by the words "provide the means for raising the necessary funds"?—We must have some taxation.

1449. You must have some powers?—We must have powers of some sort. We have at the present time exhausted the whole of our powers. If Parliament chose to say: "You are to have such and such sources of revenue," that would provide the means. It will be for them to say in what way those revenues are to be found for us. I told the chairman that we had our own ideas; but, of course, Parliament might not approve of them.

1450. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I want to ask you one or two questions on the report of the Commission of 1896. In the first place, on page 3 you will see that the ship-owners who were before the Commission owned 500,000 tons of shipping; so that it was not an expression of opinion by a small number of people?—Oh, no.

1451. And I daresay you have had the opportunity of reading the evidence that was taken?—Well, I was a good deal in the room if you remember.

1452. At any rate, we had the evidence of all the most important lines, the British India Line, the Orient, the P. and O. Company, Shaw Saville, Scruttons, Westrays—and in fact all the principal shipowners of London came before us in 1896, and were unanimous, I think, in asking for a depth of water 30ft. up to Gravesend, and a large number of them asked for a depth of 30ft. up to the Victoria and Albert Docks?—I think so.

1453. Therefore the question was gone into by the shipowners in 1896?—The large shipowners.

1454. I mean those which I have just enumerated—the owners of large ships?—The small shipowners, as you know, are very much opposed to it. They say "we do not want to be taxed to put in rivals who will cut us out."

1455. There were other shipowners of less important lines of steamers who said "We demur altogether to be taxed for the sake of the big steamers?"—Yes.

1456. I suppose that is not unusual whenever public works are undertaken?—Yes.

1457. You said something to the Chairman just now

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about depositing material in Dead Man's Hole. Is that still going on?—No—Barrow Deep we are taking to now.

1458. Your own dredging?—Yes. I made a mistake; I ought to have said Barrow Deep. If I might correct my evidence it should be Barrow Deep. It is my mistake. The County Council and all of them go down to Barrow Deep.

1459. Then it was a mistake of yours?—Yes, it was an utter mistake.

1460. The reason I asked the question is that the Commission of 1896 demurred altogether to that proceeding?—Yes.

1461. Therefore we might take it that there is no solid sewage or detritus deposited in Dead Man's Hole?—No; it ought not to be. If it is, it is contrary to law.

1462. Then if you will refer to page 10 of the Report of 1896, paragraph 35, I think you will quite admit that within the powers that were given by Parliament to the Commission of 1896 we did all we could to induce the authorities, whoever they may be, to undertake to give a navigable depth of 30ft. up to Gravesend?—Yes, it was not within your reference; but you mentioned what you thought was right.

1463. There was no uncertain sound about the question at all?—There was no uncertain sound about what you thought ought to be done, but you did not make the recommendation, as being beyond your reference.

1464. It was beyond our powers?—Yes. You clearly showed what was in your mind, but you could not go any further.

1465. Then in paragraph 36 we say, "Above Gravesend there may possibly be some complications affecting the feasibility of any serious deepening of the river by reason of the valuable properties in places bordering its banks, and there may be questions as to the stability of the embankments which protect low-lying lands from being overflowed. These matters would require careful examination, but we have not investigated them, as the upper reaches of the river are beyond the limits of our reference." May I ask you whether that has ever been investigated by your officers? Have any plans or cross-sections or surveys been undertaken to see whether there are any valuable properties in places bordering the banks which might be affected by deepening to the depth of 30ft. up to the Royal Albert Docks?—It is all right up to the Albert Dock, but after that the difficulty commences. The only thing up to the Albert Dock is this: As you will know, in Queen Anne's reign about half of Essex was overflowed. At that time, after a great deal of trouble, there was a Commission formed and the land was all taxed. Certain river banks were formed then, which we here shall have to most carefully examine. They are in a lively state. The whole of the water which overflowed Essex in 1708 has not yet been pumped out; there is some of it left even to this day, and we should have to be very careful of what took place with regard to that part of Essex, because if half that county was flooded again it would be a very serious matter.

See 3061–70.

1466. My question was, whether the matter had been carefully investigated, and whether sections had been prepared?—No; not in that way. It has been thought over and examined, but no sections have been prepared, and nothing of a character to bring any work upon. It has been thought over as a point requiring very careful consideration.

1467. No estimates could be made, I suppose, without such works as sections and cross-sections and taking out the quantities?—I am afraid not.

1468. And similarly it is impossible to say what the effect on the stability of embankments or properties would be without making surveys?—I am afraid so.

1469. Mr. More, your engineer, said that he had satisfied himself that there was no difficulty or danger in providing a channel of 30ft. up to the Royal Albert Docks?—It is only a question of money for protecting these parts. It can be done.

1470. Then may I take it that Mr. More's answer is to be qualified to this extent, that there might be other works necessary in order to protect the stability of properties and banks?—Mr. More will answer that himself when you see him presently, but we understand that it may be found, when the surveys which you mention are made, that very considerable works on the Essex coast may be necessary.

1471. May I take it in this way: that so far as the actual cost is concerned, the Thames Conservancy have never had before them any detailed or careful estimate of the works that would be necessary either to carry out the undertaking recommended up to Gravesend, or the works above Gravesend?—No, we were told that it was such an enormous sum that it was useless our going into it, because we had no powers.

1472. But why should anybody say it was such an enormous sum without enquiring what the sum was?—You must remember that we are a poor body.

1473. Then I should have thought it was more necessary for you to count the cost?—We have an enormous amount of work to do, and every penny we can use for dredging is more useful than getting out particulars for work which we knew we were unable to do.

1474. At any rate, you are going to do it, I presume?—Do you mean for this Commission? See 5459.

1475. (*Chairman.*) Yes, we ask you to do it?—I know; but it will take months to do. We shall have to call in some of the most eminent engineers to help us. It is an enormous question. I should like Sir John Wolfe-Barry to be called in to help us with regard to what is the best way to protect the banks.

1476. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You understand that what the Commission wants is something like such an estimate as you would have to submit to Parliament—not absolutely binding you to any particular sum, but an approximation to the cost which is involved by an undertaking to do the works?—Of course, I have no doubt that the Board will at once bow to the wish of this Commission, and will get the work out to lay before you. I have no doubt the Board will try to meet the Commission.

1477. What we have in our minds is such an estimate as is generally prepared by engineers for submission to Parliament. We all know that those estimates are generally prepared in from two to three months without any difficulty?—Perhaps you will ask the engineer about that. It is an engineering question, and I can hardly answer it.

1478. At any rate, you will do all you can to let us have that estimate?—I shall certainly bring it before the Board and recommend it on Monday.

1479. (*Chairman.*) You will recommend it to be done before the meeting of Parliament—before next February?—That you must ask the engineer. I cannot say that.

1480. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You heard Sir John Wolfe-Barry say two or three months?—Yes, I heard that, but of course I am not an engineer, and cannot give any answer about that.

1481. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Perhaps, as we are going through the report now, I may refer you to paragraph 47, where the Commissioners say: "If the desired depth of 30ft. at low water of spring tides, or something approaching it, is to be maintained permanently and economically through these shoals"—that is the "Leigh Middle shoals"—"the chief work for effecting the purpose should consist of a tidal training bank extending in a suitable direction eastward from Canvey Island, in order to direct and control the currents and prevent in the future such divagations of the channels as have occurred in the past. We are of opinion that no injury would be caused to the Benfleet or other creeks by such a work, but that an improvement to them would result." Then paragraph 48 says: "We think it is unnecessary at the present moment to consider in detail the design of such a work as we have indicated, or its cost, and desire to confine ourselves now to stating that the undertaking does not present any serious difficulties." Has the engineer checked that at all, or prepared any plans for such a work?—No; we took it in this way. You gave no mandatory order beyond your reference, and as we knew we had no money, we did not spend any money in getting estimates for work which we had no power of doing. We quite take the principle that it ought to be done.

1482. As a matter of fact, the particular work was inside our limits?—Was this within your limits?

1483. Yes?—We did not know that, and you did not make any order. I admit that we quite understood what was in your mind; but we had no order, and we found that we had not the money.

1484. With regard to money, I would ask you this: Is it not usual for Conservancy Boards of great rivers,

when they want money, to prepare a scheme for Parliament and apply for money?—I do not know.

1485. Take the case of Glasgow?—I do not know.

1486. I will put the case of Glasgow, or the case of the Tyne, or the case of the Tees?—As far as the Tyne is concerned, if my memory serves me, a Commission sat upon the Tyne, and they went so far as to suggest that it was so important that the Government should give them a certain sum for nothing, and that they should let them have another very large sum at a very low rate of interest.

1487. That was for a harbour of refuge?—But that was necessary for the river, and although the works have been carried out, the Government have never given them any money, or given them any at a low rate of interest; so it did not give us the idea that it would do any good.

1488. I think I am right in saying that the suggested contribution from the Government in the case of the Tyne was in respect of a harbour of refuge, and had nothing to do with the trading aspect of the Tyne?—But, as I understood, it was part of the whole river scheme.

1489. However, I think you will not deny that other Conservancy Boards have always been the initiatory body to propound schemes for improving their river?—Unfortunately, I know so much about the House of Commons that I know it would be perfectly impossible for a private body to tread upon everybody's toes, as we should, with any hope of success.

1490. (*Chairman.*) You are a public body?—I meant for any body but a Government body. I know it would be perfectly impossible to get the taxation unless the Government would take it up. As the Chairman put it, if we had approached the Government, they might have taken it up, and we might have had a scheme; but with regard to our introducing a Bill it would be perfectly illusory, I am convinced.

1491. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You did introduce a Bill in 1894?—Yes, but that was by order of the House. We could not help ourselves.

1492. You introduced a Bill?—By order of the House.

1493. Very likely; but the clause that was inserted in the Bill contemplated your applying to Parliament. It said so most distinctly?—In case you gave certain orders which you did not give.

1494. Then the only difference was whether the order was mandatory or recommendatory?—I think the words are a little stronger, are they not?

1495. (*Chairman.*) I will ask you to go back to the paragraph I quoted, paragraph 35. It may be qualified afterwards, but that is where the principle is laid down. I want to pin you to that?—Paragraph 49 seems to govern it altogether: "Having come with some regret to the conclusion that works in the river between Thorney Creek and the Nore cannot at present be recommended, we have found it unnecessary to proceed with the second branch of our inquiry," and so on. Then it says: "It seems to us that the financial powers of the Conservators, whenever the fitting time arrives for undertaking the works, should be dealt with as a whole." Paragraph 49 seems the governing clause, to our mind.

1496. It might be said that paragraph 49 suggests that there are certain difficulties in the way, but paragraph 35 is the one to look at?—Paragraph 35 speaks of going to Gravesend, which was quite outside the Reference. They could only give the order within the Reference.

1497. And that, of course, made it difficult for them to recommend it being done; but there is no question about it, if you read it as plain English. They came to the conclusion that the shipowners wanted what is stated in paragraph 35?—Quite so. We admit that point.

1498. That is the point the Commission want to press?—We admit that point; that it was evidently the wish of the Wolfe-Barry Commission that it should be done, but they did not give the order, and having no money we felt we would do all we could, but we could not go any further.

1499. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Paragraph 37 says this, "Strictly speaking also the river between Thorney Creek and Gravesend has not as we have mentioned, been referred to us, but this length of the river is so intimately connected with the questions affecting the Leigh Middle Shoals that we have felt it our duty to investigate its condition, and we have satisfied ourselves that, apart from any question affecting the Leigh Middle Shoals the river from Thorney Creek upwards to Gravesend might be easily and cheaply deepened to the extent of providing a channel sufficient for the passage of the largest vessels trading to the Port of London at all states of the tide, and that such an improvement could be maintained at comparatively small expense"?—Since your Report has been issued we have provided a channel 1,000ft. wide and 26ft. deep which will bring up at all states of the tide every vessel except about eight to Gravesend. We have done our best.

1500. You have adopted 26ft. instead of 30ft.?—Yes. We had not money enough to do 30ft.

1501. With regard to paragraph 56 of the Report, is the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy now extended as far seaward as the Nore?—As far as dredging is concerned.

1502. But in no other respect?—No, only as far as regards dredging.

1503. Have the dredging powers been extended in consequence of the Report of 1896?—No, it is in the 1894 Act.

1504. Therefore this recommendation was over and above the question of dredging?—Yes. You may take it from me that we have, as far as we could, and as far as our money went, entered into the spirit of your Report. We saw your mind in it, and as far as we possibly could we have carried that mind out, but there was no mandatory order. The only thing we have not done is this. We knew we could not go to Parliament without spending £10,000 or £12,000, and that we should probably get nothing for it; and we have not done that. That is how we stand.

1505. Therefore we may take it in this way that for any works or matters requiring Parliamentary sanction nothing has been done?—No. It is only the question of funds. We have got powers to do the whole of the other things.

1506. My question was things and matters requiring Parliamentary sanction?—We want no Parliamentary sanction, but money.

1507. But I say that anything requiring Parliamentary sanction is in exactly the same position as it was in 1896?—Yes.

1508. Can you tell us how long it will be before the channels referred to in your evidence are completed, or shall I keep that question for Mr. More?—Perhaps you had better keep that question for Mr. More. I could only give secondhand evidence with regard to it.

1509. And I suppose you cannot tell us how much has been spent?—I think £24,000. It has been put in evidence.

1510. You have some unexhausted borrowing powers to a small extent?—Yes, very small—nearly £100,000.

1511. Then I suppose that, following the analogy of other conservancy boards, if any works are undertaken you will have to go to Parliament to borrow money?—There must be a Bill in Parliament. Whether we shall have to go is another question.

1512. Somehow or other Parliament will have to be asked to authorise a loan secured in some way on the tolls on shipping using the Thames?—Yes, or by some other means.

1513. Whatever works have to be undertaken will have to be undertaken by means of a loan authorised by Parliament?—No, it does not follow. Parliament must provide some means of paying the interest on that loan. We should be utterly unable to get any more money on the present income of the Conservancy Board; the market would not take any more.

1514. Your income at present is arising from a toll on the shipping using the Thames, is it not?—Principally—it was £55,000 last year.

1515. That toll is, I think I am right in saying, ½d. a ton?—½d. or ¾d.—it goes up to ⅝d.

1516. (*Chairman.*) It is mostly ½d., I think?—Yes, it is mostly ½d.

1517. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you see any particular reason why the tolls should be so low on the

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shipping of the Thames compared with what we have been told is the toll upon the shipping of other rivers?—The only reason we see why it should be increased is because, as you have already said, it is of the greatest importance that no financial burden should be placed so as to damage the commercial interests of the Port of London. The more you put on to the shipping, of course the less chance there will be of shipping coming up.

1518. What does the ½d. toll produce—£55,000 a year?—£55,000 we received last year. When I was first Chairman we were receiving £48,000. We have tried to promote trade, and it has now risen to £55,000.

1519. Recognising very fully that nothing should be done to damage the commercial importance of the Port of London, do you say that that toll could not possibly be increased?—I should not quite say that, but I think there are other means that we could get which would be cheaper.

1520. The Commission would like very much to know what your view would be as to a possible increase in the tolls on shipping?—I think there would be a possibility but I am not sure that we should get anything out of it, because if we got the tolls upon a certain number of ships and then the tonnage falls off, the one is as broad as the other; but if we had another system of taxation, which I have thought out, then it would not interfere in the same way.

1521. Then you think there are means which could be suggested for raising the money without laying such a financial burden upon shipping?—I do.

1522. Are you going to lay that before the Commission?—If you wish it.

1523. (*Chairman.*) Have you put it before your Board?—Yes, I have.

1524. I think it is desirable that we should have anything that has been put before your Board?—I am quite prepared to give it if you wish, but it was not my business to force upon the Commission any view of my own, I thought, unless I was asked for it.

1525. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) May I ask upon what capital expenditure the estimate of income has been arrived at?—I do not quite follow you.

1526. You say you have arrived at some proposal which would find the necessary funds for executing the works which the Thames Conservancy admit are necessary for bringing the river up to date?—Yes.

1527. Can you tell us on what capital expenditure the calculation is based?—I can hardly put it in that way. I know exactly what I propose, and I know what we think it will bring in, but I do not know exactly on what capital expenditure it is based.

1527A. Then I will put it in that way. What additional income would it bring in?—We consider that in all probability it would bring in about £150,000 a year.

1528. Over and above what you have now?—Yes, that is our belief.

1529. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to ask you a few questions as to the Parliamentary history of Section 189. You were in charge of the Bill of 1894 in the House of Commons?—Yes.

1530. And on the 5th April you moved the Second Reading?—Yes, if you say that was the date.

1531. You may take it that those dates are from the records. Then nothing occurred on the Second Reading debate except the instruction that was moved by Mr. Stuart in respect of water, which you accepted?—I think so.

1532. Then the Bill was referred to a private Bill Committee, of which Mr. Jackson was the chairman?—Yes, it sat for 29 days, I think.

1533. While they were sitting, and when they had made considerable progress, on the 28th May I think, Sir Thomas Sutherland, then a member of the House, gave an instruction with regard to the dredging?—Yes, and I spoke upon it, if I remember rightly.

1534. And you on behalf of the Thames Conservancy Board were unwilling to accept it?—Yes.

1535. You opposed it?—Yes.

1536. A division was taken?—Yes.

1537. Of course it was a purely non-political matter?—Yes.

1538. I see from the record that the instruction was carried by 269 as against 112?—I did not remember that it was carried.

1539. Yes it was. That came down to the Committee, of course, being an instruction to do certain things with respect to dredging?—I do not remember exactly the words.

1540. I will read it. It was a very important instruction. On the 28th May, 1894, Sir Thomas Sutherland moved: "That it be an instruction to the Committee on the Thames Conservancy Bill that they have power to insert in the Bill, if they think fit, provisions for authorising the Conservancy to dredge the portions of the River Thames and the estuary thereof below Yantlet Creek in the County of Kent?"—Yes, I remember now.

1541. As I have said, you objected to that on the grounds which you then gave?—Yes.

1542. But the House of Commons approved of it, and it came down to the Committee?—Yes.

1543. Then in the Committee of which Mr. Jackson (the member for Leeds, of course), as I have said, was chairman, Mr. Pember, the counsel for the ship-owners, made a proposal on the 31st May with respect to this?—He represented the ship-owners, did he not?

1544. Yes, he represented the ship-owners on that occasion. He represented other interests, but at that moment he was speaking for the ship-owners. He made certain proposals in a long speech on the subject, and your counsel, Mr. Littler, on the same day made a suggestion, and it is to that suggestion that I wish to draw your attention. This is you, the Thames Conservancy Board, speaking through the mouth of Mr. Littler. The words which Mr. Littler used are, first: "We will be prepared to insert in the Bill power for the Conservators to dredge within the limits stated by Mr. Pember yesterday"—that was carrying out the suggestion of the House of Commons?—We got those powers.

1545. "And to such an extent as shall be recommended by the Board of Trade after such inquiry and report as hereinafter provided!"—That is put in.

1546. We will go through the steps, if you please. You will see my object. I want to get on the notes of this Commission the Parliamentary history of this section 189, through you. That was the proposal of your counsel. They accepted the duty cast upon them by the House of Commons. You were unwilling to do so on the 28th May, but on the 31st they accepted the duty on certain terms?—Yes.

1547. I need not go on to read those terms, but they contain the suggested clauses for the Bill. The next important step was on the 4th June, when the Permanent Secretary to the Board of Trade, Sir Courtenay Boyle, came before the Committee at its request. Of course, the Chairman of the Committee remarked that they could not impose a duty on the Board of Trade without communicating with the Board of Trade. They did communicate with the Board of Trade and Sir Courtenay Boyle came at the request of the Committee. I have here the notes of his evidence. On the 4th June, 1894, he takes the matter a little further. He alters your suggestion, that the Board of Trade should make an inquiry and then do something, into the form that after a Commission had made an inquiry you should do something. Do you see the vital change?—Yes.

1548. He withdraws the Board of Trade. You accept my view of it?—Yes.

1549. Therefore the Commission created by Section 189 was put in the place of the Board of Trade?—Only as to a certain reference.

1550. But as to its recommendations?—Yes, I think so.

1551. The Board of Trade stood aside and such a Commission was to be appointed whose recommendations should be of the same force as the Government Department's?—Yes, as far as their references went.

1552. I want to carry you with me. Do you accept that?—Yes, I think so.

1553. That is how it stood when Sir Courtenay Boyle left the Committee. The precise clause was brought up by Mr. Baggallay on the 19th June, as Clause 181B?—That is section 189 now.

1554. Yes. And after some conversation between counsel and various negotiations, which always take place in a Parliamentary Committee, it assumed its final shape in the form in which it stands in the Act of Parliament?—I understand so.

1555. It left our House in that shape, and was not amended in any respect in the House of Lords?—I understand so.

1556. It stands in the Act of Parliament precisely as the Chairman read it?—Yes.

1557. Do you really wish to put before us that that clause is not what we call in the House of Commons mandatory?—The clause is mandatory here, but what we say is that the Commission did not give us the order under it which they could have done.

1558. Then it is not that you do not admit for a moment that you have failed to carry out the mandate of Parliament in an Act of Parliament, but that the Report of the Commission was, as you have phrased it in your evidence, of an inconclusive character?—Yes.

1559. And it is upon that that you base your omission to do anything up to now?—I do not admit that we have not done anything. We have not gone to 30ft., but we have gone to 26ft.

1560. Anything that you have not done is in consequence of what is to your mind the inconclusive Report of the Commission. Is that so?—If the Commission had given us an actual order we should then have had to say, "We cannot do this; we have no money," and we then must go to Parliament to get money to do it. But as we had no particular order, and as you know it is very difficult to get an Act when there is any taxation to impose, we knew we should be throwing a lot of money away and we could not get anything.

1561. May I call your attention to this statement by one of your counsel. On the 12th June, in the Parliamentary Committee Room, on your behalf, Mr. Bidder states this: "If the works require additional Parliamentary powers they are bound to come to Parliament. If they do not come to Parliament it is an omission on their part; but the works are within their present powers, and if they were to stand still and do nothing, that would place them absolutely in the wrong box"?—We have not stood still and done nothing.

1562. You say in reply to that, that all that is within your powers you have done?—Yes. We could go any depth you like. We could go to 100ft. as far as power is concerned, but all that we have powers to do and orders to do we have done.

1563. There was a good deal of conversation between the chairman and the counsel as to whether the word "duty" should be put in the Act of Parliament. You will remember that probably?—Will you let me say this: I was not chairman at that time, and I had not the framing of the policy of the Board at that time. I remember that a good deal of what you say took place, but it was not under my initiative in any way.

1564. Who was chairman at that time?—There was no chairman at that time. There was a deputy chairman. The Lord Mayor was chairman *ex officio*, and Sir Frederick Nicolson was deputy chairman; but I was the first chairman of the Board under the Act.

1565. Then you rather suggest that when the matter was before the Committee there was no authorised head?—No, there was an authorised head, but I was not the authorised head and I was not the guiding spirit. Sir Frederick Nicolson was really chairman. I only mean that I was not chairman, and therefore I was not responsible for the action of the Board. I only heard what took place.

1566. As I understand, you briefly say that it is due to the inconclusive nature of this report that you have not done anything?—No, I did not quite put it in that way.

1567. I want it in your own words?—I put it in this way. That we did see between the lines what was the wish of that Commission, though it was not strictly within their Reference. If it had been within their Reference, and they had given us orders to do it, we had no option; but as it was not in their Reference, and they distinctly in paragraph 49 gave us no orders whatever, we felt that it would be foolish for us to go to Parliament, and all that we could do was to try and carry out the wishes of that Commission with the means we had.

1568. But in some way or other certain work has not been done?—No, it has not been done.

1569. And you admit that it is desirable it should be done?—I think so, and anything we can do to bring the river up to date we shall be willing to do and glad to do.

1570. Now, I will take you for a moment to finance. You have revenues, as I gather from the statement you have been good enough to lay before us, arising from various interests. Has there ever been on the Board—I will not use the word "friction"—a question between the interests represented on the Board as to the allocation of those funds. You understand what I mean. For instance, one interest might say: "The money comes from our district; we must have it spent in our district; not elsewhere"?—The Act of Parliament declares that all the money of the Upper River shall be spent on the Upper River, and all the money of the Lower River shall be spent on the Lower River. We cannot interfere in any shape or form, and there has been no friction in any shape or form. It has all gone as authorised by the Act of Parliament.

1571. Then there has been no question?—No. The only question has been that sometimes the Upper River has said: "We should like to have a little more dredging than we have been able to get"—nothing more than that.

1572. I see you have charged something for river frontages?—Yes.

1573. Have you any scale for those river frontages applicable all down the river?—The Act of Parliament is that we are obliged to have an assessor. We appoint an assessor who has to be approved of by the Board of Trade. That assessor ever since I have been chairman has been Mr. Clutton. In the case of an application when we tell Mr. Clutton that as far as navigation is concerned we consent to it, he assesses what the people have to pay to us, either as a fine or as rent for having the accommodation.

1574. But is it an individual assessment, or does it proceed upon any basis or scale?—It says in the Act that it shall be deemed to be the true and fair worth or value thereof to the person obtaining a license or permission. Sometimes we tell Mr. Clutton that he has not charged enough, but pretty generally he sticks to what he has said and we cannot get anything more out of him.

1575. Then some question has arisen sometimes even at your Board?—No—between myself and Mr. Clutton. I have told him I do not think he has charged enough in some cases.

1576. Has any question arisen as between man and man, or as between neighbour and neighbour that you know of?—No, not between neighbour and neighbour that I know of. Of course, we always ask the views of the neighbours on both sides, and examine their complaints, if any, in order that we may not injure anybody at all before we grant the leave, before it comes to Mr. Clutton.

1577. In fact, we may take it from you that it is done by a highly competent individual?—Yes.

1578. Then in your statement you rather play off, if I may use the term, the sills against the depth. You say it is no use deepening the river because of the sills?—Yes.

1579. Is it the mind of the Conservancy that they must wait to deepen the river until the dock companies have done their part?—What is the good of deepening the river until the vessels can use it? At the present moment when the river is at a certain height of the tide, they can all get into the docks, and if the depth were lowered to 30ft. they could get in no better.

1580. But, if I might say so, might not the dock companies say, "What is the good of our altering our sills until the Conservancy do their part?" Is A to wait for B, or B to wait for A?—If you give a recommendation that the docks should be obliged to lower their sills, I suppose they will do so. We cannot make them. and they say they will not do it.

1581. If I might call your attention again to the evidence given before that Committee, do you recollect that your counsel, Mr. Littler, said that a great mistake was made in the Ribble by not treating the river before the docks were made?—I do not remember that, but I dare say he did.

1582. Is it your view that we are to wait for the docks?—No, our view is that we ought to deepen the river at once if we get the money.

1583. Then it comes to a question of funds?—It really comes to a question of funds.

1584. Then, with regard to the constitution, do you wish us to infer that it is the best of all possible constitutions?—In my opinion it is the best we could

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possibly have. The Admiralty are represented, the London County Council are represented, and also Trinity House, the City, the dock owners, the wharfingers, ——

1585. It has on it the representatives of a good many interests, and it has worked very well, you think?—Yes, we have found it has worked very well, and they all give us the best information upon points they are best able to speak upon.

1586. You recollect that Sir Thomas Sutherland moved an instruction with regard to the constitution?—I think Sir Thomas Sutherland has altered his views a good deal. I know you are going to have him here.

See 2052.

1587. Then we will have his views from him himself. Now I come to the vital part of the whole matter. What is your recent action, and what is your present mind? In the first place, you have read the evidence given before us by your officers?—Yes.

1588. You will remember that the Secretary told us that the matter had never been considered before the Commission?—That is a misunderstanding.

1589. It is question 98?—The question that was asked was: "Has any action been taken with regard to this Commission?" The answer ought to have been: "They have not discussed any policy with regard to the subject matter of the reference to the Commission"—not that we had not discussed any general policy—because our general policy has been discussed every year. Of course we have an admirable Secretary, but he is a comparatively new man.

1590. In Question 98 does the witness take "the Commission" to mean this Commission?—Yes.

1591. Not the Lower Thames Navigation Commission?—No; this Commission. Long before he came it was discussed over and over again. It ought to have been, "with regard to this Commission."

1592. The Board of Trade Commission?—No; he did not mean that.

1593. (*Chairman.*) Upon that I asked whether you would furnish us with the minute books in order that we might see exactly what had taken place since 1896; so it is evident from my asking that that I was speaking of the Commission of 1896?—He did not understand it in that way.

1594. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Then I must take you to Question 166; that is in the evidence of Mr. Hughes, the solicitor. I gather from the answers to Questions 166 and 167 that your Board had not discussed its relations to Sir John Wolfe-Barry's Commission with regard to going to Parliament?—We had discussed them, but after discussion we felt that we could not go to Parliament.

1595. Then there have been proceedings before your Board?—There were constant discussions, and it was taken as being not mandatory, and, having no money, that all we could do was to do our best.

1596. Now you have taken what strikes me as a new departure. In your evidence you say the Conservators had recently considered the subject matter of the reference to the Commission. Now give me a date, if you please?—Since the 12th November. We have done it in this way. If you remember, you asked us to give evidence by a certain day, and we wrote back to say that we were prepared for our officers to come and give formal evidence, but we asked leave, on the question of policy, to be allowed to give that evidence later. Then we got a letter saying that you wished us to give our evidence with regard to policy at once, and when you said that, I assumed it was my duty to bring it before the Board instantly, and to ask whether it would be right to say that what had been our general policy should be our future policy.

1597. Can you give us a date for that?—Last Monday week.

1598. Have you the Minute Book?—Yes. As you have not asked me the question about what we propose about putting the taxation on, we ought not to show you this at present.

1599. I am not going into that?—This is the exact minute. (*The Minute Book was handed to Mr. Ellis.*)

1600. This was on the 12th day of November?—Yes, last Monday week.

1601. "The Chairman at the request of the Board then laid before them his views as embodied in the following proposals." Then this is the resolution. Was it passed unanimously?—Yes.

1602. "That the Conservators, whilst not admitting that the Report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission, dated 25th March, 1896, contained a specific recommendation that a navigable channel of 30ft. below low water of spring tides should be provided up to Gravesend, are prepared, in view of the tendency to constantly increase the size and draught of ocean going steamers, to take measures to make such a channel, having due regard to the security of the banks and wharves of the river, provided Parliament will grant them power to raise the necessary funds." Is that the only definite resolution or minute on your books arising out of the Wolfe-Barry Commission?—Yes, I should think so.

1603. Then up to the 15th November, 1900, and until this Commission began to sit in this room, nothing of a definite or practical character had been done?—Oh, yes; we have increased the depth of the river. You can ask the engineer as to that. We have increased the depth very much and spent a very large sum in doing it.

1604. (*Chairman.*) I think I understood you to say that you had discussions, and that you deepened the river under certain resolutions?—Yes, that was in 1896.

1605. But what we want to know is, are we under the right impression that until this last meeting on Monday week you had taken no steps at all by any resolution of your Board to do more than your ordinary dredging?—Oh, no, we took——

1606. Will you give us the resolution on which you deepened the river down to 26ft., because that is what we want. We want to know when you did that?—On the 22nd June, 1896, the Lower River Committee recommended and it was adopted by the Board: "That the Conservators adopt the scheme in the engineer's report for widening and deepening the channel of the river as follows: from the Nore to Gravesend, 1,000ft., 26ft. deep; from Gravesend to Crayfordness, 1,000ft. 24ft. deep; from Crayfordness to the Royal Albert Dock 500ft., 22ft. deep; from the Royal Albert Dock to Millwall 300ft., 18ft. deep." That is what is mentioned in my evidence. That was a very large work to bring up, and I think it cost us £24,000 or £26,000. I am told it was more than that. It was a very large sum—I forget the exact amount.

1607. Then it is upon that resolution of 1896 that you have acted up to last Monday week?—Yes, and we do not consider that Monday week alters this in any shape or form. It only shows that we are perfectly willing to go to the 30ft. recommended, if we can get the money. It is the same principle. The policy has been the same all through, but we have not got the money. We are quite prepared to accept the 30ft. if we have the funds.

1608. (*Mr. Ellis.*) At all events on the 12th November, 1900, you arrived at a definite point that you had never arrived at before?—Not in words. We always understood that we were trying to do it if we could get the money. I will put it in this way. Suppose the shipping had come in so much that our funds had been raised to a sufficient sum, we should have gone on to the 30ft. deep if we had had the money.

1609. The whole thing is summed up in finance?—Yes, that is so.

1610. Then you put in this proviso which was really unnecessary:—"Provided we had the necessary funds." Of course, if Parliament says you have to do it you must do it, and if Parliament does not say you have to do it, *cadit quæstio*?—That is so, but it shows our wish.

1611. Quite so; one will not suggest that it has been stimulated by the appointment of this Commission, but there it is?—Yes. I do not think we should have considered it until we got the funds if it had not been for the Commission.

1612. Now I want to know what you are going to do with this. Are you going to deposit a Bill?—No, we have no money. I should like to accept the Chairman's suggestion that we should approach the Government and tell them what we think ought to be done.

See 7485-91.

1613. (*Chairman.*) I suggested that you ought to have done that long ago?—You did, but we consider that that suggestion is the right one, and we certainly propose to take it up.

1614. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to get from you as the Chairman of this most important public body, what is in your minds. You passed a resolution on Monday week; what

are you going to do upon that?—I shall do what the Chairman suggested to-day that we ought to have done.

1615. But it is really not for us, as a Royal Commission, to suggest anything?—I will bring it before the Board——

1616. You say "I." Is the Board going to do it?—I will bring it before the Board, and ask leave that we should approach the Government on the whole question, telling them what we think ought to be done, and telling them the way in which we consider the funds should be got.

1617. That is the view in which you translate your own phrase that the River Thames should be "brought up to date"—that you will ask the leave of the Board to apply to Parliament?—Not to go to Parliament; we shall go straight to the Government.

1618. You will put it before the Board and ask leave?—Yes.

1619. Suppose the Government says:—"This must be introduced as a Private Bill, and we do not meddle with Private Bills"?—Then I should say at once:—"We cannot do it; we shall get no money; we cannot do it." You know we could not get a penny.

1620. I should be very sorry to pledge myself that you could, but may I ask you this? You think that the whole matter depends—the matter of the bringing up to date of the Port of London—on the introduction of a Bill in the shape of a public rather than a private Bill?—Yes.

1621. That is your answer as Chairman of the Thames Conservancy?—I do not think we should have a chance of passing a private Bill. We should get no taxation.

1622. Is that your final answer to us as a Royal Commission?—Yes.

1623. That is the answer you give us on behalf of the Thames Conservancy?—My own idea is that if we brought in a private Bill to put on taxation—and we have all the other powers except taxation—we should be fought by every interest that we touched, all the people would go to their various members in the House of Commons to protect their interests, and we should have no more chance of passing the Bill than we have of going up to the moon.

1624. You mean, to put it briefly, it is only the Government whips that could carry the thing through?—I think so.

1625. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You stated just now that the Conservancy had carried out the recommendations of the Commission of 1896 as far as money allowed them to do so?—Yes.

1626. How do you account for your having for those three years 1897-8-9—since 1896—a surplus in the Below Bridge Funds of £41,408?—I know of no such surplus.

1627. Your accounts show it. You have a surplus in your funds which you have not spent, and which might apparently, so far as one can see, have been spent. Your accounts show that quite clearly?—The amount that has really been surplus in the years 1895 to 1899 is £51,525, but the whole of that has gone in capital works. The dredging which I have mentioned comes out of that—whatever sum was spent. We spent, taking out from capital £36,133, and from reserve income £40,963, or a total of £77,096, against the £51,525 which we had over surplus. It is all gone.

1628. Then this account must be an incorrect one. If you look at the summary of your accounts you will see there: "Reserve below London Bridge for 1897-8-9, total, £200,742." I have taken it since the recommendations of the 1896 Commission. Below that you will see the expenditure: I am taking the expenditure for 1897-8-9. The expenditure amounts to £159,334, leaving a surplus of £41,408?—The real balance left is £51,525, taking the six years from 1894 to 1899.

1629. I particularly wanted those three years to show what you have expended since the recommendations of the 1896 Commission?—The whole of it has gone in general works. It has all been carried to reserve income account, and the whole of it has gone in capital charges, including this dredging. We have spent, in fact, more than we have received. We have had to spend from new capital £36,133.

1630. Could you give the Commission the proportion from your revenue which you spent annually on dredging for those three years?—Dredging in the Lower River or the Upper River?

1631. The Lower River?—You wish particulars of the three years' dredging below London Bridge?

1632. The figure I wanted to arrive at is the actual cost in dredging. Will you apportion the cost of the dredging to your income for 1897-8-9, not including new plant. I want the actual money spent in dredging?—The dredging for the Lower River in 1897 amounted to £11,200 about; in 1898, to £13,600; in 1899, £25,200.

1633. (*Chairman.*) That does not correspond with the figures in your return?—That is the dredging.

1634. That is the dredging pure and simple?—Dredging pure and simple.

1635. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Not only charges for plant?—No; here it is put "dredging" pure and simple. This is what comes out of revenue.

1636. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You are speaking now of the lower river?—The lower river only.

1637. That is below Staines?—Below Staines.

1638. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) But I have a return here showing expenditure below London Bridge?—I can give you that, too. Below London Bridge in 1897 it is £10,189; in 1898, £12,302; in 1899, £24,037. That is below London Bridge. In fact, the dredging below London Bridge for the six years since the Act.

1639. I want you to confine it to the years since the recommendations of the 1896 Commission?—I have given you that. That was what we charged out of revenue. That does not include what we charged out of capital.

1640. I wanted the proportion between your income for six years. You might submit a small table showing the proportion spent on dredging with reference to your maximum income derived from the Lower Thames.—The percentage out of revenue is 27·7.

1641. Was any regular continuous survey of the river undertaken before the recommendation of the Commission of 1896?—Perhaps you will ask the engineer that.

1642. With reference to paragraph 39 of the Report of the Commission of 1896, who was responsible for the spoil being deposited in Dead Man's Hole?—Do you mean ours, or the spoil from other people?

1643. The dredging taken by the Conservancy?—We send our own hoppers.

1644. But who was responsible for recommending that site?—If my memory serves me, the Board of Trade said that they had had enough put in Dead Man's Hole, and they insisted that in the future it should all go down to the Barrow Deep.

1645. It says here: "It appears that since 1878 the Conservancy have deposited in a part of this deep water which is marked out by beacons and measures, 200,000 square yards, more than 2,000,000 cubic yards of waste dredgings." That was from 1878 up to the Report of the 1896 Commission. My question was, can you tell me who was responsible for the spoil being deposited there?—No, I do not know. I dare say the engineer may tell you that.

1646. It is stated that the deposit from the spoil commenced in 1878. Was any survey made to see if the deposit of 2,000,000 cubic yards of waste dredging in an area of only 200,000 square yards altered the bed of the river in any way?—These are all engineering questions. I am afraid I cannot answer that.

1647. You would rather I asked the engineer as to that?—If you please. They are questions that I cannot answer.

1648. Then you said at the end of your evidence that there is no divided authority between the Trinity House and the Conservators?—Just so.

1649. Do the Trinity House buoy the channels within the Conservancy jurisdiction without reference to the Conservancy?—I believe so. Perhaps you will ask the engineer that. These are all engineering questions.

1650. You say there is no difference of opinion between the two?—Yes; there has been no difference of opinion between us. We act perfectly harmoniously. We have got their representatives on our board, and we have never had any difference of opinion. That I can say.

1651. I will ask you these questions, and if you cannot answer them, you will refer me to the engineer:

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See 8509–10.

Do the Conservancy send their plans of dredging operations officially to the Board?—I do not know.

1652. The Yantlet Creek channel having been deepened, can you explain why the Trinity House did not buoy it?—I do not know.

1653. Did they tell you why they did not buoy it?—I do not know. These are all engineering questions.

1654. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You make an annual report to Parliament, do you not?—Yes.

1655. Have you taken the opportunity of that annual report to call the attention of Parliament and the public to the deficiencies of the river, and to what is necessary to be done in order to bring it up to date?—I do not remember that we have done so. We have mentioned what we proposed to do, but we have not mentioned what were beyond our powers.

1656. It might be of advantage, if you have a certain policy to carry out, to state it in public, so as to get the support of public opinion in favour of what you think ought to be done?—I quite agree.

1657. But you have not taken advantage of your annual report to do that?—We ought to have done so, I quite admit. I think we ought to have done so.

1658. You mentioned, I think, in agreement with the chairman, and in agreement with other people, that it is quite certain that vessels are now going to Antwerp that used to go to London, on account of the deficiencies of the Port of London?—No, I do not think I said that. I did not mean to say so. I understood the Chairman to say that vessels could go into Antwerp that could not come to London, but I did not know that any facts existed showing that they did do so.

1659. (*Chairman.*) I think I asked you whether you were aware that vessels go to Antwerp now that used to come to London?—I did not understand it in that way. I understood you to ask whether they *could* go. I cannot tell you one way or the other.

1660. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I did not mean to question the statement, but I thought it material for the purposes of this Commission that we should have particulars of that, if possible?—I am afraid it is only a general statement. I will try to get you particulars. We can easily write to the various places and ask for particulars and let you have them.

1661. With regard to the question of dredging, you said that the surplus which has been derived from income during the last few years has been applied to general purposes. If you will turn to the statement of the secretary of the conservancy in answer to Question 59, I think it will appear from that statement that the amount spent from capital upon dredging in the whole of the six years from January, 1894, to December, 1899, is no more than £17,000, so that it was not an important addition to the amount spent on dredging out of income?—The amount spent from capital has been £36,133, and from the reserve income £40,963; total, £77,096.

1662. That is on dredging?—From capital expenditure on various things.

1662A. But I want it on dredging?

1663. (*Chairman.*) Dredging pure and simple—not steam-hoppers?—I have only got dredging for the six years. What we spent during the six years was £123,837 from income, and £14,500 from capital; making £138,387.

1664. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That is the total expenditure?—That is the total expenditure.

1665. But I am asking now about the expenditure on dredging?—That is on dredging—on dredging alone.

1666. But the cost of dredging according to your tables, below London Bridge in the six years was £77,000 out of income?—No; that is out of revenue—£77,647, or 27·7 per cent.

1667. And the expenditure out of capital in the same period on dredging is £17,392?—For the same period the expenditure was £14,500. Then out of reserve income £32,868.

1668. This is on dredging?—All this is dredging.

1668A. Where does it appear in your accounts?

1669. (*Chairman.*) As I understand, the £32,868 is not on dredging, but on new steam hoppers?—The new steam hoppers are used for nothing but dredging.

1670. But we want to separate the cost of the dredging from the purchase of steam hoppers, or new steamers, or anything of that kind?—We found that if we put the dredging out it would cost so much, whereas if we did our own dredging, it would cost so much. We found that it would be much less if we did our own dredging.

1671. I understand that, but what we want to know is how much was spent in plant, and how much in actual dredging. We do not care how much you have spent on plant; we do not care about that for our present purposes; we want to know what you actually spent in dredging the river. Will you look at the answer to question 59?—I did not know you wanted these particulars. Of course I cannot speak on accounts at a moment's notice. I will get up anything you wish to know.

1672. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) We merely wish to have what is the actual expenditure on dredging, not on ships?—You mean the actual expenditure on dredging below London Bridge?

1673. (*Chairman.*) Other than that spent on plant or hoppers, or anything of that kind?—For the three years, or for the six years?

1674. Since 1896?—I will get that out and send it to the Secretary.

1675. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You stated that, "Until the depth of water over the sills of all the docks is very much increased there would be no practical advantage in forming such a channel"?—Yes.

1676. Are we to understand that you consider that the sills of the docks should regulate the depth of the river?—No. It is no good our giving the river such a depth that it could not be used because the sills of the docks are so high. In answer to Mr. Ellis, I said that we were quite prepared to lower the river if we had the funds, and then let Parliament call on the docks to lengthen their sills; but it is no good having the river deepened—no practical good—if we have got to bring vessels up to lie outside the docks blocking the navigation till they can get in. They can all get in now at any state of the tide except eight vessels, as I understand.

1677. (*Chairman.*) Not at any state of the tide?—No, not quite.

1678. You furnished us the particulars of that?—Just so.

1679. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With reference to that matter you think that actually no more water is required than there is over the sills of the docks?—No, I do not go so far as that. My opinion is—if I was asked—I should like to see greater facilities all the way down the river, and they are gradually growing. We should be able to make deep berths where the ships could go in without waiting for the tides.

1680. Of course, you cannot time the ship's movements so as absolutely to avoid detentions?—No, but we say they should be able to use the river by having their dock sills lowered in such a way that they could always go in.

1681. You have not taken into account their detentions, or the possibility of the ship having to stop there?—The engineer has prepared a statement as to the detentions, and he has also prepared a diagram on purpose to show you exactly what the detentions have been, and he is also going to explain how the sills work.

1681A. Does he refer in that statement to detention by fog, when a ship is once in the channel?—No, only with regard to water.

Recalled 556.

Mr C. J More.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES MORE recalled and further examined.

1682. (*Chairman.*) You have some papers to put in, Mr. More?—Yes. The first is in reply to questions 329-332.

1683. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That is relative to paragraph 25 of the Report of the Barry Commission?—Yes, it is a statement as to the delay to ships arriving off Southend at low water. (*See Appendix, 5th day, No. 1.*) Then the second paper is in reply to Question 361 by Sir John Hext. There I promised to give a list of the dredging plant and the ages of the dredgers. That I hand in. (*See Appendix, 5th day, No. 2.*) Then on behalf of the Secretary of the Conservators perhaps I might be allowed to hand in the following statements: The first is: "An account for the years 1894 to 1899 in-

clusive, of the amount received by the Conservators for rents on accommodations and for sales of foreshore for the purpose of accommodations, and an account of the moneys paid to Her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods on behalf of the Crown"; that was referred to in Questions 38-40. (*See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 3). Then the second is: "An account of the receipts and expenditure of the Thames Conservancy for the years 1894-99 inclusive (*a*) below London Bridge; (*b*) London Bridge to Staines; (*c*) Summary." That was asked for at Question 51. (*See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 4.) Then the third is "A return of attendances at board and committee meetings of the Conservators of the River Thames for the year 1899, and to the 31st October, 1900." That was asked for at Questions 68 and 156. (*See Appendix 5th day, No.* 5.) Then the fourth is: "A statement showing the number of licences granted by the Thames Conservancy for all accommodations below Teddington for the years 1895-99 inclusive." That was asked for at Questions 199 and 200. (*See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 6.)

1684. (*Chairman.*) Those are the licences the price of which is governed by an arbitrator?—Under the Act an assessor has to be appointed by the Conservators.

1685. That has already been described?—That is so. They all have to be assessed.

1686. The price is fixed by an assessor?—The price is fixed by an assessor independent entirely of the Conservators. Then the fifth table is: "An account of the receipts and expenditure of the Thames Conservancy for the years 1894 to 1899 inclusive; (*a*) Below Teddington Lock; (*b*) From Teddington Lock to Staines; and (*c*) Summary. (*See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 7.)

1687. I see in Appendix No. 4, of the first day, it is stated: "In my opinion there is space in Barking Reach, Erith Reach, Erith Sands, Long Reach, St. Clement's Reach, and Northfleet Hope, where additional moorings might be laid down by ships without detriment to the navigation"?—That has been shown on a chart which has already been handed in.

1688. Will you just explain that chart?—These dark marks show the existing tiers where vessels may be unloaded into barges.

1689. Where are the new mooring places that you speak of?—These portions coloured black show the existing ones; the spaces coloured red are the proposed new mooring spaces.

1689A. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) They are a long way down the river?—Yes. The river is pretty well crowded near London; you could hardly put more.

1690. (*Chairman.*) Have you had any applications for any of those lower river spaces?—No; it is suggested that these should be public moorings, so that if necessary ships of deep draught might go and be unloaded into barges direct.

1691. Have you made any estimate as to the cost of dredging these mooring places. You say, "With dredging or with very little dredging." Have you had any estimate of the cost?—No, no estimate has been made of the cost of this work.

1692. We should like to know what you estimate would be the cost of providing these extra moorings to supplement this Appendix No. 4?—I will get that out for you.

See 5460 and 5463.

1693. Have you anything further to put in?—There is the table referred to by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, showing the level of the sills of all the London docks. I will now hand it in. (*See Appendix, 5th day No.* 8.) It shows the level of low water on the Admiralty Charts, and from that you get the depth of water on the sill at low water. The last column shows the depth of water in the channel which is proposed to be made by the Conservators.

See 1384.

1694. The last proposal?—The last proposal, that is to say the one I put in in my evidence.

1695. Is there anything else you have to give us?—That is all.

1696. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) May I ask one question on the table shown in Appendix 4, showing the dredging under the head of "Expenditure" for the years 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, and 1899. Can you tell why the expenditure rose from £12,302 in 1898 to £24,037 in 1899?—Yes. That was on account of new hoppers which we purchased to carry out the recommendations of the Commission, and to carry the dredgings down to Barrow Deep instead of putting them into the channel.

1697. That includes therefore the cost of plant?—No, that does not include the cost of plant.

1698. Hoppers surely are plant, are they not?—Yes, but that was the working of the dredgers—the working merely.

1699. Then why does it rise from £12,302 in 1898 to £24,037 in 1899?—Because of the extra expense of working these very large hoppers.

1700. Then you have been doing very much more work?—Yes, and of course we have had to carry the stuff so far away.

1701. (*Chairman.*) Under what head comes the expense of providing for these extra dredgers or hoppers? Can you state whether you have charged to capital all the expense of these dredgers and hoppers, and whether this is dredging pure and simple in the tables you have given us?—I have put in the dredging statement in my own evidence, and I can explain from that that the total dredging for the years 1894 to 1899 was £138,000, out of which about £30,000 was charged to capital for these new hoppers and the alterations to the dredgers.

1702. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Then the great increase of the cost between 1898 and 1899 is due to working the larger plant, and taking the material further out to sea, is not that so?—That is so.

1703. Possibly you could give us at some future time an account of the quantity dredged for these same years 1894 to 1899, so that we could compare it with the cost?—Certainly.

See 5464.

1704. Have you any record of what is removed by private dredging?—No, we have no record.

1705. That I rather fancy has been getting a smaller quantity?—Trinity House do not do any dredging now.

1706. I was referring to private dredging?—Yes, I think they take a large quantity still. There are four or five of these private dredgers in the lower reaches.

1707. You have no record?—We have no record of what they take.

1708. Therefore we should not be right in assuming that what the Thames Conservancy dredge is the total quantity dredged out of the river?—No, they dredge a very considerable quantity, the only difference being that we dredge systematically in the channel, whereas these dredgers go where they get the good stuff.

1709. Where they get gravel?—Where they get gravel.

1710. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Was any regular continuous survey of the river undertaken before the recommendations of the Commission of 1896?—The Conservators' surveyor regularly surveyed the river nearly down to Gravesend, but there was no survey beyond that. That was done by the Admiralty.

1711. Was there any regular continuous survey going on constantly before the date of the recommendation of the Commission of 1896?—Only so far down as about Northfleet, not beyond that.

1712. With reference to paragraph 39 of the Report of that Commission of 1896, who was responsible for that spoil being deposited in Dead Man's Hole?—The engineer to the Board at that time recommended this place as being suitable for deposit, because it was so very deep and convenient to get to

1713. It is stated that this deposit of spoil commenced in 1878. Was any survey made to see if the deposit of 2,000,000 cubic yards in a space of 200,000 square yards in any way altered the bed of the river at this place?—They occasionally surveyed the hole itself up and down, but not across the whole river. Surveys were made actually where the deposit took place.

1714. Then I presume that that survey showed that there was no filling up of the place?—There was filling up—not so much as you would expect from the quantity put in, but there was decided filling up.

1715. You say there were surveys taken?—Oh, yes, on that part—local surveys.

1716. In that case did the bottom of this Dead Man's Hole show any decided decrease of depth?—Yes, it did in parts.

1717. It did?—Yes.

1718. How can you reconcile that with the Report of the Commission of 1896, that it did not?—In parts it

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did not, but certainly at one end it was distinctly shallow. Our surveys showed that. It may not have been shown on the Admiralty Chart, because the Admiralty very rarely surveyed. That was the question of course that was brought before the Commission.

1719. Then it must have been an error, because the report of the Commission distinctly says that it did not show a decrease of depth?—Undoubtedly the Commission were perfectly right in stating that the whole ought to have been filled up with the quantity that was put in. It did not all stop there. That is quite certain.

1720. In paragraph 40 they say: "The recent surveys, however, show that while other portions of the river have become shallower, the depth of Dead Man's Hole has not been reduced?"—It is very easy to see by referring to the charts. If you will allow me to look into our large charts I will go into the matter; I cannot do it off-hand.

1721. Presuming that paragraph 40, where it states that the depth of Dead Man's Hole had not been reduced, is accurate, it follows that the neglect of the obvious course of constantly surveying it led to the detriment of the lower channel?—I do not know that it did. I do not think the surveys prove that in any particular part——

1722. Take the report of this Committee, and read paragraph 40?—Yes, I see the paragraph. The Commission state evidently that they considered that it was injurious to the river to put the stuff there. That is undoubtedly so.

1723. Anyhow it appears to be clearly proved that the Conservators deposited 2,000,000 cubic yards in a space of 200,000 square yards, and took no steps to constantly survey to see that the place was filled up?—Oh, yes. We surveyed the place itself. The hole was surveyed.

1724. How often in that time?—About once a year or something of that kind.

1725. Then in spite of being surveyed once a year, and finding that there was no great decrease, they still went on depositing there?—Yes.

1726. With reference to Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland's evidence, he stated that there is no question of divided authority between the Trinity House and the Thames Conservancy. Do the Trinity House buoy the channels within the Thames Conservancy jurisdiction without reference to the Conservancy?—Yes.

1727. Without reference to the Conservancy?—Without any reference whatever. They put them wherever they think fit.

1728. Do the Conservancy send plans of their dredging operations officially to the Trinity House Board?—Yes, I believe we do.

1729. (*Chairman.*) There is a member of Trinity House on the Board?—We have two members.

1730. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) The Yantlet Channel having been deepened, did the Conservancy ask the Trinity House to buoy it?—The question was raised at the Board, but I do not know whether an official letter was written or not. It was very much talked about at the Board, I know.

1731. You cannot answer that question?—I cannot answer definitely whether they wrote or not. I am told it was not brought on officially.

1732. My question is this. The Yantlet Channel having been deepened, did the Conservancy ask the Trinity House to buoy it?—Not officially.

1733. Did the Trinity House buoy it?—No, they did not

1734. Did the Trinity House tell the Conservancy why they did not propose to buoy it?—Not officially. I know the reasons, but they were not stated officially.

1735. Then your answers to those questions appear to show that there is a dual control. Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland said: "There is no question of divided authority." I want to arrive at the fact as to that?—There is a distinct authority undoubtedly, because the Trinity House buoy the channel irrespective of anything the Conservancy may say. I may say that at one time the Conservancy had the buoys under their control, but Parliament took away the control. See 1384

1736. Then, so far as buoys are concerned, there is a divided authority?—There is a divided authority undoubtedly.

Recalled 54.

Mr. WILLIAM FORREST MALCOLM called and examined.

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1737. (*Chairman.*) You are Chairman of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company?—Yes.

1738. Since when?—Since March of the present year. I may mention that we change our Chairman annually, the Chairman, before being elected, having to serve one or two years previously as Deputy Chairman.

1739. Will you give us your evidence as to the origin and growth of the docks of the Company?—The docks of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company are situated upon a peninsula on the south side of the River Thames, between the Lower Pool and Limehouse Reach, of which they occupy the greater part. Some interest attaches to the fact that a Dock constructed on this site appears to have been the first public wet dock in the United Kingdom. This dock was known as the "Howland Great Wet Dock," and was so named after a family settled at Streatham, to whom the property belonged. In 1695 Elizabeth Howland, daughter and heiress of Sir Giles Howland, married Wriothsley, the Marquis of Tavistock, the son of the celebrated Lord William Russell, and the Howland property passed to the Russells by marriage settlement, and remained in their possession until 1763. The minutes of the House of Lords show that a petition of William, Duke of Bedford, Lady Rachael Russell, and Elizabeth Howland, on behalf of the Marquis of Tavistock, and the Marchioness, his wife, minors, was presented to the House on the 11th February, 1695, setting forth that a sum of money had been laid out for the making of a dry dock at Redderiffe (Rotherhithe), and that the petitioners were well advised that the making of a wet dock there will not only be a great improvement of the said minor's estate, but of use to the public, and praying leave to bring in a Bill to enable them to raise and lay out monies for making a wet dock at Redderiffe. Leave was given to bring in the Bill, which was read for the first time on Sunday the 15th February, 1695, and received the Royal Assent on the 10th April, 1696. The wet dock referred to was constructed shortly after the Bill received the Royal Assent, as is evidenced by an old drawing of the Howland Dock, in the possession of the company with the description of the dock in manuscript appended, from which the following is an extract:—"This dock hath been found a very safe repository for ships, which was fully proved in that terrible and violent storm which happened on the 27th November, 1703, when, by the extremity of the winds, all the ships in the river which rode either at chains or their own moorings were forced adrift, and confusedly driven on the north shore, where some were lost, and most received great damage. Then, of all the several ships deposited in this wet dock, there was only one slightly injured in her bowsprit." The dock was sold by the Russell family in 1763. It was subsequently laid out for the accommodation of the vessels engaged in the Greenland whale fishery, and was then called the "Greenland Dock." In 1806 the dock became the property of a Mr. W. Ritchie. In the course of time, owing to the decline in the whaling trade and the simultaneous increase in the trade with the North of Europe, a change took place in the character of the business, and from that time the dock was mainly used by vessels laden with timber, deals, grain, and other merchandise from northern European ports. In 1807 the Commercial Dock Company was inaugurated, having for its object the purchase of the Greenland Dock and the adjacent property. The company commenced the work of extension and improvement by deepening and lengthening the existing entrance to the Commercial Docks, and the foundation of the new entrance was laid in November, 1808. In 1809 Mr. John Moore and others formed a project under the style of the Baltic Dock Company, for converting an estate of about 45 acres at Rotherhithe into ponds for the storing and bonding of timber, with an entrance to the Thames to the north of Barnard's Yard. This scheme received the assent of his Majesty's Treasury, who granted the promoters a preference in the bonding of timber, in consideration

of the large capital which would be necessarily expended in forming, constructing, and keeping up the dock and ponds. In July, 1809, the Commercial Dock Company acquired the estate and bonding privileges of the Baltic Dock Company. In 1810 the Commercial Dock Company obtained an Act of Parliament (50 George III., c. 207) for maintaining and improving the docks and warehouses called the Commercial Docks, and for making and maintaining other docks and warehouses to communicate therewith in the Parish of Saint Mary, Rotherhithe. In the following year, 1811, a further Act (51 George III., c. 66) was obtained to amend and render more effectual the previous Act, and for extending the powers of the Act. This was followed in 1817 by an Act (57 George III., c. 62) amending the two previous Acts and conferring further powers upon the company. Some time after the formation of the Commercial Dock Company another dock had been established at Rotherhithe, styled the East Country Dock, comprising premises adjacent to the Commercial Dock. The Acts relating to this undertaking are the 51 George III., c. 171, and the 6 George IV., c. 64. In 1850 the East Country Dock was purchased by the Commercial Dock Company, and in 1851 an Act (14 and 15 Victoria c. 43) was obtained, confirming the purchase, and empowering the company to construct a new entrance to the Thames, now known as the South Lock, and to enlarge the East Country Dock. The works were carried out, and the new dock and premises were opened on the 13th August, 1855. In 1860 a further Act was obtained (23 Victoria, c. 39), extending the time granted by the Act of 1851 in respect of the construction of the new entrance from the Thames at the Lavender Dock and other works. This entrance was completed and opened in September, 1862. The Surrey Canal Company was incorporated in 1801 by the Act of 41 George III., c. 31, under the style of the Company of Proprietors of the Grand Surrey Canal. This Act empowered the company to make and maintain a navigable canal from the River Thames at a place called Wilkinson's Gun Wharf, in the Parish of Saint Mary, Rotherhithe, to the town of Mitcham, in the County of Surrey, and also divers collateral cuts or branches communicating from the same to certain parishes and places within the Counties of Surrey and Kent. In 1803 it was decided to construct an entrance basin and ship lock into the river, the ship lock to be 140ft. in length. This lock and basin were completed and opened for the reception of shipping and craft on the 13th March, 1807. In 1807 an Act (47 George III., c. 80) was passed to enable the company to complete the works and to raise further monies for this purpose. In 1808 a further Act (48 George III., c. 99) was obtained authorising the company to supply with water the several towns, districts, and places therein mentioned, and to amend the several Acts relating to the said canal. The canal having been completed to the basin to Camberwell road, a distance of about four miles, application was made to Parliament, and in 1811 an Act was obtained (51 George III., c. 170), enabling the company to make and maintain a collateral cut from the canal at a place nearly opposite certain docks called the Commercial Docks, communicating with the basin at the lower end near the Thames, to complete the works, and to raise further capital for these purposes. In 1855 an Act was passed (18 & 19 Victoria, c. 134), consolidating the previous Acts, and changing the corporate name of the undertaking to that of the Grand Surrey Docks and Canal Company. Powers were also given under this Act for the making of a new entrance from the Thames, additional docks and other works, and the raising of further capital. These new works, comprising a deep-water dock of 16 acres, a basin of 3 acres, and a lock 250ft. in length by 50ft. in width with a depth of water on the sill of 27ft. below Trinity standard, which had been commenced in 1858, were completed and opened on the 6th July, 1860. In the same year, 1860, a further Act (23 Victoria c. 74), was passed authorising the company to make additional docks and other works, to raise further moneys, and for other purposes. A few years after the passing of the above mentioned Act the Commercial Dock Company and the Grand Surrey Docks and Canal Company came to the conclusion that their joint interests and the interests of the trade of the port would be promoted by an amalgamation of the companies, and in 1864 it was decided to apply to Parliament for powers to amalgamate the undertakings. The Surrey Commercial Dock Act (27 Victoria, c. 31), which incorporated the two companies under the name of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, and consolidated their previous Acts, was passed in the Session of 1864. Powers were given under this Act, *inter alia*, to increase the capital of the company, to acquire additional lands, and to execute various new works, including a communication ship lock between the Lavender Pond of the Commercial Dock and the Stave Dock of the Surrey Docks. I will hand in a schedule of the several Acts of Parliament relating to the Grand Surrey Dock and Canal Company, the Commercial Dock Company, and the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

(*The Witness handed in schedule. See Appendix 5th day, No. 9.*)

The Surrey Commercial Docks occupy a somewhat exceptional position with regard to the trade of the Port of London. Reference has been made to the decline in the Greenland trade and the simultaneous expansion of the trade in timber and corn with the Baltic ports which took place in the early part of the present century, when the Commercial Docks became the principal resort of the vessels engaged in this trade. From that time to the present these docks have held their position as a centre for the trade in timber, wood goods and grain, and their situation within a distance, by road, of two miles from London Bridge, and 1½ miles from the Tower Bridge, affords exceptional facilities for the cartage of goods direct from the docks. I will now hand in some tables which give the figures relating to the principal features of the company's business.

The Witness handed in the following tables:—

(*A statement of the accommodation afforded by the Surrey Commercial Docks, giving particulars of the docks, locks, timber ponds, warehouses, sheds, etc. See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 10.)

(*A table showing the tonnage of vessels of various classes (excluding light vessels) received into the Surrey Commercial Docks from* 1865 *to* 1880. *See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 11.)

(*A table showing the tonnage of vessels of various classes (excluding light vessels) received into the Surrey Commercial Docks from* 1881 *to* 1899. *See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 12.)

(*A table showing the number and tonnage of vessels wood-laden entering the port of London and the Surrey Commercial Docks from* 1880 *to* 1899 (*exclusive of vessels from the East and West Indies*), *showing the proportion of the wood tonnage entering the Surrey Commercial Docks. See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 13.)

(*A table showing the percentage of sawn wood goods landed in Surrey Commercial Docks to total import into London. See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 14.)

(*A table showing the quantities of sawn wood goods delivered direct from ship to craft from* 1890 *to* 1899, *and the percentage of these quantities to the total quantity of these goods received into the Surrey Commercial Docks. See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 15.)

(*A table showing the number and tonnage of sailing vessels and steamers wood-laden that entered the Surrey Commercial Docks from* 1870 *to* 1899, *showing the increase in the number and tonnage of steamers during those years. See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 16.)

(*A table showing the number and tonnage of sailing vessels and steamers grain laden that entered the Surrey Commercial Docks from* 1870 *to* 1899, *showing the increase in the number and tonnage of steamers during those years. See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 17.)

(*A table showing the increase in the tonnage of steamers that entered the Surrey Commercial Docks from* 1880 *to* 1899. *See Appendix, 5th day, No.* 18.)

The tonnage of vessels of various classes, excluding light vessels, which have entered these docks from 1865 to 1899, is set out in Appendices 11 and 12. From this it will be seen that the total tonnage which in 1865 was 744,540 tons had increased in 1894 to upwards of 1,000,000 tons.

1740. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I suppose that includes coasting vessels as well as vessels in the foreign trade?—Yes, but I might explain that our coasting vessels are a very small proportion. Comparing the tonnage of 1865 with 1899 there has been an increase in the wood tonnage, including firewood, of 46,344 tons; the grain tonnage has increased from 114,735 tons in 1865, to 237,390 tons in 1895. The apparent decline in the grain tonnage since 1895 is attributable to the failure in the crops, and consequent diminished import of Russian grain, of which

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the company receive a large proportion. It is to be observed that owing to the increase of the number and tonnage of steamers employed in the wood and grain trades since 1875, the proportion of goods carried to the register tonnage has considerably increased, the out-turn of steamers being greatly in excess of that of sailing vessels of corresponding tonnage. Appendix 13 shows the percentage of the wood tonnage received into the Surrey Commercial Docks to the tonnage of wood laden vessels into the Port of London, excluding vessels laden with hard wood timber which discharge in the docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee. Appendix 14 shows the total import into London of sawn wood goods from 1890 to 1899, and the percentage of the quantities landed in the Surrey Commercial Docks to the total import. It will be seen from these figures that the proportion of the goods landed with the company has decreased from 76·6 per cent. in 1890 to 54 per cent. in 1899. This is due to the growing increase in the quantity of the goods delivered overside, that is to say, delivered direct from ship to craft, and conveyed from the docks to the private wood wharves and saw mills, and upon which goods the company are precluded from making any charge. Appendix 15 gives the percentage of the deliveries overside to the goods landed and to the total quantity received into dock from 1890 to 1899. In 1890 the overside deliveries amounted to 49,900 standards, being 23 per cent. of the total quantity landed, or 18·9 per cent. of the total quantity received into dock. In 1899 the overside deliveries had increased to 123,759 standards, being 68 per cent. of the quantity landed, or 18·9 per cent. of the total quantity received into dock. Without attempting to raise the question of the exemption from charges of lighters and craft engaged in this overside business, which it is understood the Commissioners propose to consider hereafter, it may be permissible to state the fact that the number of barges thus employed, in diverting from the docks goods some portion of which might otherwise remain with them, seriously interferes with the conduct of the dock business, especially in the busy season, and that the expenses necessarily incurred in the docking, undocking and handling the numerous craft which frequent the docks impose a serious burden upon the company.

See 1841-2.

1741. (*Chairman.*) Upon that I assume that whenever we go into the lighter question you will be prepared to offer distinct evidence upon the subject?—Yes, we shall be.

1742. Either by yourself or by some representative of your dock?—Precisely. During the period which has elapsed since the amalgamation of the companies in 1864, there has been not only a considerable increase in the volume of the business, but also material alterations in the nature and conditions of the trade connected with these docks. Foremost among these may be mentioned the introduction and rapid increase in the number and tonnage of steam vessels since 1870. Appendix 16 shows that in 1870 all the wood-laden vessels received into these docks were sailing ships. In 1875 67 wood-laden steamers entered dock with an aggregate of 47,429 tons, averaging 708 tons for each steamer, the proportion of steam tonnage being 9·6 per cent., and sailing tonnage 90·4 per cent. of the whole. In 1899 the number of steamers had increased to 512, with an aggregate of 465,686 tons, averaging 990 tons for each steamer; the steam tonnage being 83·7 per cent., and the sailing tonnage 16·3 per cent. of the total. Appendix 17 shows a similar increase in the number and tonnage of steamers grain-laden. In 1870 no grain-laden steamer entered the docks: in 1875 the steam tonnage was 39·8 per cent., and the sailing tonnage 60·2 per cent. of the total grain tonnage. In 1897 the steam tonnage amounted to 99·9 per cent. of the whole, only one sailing vessel of 100 tons register having entered the dock in that year. Appendix 18 shows the increase in the tonnage of steamers using these docks since 1880. Whilst in that year no vessel entered the docks of more than 1,500 tons register, in 1899 there were 73 vessels exceeding that tonnage, of which 16 were above 2,000 tons register. Then I have to deal with the question of the extension of the dock system and improvements effected by the company since 1864. That the company have been fully alive to the changed conditions and requirements of the trade with which they are concerned, and have persistently endeavoured to meet the demands for additional accommodation and improved facilities is shown by the following summary of the chief additions and improvements which have been carried out since 1864. A comparison of the two plans showing the premises as they were in 1867, and as they are at the present time, will afford some idea of the nature and extent of the improvements effected. The Dock system has been greatly altered and extended. A new dock known as the Canada Dock, 1,508ft. in length by 454ft. in breadth, with a water area of 15¾ acres, was constructed and opened in November, 1876. Four grain warehouses have been erected, having together a storage capacity of 168,000 qrs. The demand for under-cover accommodation for wood goods has been met by the erection of twenty-three blocks of sheds, covering an area of 46 acres, and having a storage capacity of 61,500 standards, or 202,950 loads. I hand in a schedule of the works which have been carried out by the company since 1864, involving a capital expenditure of £484,914.

(*The Witness handed in a schedule of the works carried out by the Surrey Commercial Dock Company from* 1864 *to the end of* 1899 *charged to capital account, excluding the Dock Extension Works now in course of construction. See Appendix, 5th Day, No.* 19.)

This schedule does not include the dock extension works now in progress, which are referred to hereafter. Then the next point is with regard to the dock extension works now in course of construction. The constantly increasing dimensions and tonnage of vessels employed in the trades in which the Surrey Commercial Dock Company is mainly interested had for long engaged the serious attention of the Directors. The necessity of providing dock accommodation which would adequately meet not only the present, but also the probable future, requirements of the shipping using these docks was apparent. It was accordingly decided to construct a new dock on the site of the old Greenland Dock with an entrance lock of such dimensions as would afford ample accommodation for the largest class of vessels that now or in the future would resort to these docks. Application was made to Parliament for power to carry out this scheme. In 1894 an Act (57 & 58 Vict. c. 67.) was passed authorising the company to alter and extend their works, to raise further capital, and for other purposes. The works authorised by this Act comprised:—The extension of the Greenland Dock; the construction of a lock and entrance from the river adjoining the Greenland entrance lock; the construction of a communication passage from the south-eastern corner of the Canada Dock into the new Greenland Dock; the extension of the Russia Dock southward; the construction of a communication passage from the Russia Dock into the Greenland Dock; the construction of new canal locks; the extension from the Greenland Dock into the Surrey Canal, and the formation of a basin by the widening of the canal. The extension works were commenced in 1894, and the first section of the new dock, 845ft. in length by 450ft. in breadth, with a water area of about 8¾ acres, was completed in 1897. The second section of these works is now in course of construction. The new dock when completed will be 2,350ft. in length by 450ft. in breadth at the widest part, covering an area of about 21 acres, with an entrance lock from the river 550ft. in length, 80ft. in breadth, and having a depth of water on the sill 33ft. below Trinity high-water standard.

See 1870 and 1886.

1743. Now you are coming to the question of the capital expenditure.—Yes. These works have entailed a capital expenditure to the present time of about £600,000, and it is etimated that a further expenditure of upwards of £250,000 will be required for the completion of the works and the provision of the necessary equipment. In view of the foregoing statement, and notwithstanding the criticism with which the dock companies of the port have been in some quarters assailed, it may be fairly contended that this company have not been slow to recognise the necessity of adapting their system to modern requirements, and that to the full extent of their powers they have endeavoured to meet the demands for increased accommodation and facilities which have arisen from the altered conditions and development of the trades with which they are concerned. In connection with the dock extension works, it is desired to call the attention of the Royal Commissioners to a matter of the utmost importance to this company, and also to the trade of the port. As already stated, the new entrance lock now in course of construction provides for a depth of water on the sill of 33ft. below Trinity high-water standard. It is obvious that unless the river is of sufficient depth to make it navigable by vessels of deep draught up to the entrance, the efforts of the company to provide accommodation for such vessels will be entirely frustrated. According to the Report of the London County Council on the Port of London the Thames Conservancy contemplated, besides the

channel of 30ft. minimum depth to Gravesend, the maintenance of a navigable channel 18ft. deep and 300fe. wide from the Albert Docks to the Millwall
See 1843. Docks. This scheme was to have been carried out within 18 months from January, 1897, but it appears that no attempt has yet been made to deepen or widen the river channel above the Victoria Dock entrance. The proposed channel of 300ft. wide
See 1870. is inadequate. To render the new dock accessible to vessels of the class it is designed to take, it will be necessary that the river should be deepened to not less than 38ft. below Trinity high-water standard outside the new entrance and for a distance of 600ft. above and below it; not only in mid-channel, but extending across the river between the opposite shores as far as may be practicable. In the interest, not only of this company, but of the port, it is imperative that the river should be made navigable for vessels of deep draught above as well as below Gravesend, and it is
See 1836. to be hoped that measures may be adopted to carry out the necessary deepening without delay.

1744. Will you just give us the explanation of that 38ft. What depth of water does it mean at low water?—I should be glad if you would permit me to tender our dock engineer, Mr. Gaskell, to give evidence with regard to that. He can give evidence on that engineering point better than I can. I am not an expert in those matters.

1745. We only want to know what it means. We have been talking about 30ft. at low water. What does that 38ft. mean. We want you to reduce this to the common denominator of either 24ft., or 26ft., or 30ft. Which does it come under?—As I understand the depth at present is 14ft.

1746. The Millwall Dock is about 24ft. What we want to know is whether you want the same. For convenience sake, when we are speaking of these things, it is as well that we should have a common standard for all the docks?—I am told that 38ft. below Trinity high water standard would mean 20ft. below that standard at low water and spring tides.

1747. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You mean 20ft. below low water at spring tides?—20ft. below low water of an ordinary spring tide.

1748. (*Chairman.*) Can you tell us whether there have been any vessels delayed outside your docks
See because the river is not deep enough at the present
1867-70, time?—We have had in neap tides vessels that could
7748. enter our dock with the present lock, which is not equal to our new lock, delayed sometimes by not being able to come up.

1749. How long are they delayed—half a day?—I should say several days if they happen to come up just when the neap tides are taken off so that they cannot get in. They must wait till the neap tides come to their extreme and wait till the tides come on toward the spring tide.

1750. Can you put in a table of vessels that have been so detained during the last year?—I have not such a table prepared.

1751. Will you kindly give us a table of vessels that have been practically detained from entering the dock in consequence of the want of depth of water in the river?—I have already said there would be much more detention of large vessels that we could take into our new lock than there would be of vessels with our present lock.

1752. At the present time the larger class of vessels which would come up do not come up at all or only come up on very high tides?—Yes. In the wood trade we do receive the largest class of vessels that are loaded with wood, for this reason:—A wood cargo comes for sale to London, and it is unsaleable if it is landed in any other dock than the Surrey Commercial Dock; but it is very probable that vessels for the wood trade would be built of a still larger capacity than they are at present if it were clear to the owners that they could come up the River Thames without detention at any state of the tides, either neap or spring, and could be received into our lock and so into our dock without any detention.

1753. Do you know of any vessels in the wood trade at present which go to other ports in preference to
See 1862, London in consequence of there being a greater depth
7578. of water at those ports. Do they go to Hull, for instance?—That I cannot speak to. I can make inquiry and submit the results.

1754. You spoke just now of larger vessels that would come up if the water was deeper. What I ask you now is whether there are any at present that go to other docks?—I would rather amend my evidence by saying that the tendency with regard to steamers in the wood trade, as in all other trades, is to build them gradually larger. The larger the steamer is, the less are the working expenses proportionately. If steamship owners were aware that steamers of a considerably larger size than those employed at present could come up to London, and go into the Surrey Commercial Docks without delay, there might be a tendency to increase the size of the steamers built for the timber trade.

1755. I think you said that 75 per cent. of the wood that comes into London comes into your docks?—Yes.

1756. (*Mr. Ellis.*) There seems to be a decrease in percentage?—Yes.

1757. (*Chairman.*) I want to know whether you have ample storage in your docks for all the timber that comes in, or whether it is conveyed at once to the purchasers in different parts of London either by land or by water?—We generally have a very large quantity both of floating timber on our ponds and of sawn timber in our sheds, and in the open, which after arriving in London is sold and distributed piecemeal to the buyers.

1758. Is there any other part of the river that would be more suitable for the storage of timber on a large scale than your docks?—I think not; and certainly, if any place was found further down the river that might be suitable for the reception of it, it would be by no means suitable for the distribution. We stand very conveniently for the distribution of timber.

1759. Have you floating barges for the more rapid unloading of timber vessels, or what steps do you take to unload timber vessels as rapidly as possible?—When possible we bring up timber vessels alongside our quays, and discharge them straight away on to the quays, but a certain proportion of our sheds and open spaces for storing wood goods are not accessible to vessels of large tonnage. In the case of those vessels we employ, first, barges belonging to ourselves, and when they are exhausted we hire barges and take away the sawn timber from the vessels to the sheds or quays where the depth of water would not permit the vessels to discharge, but where we land them.

1760. In Manchester we found they had floating quays upon which timber could be landed, and then the ship would clear its cargo, and the floating quays could be transferred to any portion of the dock and landed as required. You have not tried them have you?—We have had the matter under consideration, but we have not seen our way to try it in the meantime.

1761. You have not room for it, I suppose?—There would be a difficulty, but we have had the idea under consideration whether it might not be a facility to attempt it provisionally to a certain extent.

1762. I presume the great thing in the present day is to unload vessels as rapidly as possible?—Certainly.

1763. Have you any special machinery for the unloading of timber vessels?—As a rule steamers discharge themselves with their own power. I may say with regard to the quickness of dispatch that one of our great grievances is that when goods go away overside, in the case of a vessel which, if brought alongside our quay with an entire cargo to be landed at our docks, could be discharged in three days, perhaps half that cargo has to go away overside, and not only do we get nothing for it, but through the delay caused by picking out the cargo which has to be discharged into the barges a steamer may be detained six days instead of three, at a loss to the steamer herself and at a great loss to us by blocking up the quay space which, at certain times in the season, is very valuable.

1764. Are you in favour of an alteration in the practice of the port so that everything should be landed on to the quays at once and distributed either by land or by water?—I cannot say that in all branches of our trade that would be practicable. In the case of our floating timber we discharge it direct into the water, and there it remains. What we plead for is to be allowed some compensation in the shape of a tax upon the barges using our docks for their own benefit and not for ours, and on the goods which are taken away loaded in the barges from the ship's side, for which at present we receive no remuneration.

1765. Do you not draw any distinction between the barges themselves and the goods which they contain?—Our opinion is that one could scarcely tax the barge itself to a sufficient extent to compensate us; that there ought

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to be, besides a certain tax upon the barge, a tax upon the goods which have used our docks during their discharge and were loaded into the barge and taken away, and upon which goods we had received no payment of any kind.

See 7578.

1766. Do you think that that tax upon goods should be applicable to the whole port, or only to the docks?—I do not quite follow you.

See 1261.

1767. The Chamber of Commerce have stated in evidence that they would not object to certain dues being levied upon the whole port, but they object to dues levied only upon goods in docks. I want to know your opinion?—If dues were charged upon goods discharged in the river, it would not affect us in any way; and therefore we have no opinion on the matter.

1768. Supposing it were charged on the goods in your docks equally with goods in the river, would that satisfy you?—I am not quite sure that I catch your meaning.

1769. I only wish to know whether you have any definite views upon that question. We are quite willing that these views should be stated before us when we come to them, and of course anything that is stated then will be subject for cross-examination. I will not pursue the question further if you do not wish to give any evidence now.—Our object in the matter is almost entirely that we should be paid for the use of our docks by barges and goods coming into the docks, from which we derive no revenue of any kind.

See 1740.

1770. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I asked you a little time ago whether the figures of tonnage in Appendices 11 and 12 included coasting vessels or not, and you replied that the proportion of coasting vessels would be very small, but they were included. Can you tell us what the proportion would be?—I have a table drawn out here which shows the proportion of laden and the proportion of light vessels received into our docks from 1865 up to the present time. Laden vessels are practically, in our docks, exclusively foreign vessels. Light vessels are coasters, which go in to load cargoes of timber and grain. In last year, 1899, the tonnage of laden vessels was 907,347, and the tonnage of light vessels was 47,867; thus bringing the total to 955,214 tons.

1771. Then if we had a figure from the Customs showing that the tonnage of vessels in the foreign trade received into the Commercial Dock was not the figure you mention, but 774,000 tons, I suppose you would say there is some discrepancy that you could not very well explain?—The figure which I am mentioning is the figure for vessels loaded with cargoes of all descriptions—the 907,347.

1772. But you say that they are practically vessels in the foreign trade?—Excepting the 47,867.

1773. Then I am pointing out to you that we have a different figure from that which you have given us supplied by the Customs, and I wish to inquire whether you can suggest any explanation of the discrepancy?—I cannot suggest any explanation, but I think our figures must be the correct ones. We have charged the dues upon the vessels.

See App. 3rd day No. 3.

1774. Then may I ask whether 112,000 tons coal laden vessels, that you include, come from foreign countries?—No. I should have excepted the coal laden vessels. That is a particular part of our business for the South Metropolitan Gas Company. They would not be taken notice of by the Customs at all.

1775. Then that does alter the figure as to vessels in the foreign trade being substantially what you give here?—I have made a mistake in that in forgetting to take into account that particular branch of our business.

1776. Are any of the other vessels to be dealt with in the same way?—No, I think not.

1777. None of the grain vessels?—No. Coastwise grain would not come to our docks once in a thousand times. We send a good deal of grain away coastwise, but it would be an exceptional thing to receive a cargo coastwise.

1778. Now I should like to ask you a few questions upon Appendices 13 and 14. In Appendix 13 you show that the percentage of all the wood laden vessels coming into the docks is 75 per cent.?—That we receive into our docks 75 per cent.

1779. Of course that is a diminishing percentage, because in 1880 the percentage was 83 per cent.?—Yes.

See 7634.

1780. Then in the following Appendix 14 you show that the percentage of sawn wood goods landed in your dock compared with the total import into London is now about 54 per cent., which is a smaller percentage than the 75 per cent. in the previous Appendix?—If you will remark, Appendix 13 represents the tonnage of the wood laden vessels received into our docks; Appendix 14 represents the percentage of sawn wood goods landed into our docks.

1781. So you may receive more goods into the dock than are landed?—That is practically our complaint, namely, that a very large quantity coming into our docks are taken away by barges, and are discharged at private wharves, upon which goods and barges we receive no payment.

1782. I just wished to have the explanation of what seemed to be an apparent discrepancy in these figures. Can you give us an idea, with reference to the wood laden vessels, of the weight of the goods as compared with the tonnage of the ships? Would it be much greater?—I had a table made out by our superintendent, in which he takes 12 representative steamers, and 12 representative sailing vessels. In wood we do not count by tonnage; we count so many standards of 165 cubic feet. We find that in 8,262 tons of sailing vesels we have an out-turn of 3,421 standards; 15,855 registered tons of steamers give us an out-turn of 8,926 standards. In round numbers, 1,000 tons register of steamers carries 563 standards, while 1,000 tons register of sailers carries only 414 standards.

1783. Your company have supplied to the Commission a copy of the annual account for last year. I should like to ask you one or two questions on that account. I will ask you just to enumerate the particulars composing your capital—at the present time—how much Ordinary stock, how much Preference Stock, and how much Debentures?—At the present time we have issued stock, Ordinary £1,353.814; Preference £633,290. Of that Preference Stock £131,290 was issued during the present year.

1784. And it is not shown in this account before me?—No, it is not shown in that account. Of Debenture Stock we have issued £140,000, and we have in hand unissued £208,000, which exhausts our Parliamentary powers.

1785. And the total amount issued is—what?—The total capital issued is £1,995,814.

1786. That was at the end of last year, and not including the Preference Stock which you have issued during the present year?—The Preference Stock which we have issued during the present year brings it up to £2,127,104.

1787. Then on the other side what is your total capital expenditure?—The total capital expenditure is £2,243,109 19s.

1788. Something has been added to that during the course of the present year?—Undoubtedly.

1789. Can you tell us the market value of the different stocks at the present time. I want to know the aggregate amount?—Our Ordinary Stock is quoted at £130 to £133; our various Preference Stocks range from £130 to £143; and our Debenture Stock £140 to £145.

1790. And the total market value?—I have not that figure, but if we add one-third in rough figures to the capital it will show what the market value will be.

1791. The market value is one-third more?—Yes, it is a little more than one-third more. It is about 35 per cent. more.

1792. Before I leave this question of capital I assume we may infer from the figures in the account, that to some extent your outlay has been provided out of the balance of cash in your possession, and the large sum to the credit of profit and loss?—The greater part of our stock since the very early days has been placed at a premium. That premium we credited to profit and loss account. We showed the stock only for its nominal amount, not for the amount received for it.

1793. So that a large part of the £375,690 to the credit of profit and loss consists of premiums which have been received in that way?—Yes, a considerable part consists of premiums.

1794. Then, turning to the revenue account, I notice that you divide your dock earnings into three heads; wood department, warehouse department, and dockage?—Yes.

1795. I should like to ask whether it would be possible for you to make some sort of arrangement—as that which the Joint Committee have made, and give us the earnings of the company in the same form?—I think you will

find we state the earnings in the same form on the credit side. We divide it into wood department, warehouse department, and dockage.

1796. Their division is import rates, export rates, and tonnage dues?—Our export rates are practiaclly nil in our docks.

1797. Then what is the division?—Our division is wood department, warehouse department—which is chiefly grain—and dockage.

1798. And the dockage correspondends to the tonnage dues in the accounts of the Joint Committee?—Yes.

1799. Your total income from all sources is £341,000?—Yes.

1800. And your total expenditure is £240,000?—Yes.

1801. That leaves a surplus of rather more than £100,000?—Precisely.

1802. And has that profitable state of affairs been going on for a long time?—We have always been able to pay a fair, reasonable dividend to our shareholders.

1803. What do you call a reasonable dividend?—We have paid for many years past 6 per cent., but I may state that a considerable proportion of that 6 per cent. does not arise from our dock property; it arises from the earnings upon the canal, and upon properties belonging to the dock company.

1804. Your canal earnings are down here at £14,765?—Yes; you will find them stated as £14,765.

1805. And the expenses?—The canal expenses are £2,801.

1806. So that would leave to go to profit and loss about £12,000?—Yes; and also then there are rents of properties £8,667.

1807. So that £20,000 of that £100,000 is partly from the canal and partly from rents of properties?—Yes, which on the whole is more than 1 per cent. upon our ordinary stock.

1808. Have you any outlay in connection with the management of the property?—It would be very small, so small as not to be worth stating separately.

1809. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to ask you a question upon Appendix 17. In column 3 I notice there seems to have been a kind of recovery in sailing ships in the year 1899. Is that merely transient, or is it likely to be permanent?—It is transient. We may get occasionally a few of the large sailing vessels from California, or from the River Plate, sent into our docks, but we do not expect them as a rule.

1810. Then with regard to the tonnage of steamers, there seems to be a very great diminution?—Yes. I can explain that.

1811. Of course, these are grain vessels?—Yes.

1812. Is that diminution likely to go on?—No; we have begun already to recover very rapidly. The grain that we receive is very largely Russian grain, and especially Russian oats, and it so happens that for two years there had been very bad oat crops in Russia, and the price of Russian oats went up very considerably higher than American oats.

1813. Then you expect to get it back again, do you?—We expect to get it back again to the scale of former years.

1814. Then with regard to finance: roughly speaking, out of every pound of income you pay away about 6s. or 6s. 8d. in dividend—about 30 per cent.?—Yes; but our income is very largely derived from very valuable fixed properties that we have. If that property had not been turned into docks at all, but had been left as it was we might have received a better income from ground rents or houses than we are now receiving upon the docks. The fact is, all profits arise in a great degree from the happy circumstance that our predecessors bought property which was at a comparatively very much less value in those days than it is to-day.

1815. Will you kindly translate that into figures. I do not quite follow it in the balance sheet before me. There are £317,000 dock earnings?—Yes, of which a very large percentage is rent.

See 7578. 1816. How much of the £317,000 arises from rent?—Speaking from memory I should say about £80,000.

1817. Then when you use the word "earnings," that includes rent?—Yes.

1818. I do not call it an accurate phrase. "Earnings" is supposed to mean something received for something done?—We give value in the accommodation for the rent which we charge.

1819. You give something, of course. Then you bring a very large balance forward from the 1st January, 1899?—That is represented in the shape of works which we have carried out out of revenue; and also, as I have pointed out, by the premiums upon the issue of our capital.

1820. Then it is not a balance in the ordinary sense of the term—it is fixed property, is it?—A large proportion of it is fixed property; but you will remark that we have a certain amount that we hold in Consuls.

1821. Excuse me. Keeping to the Profit and Loss Account, with which I am dealing, you say, "Balance, 1st January, 1899, £369,446"?—Yes.

1822. Is that an ordinary balance in money?—No; it is not in the shape of money.

1823. It could not be divided as dividend then?—No.

1824. It is not a divisible asset?—No.

1825. I only want to get at the facts, you understand?—Certainly.

1826. But taking the account as it stands, you are what I may call a highly prosperous company?—Fairly prosperous—yes.

1827. All your Stocks are at a large premium, at all events?—Yes.

1828. There is no doubt about it, is there?—I am reflecting back on the days when we were more prosperous than we are now.

1829. But you would have no difficulty in raising money if you wanted to?—No.

1830. You would have no difficulty in making extensions or improvements?—We have money provided for our present extensions, and we hope when those are done that we shall be relieved from the necessity of any other works for a considerable time. We have endeavoured to provide for some distance ahead, that is, not to be caught by large vessels coming upon us before we have our locks and other accessories ready to receive them, but to prepare for those vessels to come to them when the time comes.

1831. At all events I may take it from you that you do not come before us like some people *in formâ pauperis*?—If we find that there is anything to be done to our dock we hope we shall always be in a position to find money to do it with.

1832. At present you do so?—At present we do.

1833. Now will you go to Appendix 12. Could you at all give me the percentage of vessels of large tonnage that come in that large figure of 907,347 tons that came in in 1899. Could you give me at all an idea of the draught of water of that tonnage?—In Appendix 18 you will find the increase in the tonnage of steamers shown to a certain extent. See 1866.

1834. But I am asking as to draught of water?—I find we have no information as to the draught of water.

1835. And you could not say roughly how much of the 907,347 tons consist of vessels drawing more than 22ft., or 24ft., or anything you like?—I could not give you that information now. We can submit it to you later on, if it is desired. See 1928.

1836. I am rather asking you because of the words you used in your evidence. As I understand you have come here as the chairman of this prosperous company, and you say to us: "In the interest not only of this company, but of the port, it is imperative that the river should be made navigable for vessels of deep draught above as well as below Gravesend," and so on. Do you lay great emphasis on that?—I do lay very considerable emphasis upon it. I have found that vessels which ten years ago we should have treated as beyond the bounds of possibility in any of our trades are to-day vessels that we think nothing of; and I think that very possibly in ten years more we shall find the same state of matters prevailing again, and that the vessels of ten years hence will show an equivalent advance upon the vessels of to-day. See 1743.

1837. And would you wish us to infer that the desirability of deepening the channel of the Thames is growing more urgent year by year?—Distinctly, I think so.

1838. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is there much dredging that has to be done in the Surrey Commercial Docks?—Yes, we do a very considerable amount of dredging.

See 7578.

1839. Could you give us any idea of the amount per annum in pounds, shillings, and pence?—The figures are roughly about £5,000 per annum.

1840. Is that for the removing of mud deposit from the water of the tide coming in and out chiefly?—Yes.

1841. I will just draw your attention to that part of your evidence where you dealt with the costs which are put upon the company by reason of the total number of barges. You said that "the expenses necessarily incurred in docking, undocking, and handling the numerous craft which frequent the docks impose a serious burden upon the company," but you make no mention there of the cost of dredging?—No. Undoubtedly if we had not so many craft, and our locks were not open so long in consequence, the amount of dredging required would be somewhat less; but that is a matter that our engineer could speak to better than I can.

See 1740.

1842. I merely draw your attention to it, because it has been mentioned by other dock chairmen that it is a cost that falls upon the dock companies on account of the barges, and I wanted to know whether it is the same thing with the Surrey Commercial Dock?—Undoubtedly it is.

1843. Then in another part of your evidence you said, this scheme for deepening the river "was to have been carried out within 18 months from January, 1897, but it appears that no attempt has yet been made to deepen or widen the river channel above the Victoria Dock entrance." Who undertook to do it within 18 months from January, 1897?—We found this statement in the report made by the London County Council upon the Port of London.

See 1743

1844. Can you refer me to any authoritative statement by the Thames Conservancy?—I am afraid not.

See 7641.

1845. Now I will ask you a question on Appendix 15. I notice that the percentage of overside deliveries to total landed and overside deliveries has increased from 18·92 in 1890 to 40·58 in 1899. Can you give the Commission any reason for this very large and apparently continuously increasing percentage?—It is the general tendency of trade of all kinds to endeavour to economise every charge as much as possible, and if a man having a private timber wharf in London finds he can send a steamer into our docks, send his barges for it, and that we can charge him nothing on the goods that occupy our docks on the barge, it is naturally to his interest, instead of having these goods landed in the dock, to take them away direct from the ship's side to his own private wharf. That tendency is increasing year by year.

1846. I should have thought the tendency would have been quite as great in 1890 as in 1899. Self-interest was quite as strong in 1890 as in 1899.—The competition is much keener now than it was ten years ago.

1847. Then I will put this to you: If that is the case, do you think it will continue to increase?—That is a difficult question to answer. To a certain extent, there must be always a large amount of the goods intended for sale that must be discharged in our docks. If they are discharged at a private wharf, or discharged anywhere else, they are no longer available for current sale in the market.

1848. Then do you think the percentage has reached its climax?—No; I think if the power is not given to us to tax their goods to a certain extent, they will continue to find it to their advantage to take away an increasing percentage of goods from us. I do not think the percentage will mount up in the same rapid proportions that it has in the past ten years, but still I consider that the tendency would be towards an increase.

1849. If it did mount up, your position would be not quite so good as it is now?—Unfortunately not.

1850. It would be a very serious thing?—Very serious indeed.

1851. But is there any particular reason affecting the trade of London as to the opening of other places for stacking of timber, or the different modes in which the trade is conducted, or other general considerations which have made this increase so considerable between 1890 and 1899, and which will not continue to make it equally considerable in the coming nine years?—There has been a little difference in the mode of trade, in this way—that people who buy a moderate quantity, 50 standards or thereabouts, ten years ago would have bought goods lying in our docks, but now they import themselves, and if they can, they take them away overside to their own places.

1852. Do the railway companies compete with you overside?—No, we have no competition that way.

1853. The engineer will, I suppose, tell us what the depth of water in the Channel, which you say is necessary, would be as compared with the programme of the Thames Conservancy?—I understand he has very full information upon that point.

1854. Your complaint against the Thames Conservancy, therefore, would be this—that their programme is insufficient, and that they are very much after time?—Our complaint, as far as we are personally concerned, is that our new lock will be available for receiving large vessels which by the time it is ready will not be able to come up to it unless at certain occasions of the tide. They will not be able to come up at neap tides.

1855. Unless the Thames Conservancy bestir themselves very quickly?—Decidedly.

1856. And you would urge that that should be done?—As far as we have any right to urge such a course, we certainly would do so.

1857. (*Chairman.*) Do many of your goods go by the Surrey Canal?—A very considerable amount of firewood goes up the Surrey Canal. Then the coals go up the Surrey Canal largely.

1858. What is the size of barges on your canal; what is the depth of water?—They are small barges—20 and 30 ton barges, and about 5ft. depth of water.

1859. Have you 6ft. depth of water in your canal?—6ft. 3in.

1860. The railway does not carry many goods away, does it?—We have nothing to complain of in regard to the railway taking away goods from us.

1861. What proportion of the goods goes away from your docks by railway?—Do you mean goods that do not pay us any revenue?

1862. Goods of any kind, whether grain or wood, or anything?—We have no means of checking that. We have really no direct railway communication in our docks.

1863. Which is your main road for the docks into London?—The Deptford Road.

1864. Have you a good access to it from all the docks?—Very good indeed.

1865. Have you made the roads themselves?—We have made the roads inside our docks.

1866. You have nothing to complain of in that direction as far as the land carriage goes?—No, we have nothing to complain of in that direction. I do not know whether it is germane to the present inquiry, but we complain very much of the enormous amount we have to pay away in rates.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I think it would be convenient if we could have some information as to the point I raised with regard to the draught of water of vessels using the docks. See 1833–7

(*Chairman.*) Yes, we want a return of the class of vessels, the tonnage, and the draught of water.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) During a series of years?

(*Chairman.*) The last five or six years will be sufficient, I suppose, for the purposes of comparison with what we have had from some of the other docks.

(*Witness.*) I presume that is a point upon which the engineer's evidence will be more valuable than mine. See 1928.

Recalled 7573.

(Adjourned to Tuesday next, November 27th, at 12 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

SIXTH DAY.

Tuesday, 27th November 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The EARL EGERTON OF TATTON (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. JAMES STRANACK GASKELL, M.I.C.E., called and examined.

Mr. J. S. Gaskell, M.I.C.E. — 27 Nov. 1900

1867. (*Chairman.*) You are engineer to the Surrey Commercial Dock Company?—Yes. May I ask that before tendering my evidence I may correct a point in the evidence of our Chairman which was tendered last Tuesday before the Commission? The amendment has regard to Question No. 1748. The proper answer should have been: "No detention has taken place. The vessels could always come up the river to our docks when we were able to receive them into our locks."

See 1748-53.

1868. No detention to your knowledge. Of course, there might have been detention?—There might have been detention, but not to our knowledge. This amended answer to Question 1748 would, of course, nullify the answers to Questions 1749, 1750, and 1751.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We ought not really to take a correction of the evidence of one witness from the mouth of another.

1869. (*Chairman.*) At Question 1753 I ask: "Do you know of any vessels in the wood trade at present which go to other ports in preference to London in consequence of there being a greater depth of water at those ports?" Can you answer that question?—No, I cannot answer that.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I do not think we should alter on our notes by the mouth of one witness what another has said.

1870. (*Chairman.*) It involves several questions and answers. I am afraid they must stand on the notes with such correction as you have been able to give. Now will you give us the details of the locks and docks which have been referred to in the evidence of your Chairman?—The three existing entrance locks referred to in the evidence of the Dock Company's Chairman are distant below London Bridge one and three-quarter miles, two and a-half miles, and three and a-half miles respectively. The Surrey Lock is 250ft. long and 50ft. wide; the depth of water over sill at ordinary spring tides is 27ft. 3in. The South Lock is 220ft. long, 48ft. wide; depth of water over sill, 27ft. The Lavender Lock, 320ft. long, 34ft. wide; depth of water over sill, 18ft. 6in. The particulars of the different docks which are at present served through these entrance locks are given in a table which I will hand in, communication between the docks and the Surrey Canal being obtained by means of a lock 140ft. long by 21ft. 6in. wide, through which barges are locked down from the docks to the lower water level of the canal.

(*The Witness handed in a table giving particulars of the different docks of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company. See Appendix, 6th day, No. 1.*)

The whole of the docks, with the exception of the south dock, are at present served from the river through the Surrey entrance lock, which is situated about one and three-quarter miles below London Bridge. The Admiralty chart shows 12ft. as the depth of the river channel opposite this entrance. The south dock is entered from the river by the south lock at a point three and a-half miles below London Bridge. The river channel opposite this entrance is shown on the chart to be from 16ft. to 21ft. deep. The Lavender Lock, which is about three-quarters of a mile below the Surrey Lock, is used almost exclusively for barge traffic and for the timber traffic in connection with the timber ponds. The depth of the river channel opposite this lock is shown to be 13ft. The site of the new entrance lock, which, together with the new dock now under construction, was referred to by the Chairman in his evidence, is situated about 550ft. above the south entrance lock, and nearly three and a-half miles below London Bridge. Opposite this entrance the chart shows the depth of the channel to be from 17ft. to 19ft. Owing to the amount of barge traffic that has to be dealt with, the work of unlocking from the Surrey entrance has to be commenced at a very early stage of the tide, the first lock out of barges generally being made at the beginning of the flood, five hours before high water. The locking of barges out and in goes on until about one and a half hours before the time of high water, when the vessels leaving and entering the docks are taken in hand. The time of discontinuing the barge work is to some extent governed by the size and number of vessels to be dealt with at that particular tide, and also by the nature of the tide. The inner dock gates are closed at the time of high water, after which vessels generally are not admitted. Any barges remaining to leave or enter are then disposed of. The necessity of having to make so many locks for barges at such a low stage of the tide (six and seven locks on the same tide being not an unusual number) necessarily involves the loss of a considerable amount of dock water. This has to be replaced by water from the river more or less charged with solid matter in suspension, which settles at the bottom of the basin and docks, and consequently adds materially to the amount of periodical dredging which has to be done for maintaining the requisite depth of water throughout the system. With vessels entering these docks, the general practice is that, with a view to ensuring safe conditions of working, they should do so on the rising tide; consequently, in the case of several vessels about to enter on the same tide, they have to be up the river and alongside, or near to the entrance, some considerable time before high water. In passing up the river, and just before arriving off the entrance, the vessel is swung round and her head pointed down stream, in order that she may be in the most favourable position for entering the lock. This swinging, in the case of ships bound for the Surrey entrance, generally takes place just off the Shadwell entrance to the London Docks; and in the case of vessels of 400ft. long, the whole of the fairway in the stream would be taken up at the time of swinging. The completion of the company's new dock and entrance lock will, should it be hereafter found desirable to do so, enable the whole of the larger class of vessels visiting these docks to make use of this entrance for obtaining access to any part of the dock system by means of the different communication passages leading out of the north and south sides of the new dock. This would not only leave the other river entrances free to deal conveniently with the smaller vessels and ships going out of the docks light, but would also relieve the river, for a length of nearly

See 1742-3

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See 1743.

one and three-quarter miles between the new entrance and the Surrey lock, and over which the traffic is at present somewhat congested, of the heaviest ships now coming to these docks. Reference was made in the Chairman's evidence to the necessity for deepening and widening the present channel of the river, especially in the neighbourhood of the new entrance and above and below it, in order to render the new dock accessible to vessels of the class it is designed to take. In this connection I may be permitted to submit to the Commissioners that similar conditions of working will prevail with respect to this entrance as now exist at the Surrey entrance. Vessels will arrive at a comparatively early stage of the tide, they would have to swing in the stream, presumably at Limehouse Reach, before arriving at the entrance, and accommodation will have to be provided for the earliest arrivals to lie by during the interval which takes place between the time of their reaching the entrance and that of their admission into the dock. These, together with other points in connection with the general traffic, all tend to show that something more than a channel 500ft. wide is necessary, in that part of the river referred to, to meet the requirements of the company's new undertaking, in respect of its approaches from, and connection with, the river.

1871. You have given us the depth of the river channel opposite the locks?—Yes. The Surrey entrance lock is about one and three-quarter miles below London Bridge. The Admiralty chart shows 12ft. as the depth of the river channel opposite this lock.

1872. Is that Admiralty chart correct?—I am not prepared to vouch for the accuracy of the Admiralty chart.

1873. Have you ever tested the depth for yourself?—Yes, but not opposite to the Surrey lock. We have had no occasion to do so up to the present.

1874. Now the south dock?—The river channel opposite this entrance is shown on the chart to be from 16ft. to 21ft. deep.

1875. Have you verified that yourself?—Not personally, but it has been verified in my office.

1876. What was it then. You say it is from 16ft. to 21ft. deep. Is that correct?—The 21ft. would be the deepest point in the channel, but the floor of the channel is not of a uniform depth of 21ft.

1877. Has it been dredged lately?—I think not.

1878. You must know surely, as an engineer, whether it has been dredged or not?—I should say not.

1879. But do you say not—distinctly not?—Yes, I say not. The depth of the river channel opposite the Lavender Lock is shown to be 13ft.

1880. Has that been verified by you?—I am giving you the depth as stated on the chart.

1881. I want to know whether you, as engineer, can tell us if those depths are correct?—I have not verified that.

1882. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Have you the chart there?—Yes.

1883. Perhaps you will tell the Chairman what the date is on the chart?—It is published on the 25th July, 1856, and corrected up to February, 1889.

1884. (*Chairman.*) How long have you been engineer?—My appointment dates from June, 1896.

1885. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Were you with the company in any other capacity before that time?—No.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) To avoid any misunderstanding I may say that the chart is corrected up to 1897.

See 1742–3.

1886. (*Chairman.*) Now tell us about the new entrance lock which was referred to by the Chairman in his evidence?—Opposite this entrance the chart shows the depth of the channel to be from 17ft. to 19ft. I may say that that depth has been verified during the last two years.

1887. When will that new lock be finished?—We hope to have it finished in the course of another two years.

1888. The necessity of making locks for barges involves a certain amount of loss of water. How do you replace the water?—It has to be replaced from the river. We have no supply from inland at all. Any water that is taken up by locking has to be replaced from the river.

1889. And it is charged with solid matter which has to be dredged in order to maintain the depth of your docks?—Yes, in some cases very heavily.

1890. At what cost do you reckon that the dredging that you have to do in consequence of these operations is carried out?—During the last five years the cost works out at an annual amount of £5,000 in round numbers.

1891. £5,000 a year?—Yes.

1892. You do not get any tolls upon those barges?—No.

1893. Nor dues upon the goods?—No.

1894. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Can you give us the length of the longest ship that enters your docks, or that has entered them up to date?—I am not sure that I can give you the longest ship, but I can give you the lengths of three or four long ships that we have docked during 1898 and 1899. In April, 1898, we docked the "Strathnairn," 365ft. long, 47ft. beam. In February, 1898, we docked the "Oceana," 330ft. long, 45ft. beam. On January 9th of the present year we docked the "Brighton," 325ft. long.

1895. Practically we may take 365ft. as about the greatest length?—Yes.

1896. Do you bring the ships stern foremost into the dock?—No, the ships are swung before they get abreast of the entrance, and they are always taken in stem first.

1897. When they are coming up, on what tide?—On the flood tide. We swing them with their heads down stream, and they enter the locks on the flood. The docking is completed as a rule at our docks before high water. They come with the flood, and they swing with their heads down stream.

1898. Then in that case you require more than the length of the ship of deep water in the river to swing her length?—Yes, certainly, apart from the question of the rest of the traffic in the river, which of course the swinging stops for the time being.

1899. What do you consider should be the depth of deep water in the river to allow the vessel to swing in safety?—I should say that, as far as the vessel's requirements are concerned, if it is confined to the vessel's requirements, a margin of from 50ft. to 100ft. would be ample.

1900. That is in addition to her length?—Yes.

1901. (*Chairman.*) That means 500ft?—Yes; 500ft. for a 400ft. ship.

1902. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you ever considered what depth of water you would like to see up at the entrance to your new lock; I mean the depth of water you would consider would be desirable to allow vessels to come up to make use of your new lock to its full advantage?—Yes.

1903. What depth do you say?—I think that the programme as sketched out by the Thames Conservancy and laid before the Commission last Tuesday would probably meet the requirements with respect to the channel itself, but it would not give my company what they wish for. It would not meet adequately the requirements of the new lock and dock for the purpose of convenient working. See 1384.

1904. Then virtually you accept the intentions of the Thames Conservancy?—As far as they go, but I say they are not sufficient for the satisfactory working of our new lock and entrance.

1905. What greater depth do you require?—I say I accept that programme as far as the channel of the river itself is concerned, but that does not cover all the dock company's requirements in respect of working the new lock.

1906. My question is:—When your new lock is completed, are you content with the proposals of the Thames Conservancy as sufficient to meet the requirements of that lock?—Not sufficient to meet the whole of the requirements.

1907. Then what increase do you require over their proposals?—I think the channel in the Limehouse Reach or Deptford Reach should be made considerably wider, in order to admit of the swinging of the largest class of vessels that the new lock could accommodate; 500ft. would not be sufficient for that.

1908. What greater depth do you require?—If the floor of the channel was maintained to a depth of 18ft. below low water, or 39ft. below Trinity, for its full width, that width being sufficiently wide to enable the largest class of vessels to swing, I think that would be sufficient. May I add that the programme as laid down by the Thames Conservancy provides nothing in the shape of widening the river immediately opposite the new entrance. There is no adequate deep water space for vessels to lie during the time that takes place

between their arrival at the pier-head and the time of their entering the locks, and it is very necessary that provision should be made for that, because in many instances we have five or six vessels coming up on a tide, and sometimes as many as five or six waiting outside the entrance to the dock.

1909. That was my object in asking you the width you consider necessary. You say 100ft. over their length. That would be 500ft. ?—I thought your question was confined to the channel itself pure and simple.

1910. No. I pointed out the swinging of the ship?—The ships would swing perhaps half a mile before they arrive at the entrance. In addition to the space for ships to swing we require additional space for ships to lie after they arrive at the entrance previous to their docking.

1911. (*Chairman.*) What additional depth. Suppose you have four or five ships waiting to come in what additional room and what depth of water would you require? —I think it is very necessary that the whole of the river bed, as far as practicable, should be dredged out to give us the same depth of water immediately opposite and in front of the entrance as the channel itself; that is to say, from the new entrance up to the Commercial Dock Pier.

1912. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You gave us the length of the vessels, but you did not give us the heaviest draught that you have to take in?—From 24ft. to 25ft at present.

1913. Were you under the impression that the Thames Conservancy programme was for a channel of 500ft. wide? —That was my impression.

1914. I think the programme is 300ft wide from the Albert Dock up to the Millwall Dock?—I refer to the programme which was laid before the Commission last Tuesday.

1915. (*Mr. Ellis.*) The amended programme?—Yes.

1916. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I am referring to the amended programme. My note is that it is 500ft. up to the Albert Dock, and 300ft. above the Albert Dock. At any rate your impression was that it was to be 500ft. ?— Yes.

See 1930

1917. And you say in addition to that you want some more room for swinging the ships?—Yes.

1918. For a length of about half a mile?—The ships entering the South Dock at present generally swing opposite the Cattle Market in the Deptford Reach; that is about three-quarters of a mile below the entrance.

1919. At any rate you want sufficient length for swinging?—Yes.

1920. In the evidence which was given which I took down at the time it was stated as 300ft. wide. It is in Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland's evidence in answer to Question 1384. However, your impression was that it was 500ft. ?—Yes.

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1921. You cannot give us any evidence, I take it, as to the present width of the channel opposite the docks. You have not surveyed it?—As far as I know it is about 150ft. wide in the centre, giving a depth of 18ft. below low water spring tides.

1922. And as far as you know no dredging has been done in that part?—No, there has been no dredging as far as I know.

1923. The new lock of your company is to be of a length of 550ft. ?—Yes.

1924. What would be the depth of water on the sills at low water spring tides?—12ft. effective depth. In the centre, of course, it would be about 2ft. 6in. more, but the floor of the lock is in the form of an inverted ellipse, so that for practical purposes for the docking of vessels we reckon the sill to be about 33ft. below Trinity.

1925. Practically all ships would be able to dock there at every high water, neaps and springs, throughout the year?—Yes. We should get 29ft. of water effective depth over the sill at ordinary neap tides.

1926. I suppose one is right in saying that the vessels that come loaded with timber are not the deepest draught vessels that come into the Port of London? —No, not by a long way.

1927. Do grain vessels draw more water in proportion to their tonnage?—Yes.

1928. May I refer you to an answer given to Mr. Ellis at the end of your Chairman's evidence, Question 1866? Can you say of your own knowledge whether that return has been put in or do you put it in now?— We put it in now. It has only been printed this morning.

See 1866

(*The Witness handed in a statement showing the total number of vessels in each of the years from 1895 to 1899 which entered the Surrey Commercial Docks with a draught of 22 feet and upwards, and the average tonnage of such vessels. See Appendix, 6th day, No. 2.*)

1929. That will fulfil your Chairman's undertaking to give the Commission this information?—Yes.

1930. To prevent any misunderstanding about the width of the channel, the Secretary has been kind enough to refer to the evidence, and it is found that I am right, that the channel was defined as 300ft. wide above the Albert Dock to the Millwall Dock?—My remark was with regard to what I saw in print.

1931. Then *a fortiori* you would say the programme was insufficient?—Yes.

Sir THOMAS SUTHERLAND, G.C.M.G., called and examined.

Sir T. Sutherland.

1932. (*Chairman.*) You are the Chairman and Managing Director of the Peninsular and Oriental Company? —Yes.

1933. You have been Chairman for 20 years?—For 20 years, and 5 years before that Managing Director.

1934. What is the number of your fleet and the tonnage?—In round numbers about 65 vessels, aggregating upwards of 300,000 tons, and London is the headquarters of our service. We have regular lines all over India, China, Japan and Australia. A considerable proportion of our fleet is engaged in carrying Her Majesty's mails to and from all parts of the East.

1935. You changed from Southampton to London?— Yes, we did.

1936. In what year was that?—About 1875, in consequence of the opening of the Suez Canal, which altered completely the conditions of the carrying trade. Our trade depended upon the land route through Egypt formerly, and consisted of very valuable goods. The opening of the Suez Canal compelled us to become carriers of general cargo upon a large scale. Therefore we came to London in order to be nearer the centre of trade.

1937. What number of vessels do you despatch every year?—Rather over 100.

1938. Are they all from the Albert Docks?—Yes, all from the Albert Docks.

1939. You have your own quays there?—We rent quays and sheds.

1940. What is your largest vessel at present?—About 8,000 tons, and the smallest about 5,000 tons gross register.

1941. Have you none larger than 8,000 tons?—None larger than 8,000 tons gross register.

1942. Is not the "Caledonia" yours?—Yes, but there are five ships a little larger than the "Caledonia" which are the same kind of ships—the "India," the "China," the "Egypt," and the "Arabia"; these are all about 8,000 tons.

1943. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) About what does the net registered tonnage amount to?—The gross tonnage, for instance, of the "Arabia" would be, as I have said, just over 8,000 tons, the net tonnage 4,167 tons. If you would like to know the carrying capacity for cargo of that ship with that net tonnage, it would only be about 2,000 tons.

1944. (*Chairman.*) What is the length of that ship now?—500ft.

1945. And the depth?—What we call the depth of the vessel is nearly 33ft.

1946. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) But what would be the draught of water?—26ft.

1947. (*Chairman.*) It is a matter of notoriety that your ships have doubled in tonnage within the last twenty years?—Yes.

1948. Then you have, besides the mail steamers, other cargo steamers?—We have a good many cargo steamers.

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We have, I suppose, about two or three entering the docks every month—always two, at least—so that our total carriage of cargo is somewhat large; it amounts altogether to nearly 400,000 tons of cargo imported and about 340,000 tons exported.

1949. Do you deal with the export cargo differently now from what you did previously?—The export cargo is treated in exactly the same way as it was formerly. A certain percentage goes in through the dock warehouses—about 45 per cent., we compute, enters through the dock warehouses; and about 55 per cent. is barged into the dock.

1950. On which you pay no dues?—On which no dues are paid by shippers.

1951. Will you tell us how you now deal with the import cargo which is different to what you used to do?—A very important alteration was made in the system after the great strike of 1889. Previous to that time the dock claimed—I am not sure whether they had a legal claim—but, at all events, they claimed and exercised the right to unload our ships and to pass the goods through their warehouse for the purpose of sorting and re-delivery. The expense of landing the goods fell on the shipowner, and the cost of sorting and re-delivery in the case of all goods which passed out of the hands of the dock company was also borne by the shipowner, so that the consignee had a free delivery of all such cargo so far as the shipowners and the docks were concerned. I should explain that the dock company made a considerable profit on the landing and re-delivery charges thus paid by the shipowner, but the great dock strike in 1889 and the subsequently disturbed state of labour in the East End of London showed that if the dock company continued to discharge all the ships, as up to that time they had done, the risk of labour agitation against the dock company would be very great, and both the dock company and the shipowners desired to effect such a change as would place the responsibility for the discharge of their vessels upon the shoulders of the shipowners instead of being in the hands of the dock company. An arrangement was therefore come to by which owners like the P. and O. Company agreed to rent certain warehouses and quay space at a fixed rate, and carry on their own work. This shed and quay rent compensated the dock company for the profit they sacrificed in ceding the right of discharge to the shipowners.

1952. Are you able to say what rent you pay for the quays and warehouses?—It is in round figures just about £5,000 a year.

1953. You say owners like the P. and O. Company; are there many others who are on the same terms as yourself?—Yes; I may say that all the principal lines coming to the Albert Dock engaged in eastern trade are, I think, on the same footing. I may mention here that in whatever I say I am expressing the view not only of the P. and O. Company, but of the British India Company, who are perhaps the largest customers of the dock next to ours, or one of the largest.

1954. Is this system which was started then like the Liverpool system, or how does it differ?—No; not at all like the Liverpool system; the very opposite. In Liverpool the shipowner gets rid of the whole of his cargo at once, and is done with it.

1955. Do you prefer this system to the Liverpool system?—No, not at all.

1956. Do you think the Liverpool system is the best system?—From the shipowners' point of view it is most unquestionably the best system, because it is the quickest system for getting rid of his cargo.

1957. Is that one of the reasons why shipowners like Liverpool better than London?—As a method of transacting business in connection with the discharge of cargo, the Liverpool method is preferable; but, of course, the trades of Liverpool and London are more or less distinct; they overlap each other at certain points undoubtedly, but still they are more or less distinct. We could not carry on our present trade by going to Liverpool.

1958. You run to Australia, do you not?—Yes.

1959. Do you carry wool in your vessels from Australia?—Yes.

1960. Still?—Yes.

1961. We understood that a great deal of trade that used to come to London in the way of wool now goes through Liverpool and Manchester to Yorkshire?—I think London is still the principal seat of the wool trade.

See 769.

1962. Has your import of wool diminished in any way?—No; a great deal of wool formerly used to come to London which now goes direct to the Continent; that is well known.

1963. Therefore London loses the re-export trade?—Undoubtedly; but you may say the same with regard to a great many other trades. You may say the same, for instance, with regard to the silk trade, which before the days of the Messageries Maritime centred in London, and has all been transferred to the Continent. It is a trade not existent in London now.

1964. You think that that change has been rather owing to the opening of the Suez Canal than to any other cause, such as the unpopularity of London as a port?—It had commenced to take place really before the opening of the Suez Canal; but no doubt the opening of the Suez Canal accentuated that change very much.

1965. Will you state now the change that took place in 1896?—Yes; I think it was towards the end of 1896. The arrangement which I have just described had worked smoothly up to that time. The dock company then sought to raise increased revenue by means of imposing a tax of sixpence per ton on all goods brought into the dock which did not remain for the purpose of storage in the hands of the dock company.

1966. Do you mean what was taken by lighters?—On everything; not only what would go out by lighter, but it might be delivered by road, so long as the dock company did not get the storage of it. They wished to impose a tax of sixpence a ton on everything that was not stored with them.

See 2822.

1967. Upon all the goods in the dock?—Not altogether, because in the case of our ships, for instance, I think I am right in saying that the dock company retain about 18 per cent. of our cargo for the purpose of storage.

1968. Now?—Yes. Therefore the proposal would have been to levy a charge of sixpence a ton on 82 per cent. practically. Of course, a charge of that kind would have been impossible for us to recover from our consignees; it would have amounted at once to a charge upon us of £5,000 to £6,000 a year, in addition to the charge which we were then paying for warehouse and quay rent, and in addition, of course, to the dock dues, and as we naturally found that this charge would be very much in excess of what we ought to pay or could afford to pay, we struck against it, and really took up a policy of building wharves on the Thames. I may say that we invested in land for the purpose, and would undoubtedly have carried out that policy, but the dock company afterwards saw reason to compromise the situation, and we did compromise it.

1969. You mentioned that you have bought land. Have you got that land still?—We have. It is the whole of what you see in the map called St. Clement's Reach. The whole of that land on the north side of the Thames belongs to us.

1970. Rather than go to capital expenditure which would enable you to work these wharves you agreed to pay this £1,500 a year rent?—Yes, we compromised it.

1971. Do you think that that is a solution with regard to the extension of the dock system—the creation of wharves in the river itself in the same way, say, as at Calcutta?—I do. I think there is a great field for the construction of wharves on the Thames.

See 2144.

1972. You think with the tendency to have large ships, the rapid discharge that is required would be better obtained by not having a system of docks, but as far as possible canalising the river?—I do to a very large extent. Our experience at Antwerp, where we have been in the habit of sending our ships since the year 1883—ever since I may say that expensive quay system was created—has created a very favourable impression in our minds with regard to what can be done on the river by means of deep wharves. The great question with shipowners is rapid working, especially rapid discharge. Rapid loading is another question; he cannot load so rapidly as he would like.

1973. Did you ever get any estimates as to what it would cost you to build the wharves that you would require?—It would have depended very much upon the extent to which we should have desired to carry out our particular work there. We considered the matter and especially the nature of the dredging which would be required, because at a portion of the land the water is deep and at another portion the coast would have required to be

dredged. While we were considering that very anxiously the dock company withdrew from the position which they had taken up in reference to what we call a royalty upon all cargo, and the compromise which I have mentioned was effected.

1974. Your engineers never went so far as to draw plans or anything of the kind?—Well, we did draw plans, but they were not plans sufficient for the purpose of obtaining estimates.

1975. Do you say that the cost of discharging ships under the old system was less expensive than under the new?—The old system was less expensive than the new. I say also that is the case, notwithstanding the fact that in order to economise the company discharge a large portion of their cargoes overside and avoid the expense of passing through the dock warehouse. I can give you actual figures as far as the old and the new methods of working are concerned, but I should say that the actual figures do not represent in any degree the cost to us, because under the new system of working we have a vast amount of what we call overtime, and that it is impossible to introduce into the calculation which I mentioned. The former cost of discharging a ship and subsequently of passing the cargo over the quay to the consignees to give them free delivery, we estimate, exclusive of overtime, as having cost us about 2s. 5d. a ton. I should mention freights are very often 10s. a ton. Then on the present system we calculate, without overtime again, that it costs us about 2s. 7d.; that is a difference of 2d. a ton. But as I say that does not represent the whole of the extra cost, because in working under the present system, and with the large cargoes with which we have to deal, we have to pay for a great deal of overtime, and that I do not bring into the calculation.

1976. The calculation you are now making is the difference between the present system and what you had previous to 1889?—Yes, what existed before 1889.

1977. You have your own staff of labourers, or whatever you call them—the different employees?—Yes, our own superintendents and our own staff.

1978. Whereas, previously the dock company did the work?—Our staff was previously very small in comparison with what it is now.

1979. You say that you discharge a large portion of your goods overside on account of economy. Is that the most rapid way of discharging your vessel—in lighters?—No; the most rapid way would be to discharge the whole cargo into the dock warehouses, as is done in Liverpool. See 6905.

1980. You mean with double floors?—Yes. As a matter of fact, if we wish to discharge the whole of our cargoes into docks, which we cannot afford to do because the cost would be so great now under the present system, it would be impossible to do so because the present dock warehouses would not contain the large cargoes which are received in the port. See 6905.

1981. That is the complaint that you have to make of the docks as they are at present; that in order to make them effectual for your purpose you require larger warehouse or shed accommodation; is it both warehouse and shed? I draw the distinction between warehouse and shed. In Liverpool there is a great deal of cargo which is discharged into sheds where the goods remain for a certain time, and of course there are permanent warehouses. Are you speaking now of temporary sheds?—I am speaking now of the dock sheds. See 6905.

1982. You mean the warehouses for temporary purposes?—Yes, for temporary purposes. The warehouse is a shed in the dock in which goods are placed in order to be sorted, and subsequently re-delivered. What I say is that it would be impossible for us if we wished to do so to put the whole of our cargoes into these temporary sheds, and therefore we are compelled, whether we like it or not, to discharge a large portion of our cargo overside. As a matter of fact, we do discharge overside, not only because we are obliged to for the reason I have explained, but also in the interest of economy. Whatever cargo we put into the shed at the present time we have to pay for taking out again, and giving to the barges and to consignees in any other way, outside the 18 per cent. of the total which the dock company retain for the warehouses. See 6905.

1983. You are obliged to use a system of discharge which is not so rapid as you would like, on account of the economy of it?—In the first place I should like to explain that there is not the room. I may give a very clear illustration of that by saying that owing to the barge strike which has existed for the last few weeks in the Thames the state of these warehouses becomes so congested that a merchant told me only the other day that he actually had not received goods six weeks after the ship had arrived. The dock sheds are now, I say, entirely inadequate to the system which ought to exist, namely, a system of complete discharge of the ship to the shore. It ought to exist of course under conditions which would necessarily relieve the shipowner to some extent of the great expense which he has to incur in re-delivery.

1984. You do not at present have experience of other ports, do you? I want to know whether you send any of your ships to other ports?—I have no personal experience myself of Liverpool; we have sent a ship or two there; but I have a great deal of personal experience of Antwerp. But we go to Antwerp more for loading than for discharging, therefore the point does not arise about which I am now speaking.

1985. You take Continental goods for export to the East, I suppose. Is it after partly loading in London that you go over to Antwerp?—After discharging our ships in London we send over our ships to Antwerp to load, because the goods are too heavy to be transshipped in London. The shipments in Antwerp mostly consist of deadweight. I suppose we send on an average about two steamers every month to Antwerp in that way; at least we did until very lately.

1986. From what you see of the wharves at Antwerp, you think they are better suited for the modern system of cargoes and the modern system of large ships than the Port of London?—I do in a great many ways, certainly.

1987. Have you ever endeavoured to make any better terms with the dock company as to these things which you want? Has there been any interchange of views between you?—We have to take the docks as they are, and I am afraid that the docks have very considerable difficulties in the way of finance. As far as I know, there is no possibility of changing the system which exists now in the docks unless there is an entire change in the system of the port.

1988. Are you in favour of any such change?—Yes, I am very much in favour of change. I think the present system of the Port of London is disgraceful for the nineteenth century.

1989. I do not ask you anything as between docks and shipowners, as I understand, if necessary, you may be represented further on in regard to any question which arises as to the imposition of future dues and so on?—Certainly.

1990. I presume you are aware that there is proposed legislation in Parliament, and I suppose you do not approve of it. I will ask you that just generally?—Certainly. I should be very sorry to have to create a plan myself, but I have no doubt that the Commission will be quite equal to it.

1991. We rather look to gentlemen of your experience to give us some lead in the matter; we are not experts?—A private individual like myself could hardly venture to attempt to formulate any plan in a matter of that kind, but I think, after the whole of the evidence is before the Commission, if your Lordship and your brother Commissioners were of opinion that the system ought to be altered, the onus would be upon somebody to create a plan. What I should like to make clear at this point is that the difficulties which the dock company have had to contend with have arisen in no way at all events from a scarcity of tonnage. We and other companies have continued to contribute upon an increased scale to the revenue of the dock company by increased tonnage. Our own fleet, I think, must have increased to about three times what it was in 1875. At the same time we feel strongly, under the present port system and dock system, that shipowners are not on solid ground at all, but are very liable to have their business further interfered with in the interest of the dock shareholders, and without increased efficiency or advantage to the shipping world.

1992. Would you state what you consider to be defective in connection with the port and docks?—I think with regard to the port, in the first place, that it is a very great danger that large vessels such as we and others now employ should not be able to lie with safety off the dock entrance, or in any part of the river above Erith. We have been obliged to send ships which are already off the docks waiting to enter, back all the way to Gravesend. That, I need hardly say, late in the afternoon in winter, is a very serious thing

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to be obliged to do. It has not happened very often, but still I have four or five cases in which it has happened. The last case was the case of the "Caledonia." She had come up ready to enter the dock. I believe there was some accident—I am not blaming anyone in connection with it—and she had to steam all the way back to Gravesend.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Can you give us the date when that happened?

1993. (*Chairman.*) Will you give us all the cases that you have, please?—Yes. The "Caledonia" had to go back on June 8th of this year. That is the last case. The previous case to that was the "Borneo" on November 21st, 1897. She had to go back on a winter's night; it was a very bad winter's night indeed. Then the "Shannon" returned in the same way on January 23rd, 1896; and the previous case to that was some time before, in January, 1889, the "Khedive." Three out of the four cases happened in the depth of winter. Then we say that ships on leaving the docks are sometimes overtaken by fog, and if that occurs in the shallow part of the river above Erith, the ship must get aground and incur very considerable danger in the case of such heavy vessels that are coming up to the docks now displacing some ten or twelve thousand tons. Our contention is that, taking into consideration the increasing size of ships, the river ought to be deepened as far as the Albert Docks at least to 26ft. at low spring tides, with a width of channel of at least 500ft.

1994. Now as to the docks?—You ask me now with regard to the docks. I speak of the Royal Albert Docks, on which our experience rests. I believe that it is admitted by the dock authorities that a new entrance to this dock is necessary. I believe at present it would be unsafe to bring a ship into the dock more than 517 or 520ft. in length. We had plans drawn up for a ship 530ft. long the other day, but it was proved to us that it would be necessary to send such a ship either to Tilbury or to Southampton. Our present largest vessels are only 500ft., but we contemplate the construction of ships of considerably greater size. Then, undoubtedly, the graving dock accommodation is inadequate. There is a new graving dock required capable of taking in ships drawing 24ft. at least.

1995. What is the largest graving dock in London?—Tilbury is the largest.

1996. Is that as large as the largest at Liverpool?—I fancy there are larger graving docks in Liverpool. I wish to say that I am very desirous of not appearing or wishing to make any complaint against the docks. The docks are poor we know very well, and have to manage their business with most rigorous economy, but undoubtedly if you walk through the docks and see the state of their quays, and if you look at their tugs, which are pretty well coeval with Noah's Ark, I think, and their appliances in general, you will see that the expenditure is kept down to its lowest possible point, and one which I should myself say is hardly compatible with efficiency.

See 2274.

1997. What would you recommend for the most rapid discharge of a vessel?—I say that the shipowners ought to be able to discharge their ships in dock on to the dock quay entirely as they do in all great ports, and that subsequent handling of goods, if they are to be taken away by barges for the convenience of consignees, should be at the cost of those consignees; but in the present state of the dock plant and of their warehouses, which are simply ground floor sheds, it would be impossible to discharge *in toto* the large cargoes which are now brought into the dock. That is merely a repetition, so far, of what I have said before. I say, to bring the system up to date would involve a reconstruction of those sheds to a height of two floors at least, as the superficial space of the docks would be hardly sufficient to make them large enough with one floor only.

1998. Three floors might be desirable?—If they had space enough I should prefer, of course, that the sheds should be of one floor, but they have not got space enough. That appears to me to be the state of things to be aimed at from a shipowner's point of view, as rapid discharge is the most vital of all questions.

1999. Is it not a fact now that the large vessels that come into docks have very nearly always a mixed cargo that requires sorting?—Yes.

2000. And that can best be done, I presume, on the quays?—Certainly.

2001. On the quays or in covered sheds open to the quays?—Certainly.

2002. Those goods are sorted much more expeditiously in that way than in any other?—Certainly.

2003. It is difficult to sort goods in a vessel, into lighters, is it not?—Very.

2004. Because if you have a mixed cargo—grain, for instance, and a variety of mixed goods, you have to get them all sorted before you get down to the grain?—It is extremely difficult, but necessity drives us to a good many shifts. To give you an instance, we load our cargoes in Calcutta, and we load our cargoes in Australia, as far as we possibly can with a view to their being discharged partly overside and partly on to the dock quay. We know from experience that certain goods will go to wharves, and certain goods will go into lighters, and so on, and if we can possibly arrange it in loading our ships, we put these goods into a position to be handled more easily, but, still, that is, at the best, a very imperfect system compared with the total discharge of a ship and subsequent sorting.

2005. I suppose it is very difficult for all ships to be loaded with such care as you mention?—Yes, in the trades in which we are engaged, I may say, the goods are carried on what are called "liners," that is to say, ships running regularly in the trade. They do in all probability much as we do. Perhaps some of them do it a great deal better, but I am not sure of this, but what I say is, if this re-construction of the London system were to be effected, I have no doubt the docks would obtain a far larger quantity of goods to store than they do at present. If, on the other hand, a large proportion of goods is to be turned away for the convenience of the merchant and the benefit of the wharfinger, it does not seem right that shipowners should pay for that convenience. If I were in a Court of Law I should not be allowed to express an opinion, I should only be allowed to state facts; but I wish to say that I speak the views of leading shipowners, I think, who are trading to these docks, in saying that, in the interests of public policy, the administration of the Port of London and the docks should be in the hands of an authority constituted *ad hoc*, which should have powers not likely to be given either to the present Conservancy Board or to the dock companies to impose such dues either on ships, on river craft, or on goods, as would appear necessary for the purpose of raising a sufficient revenue for the improvement of the port and the extension of the dock works or construction of wharves, in whatever direction such improvement may be found necessary. I also venture to say that the future interests attaching to this question are too grave to be committed to the hands of private individuals, such as the dock directors are, whose policy must necessarily be based on the desire of their shareholders to secure a market value for their property, which it certainly does not possess at the present time, and is not entitled to obtain at the expense of shipowners. Of course what I say in reference to the docks applies equally to the existing Conservancy Board.

2006. Then you think that such a body should be a representative body?—Certainly.

2007. The public authorities of London, and shipowners, and the Chamber of Commerce should have representatives on it, you think?—I think it would be one of the most important bodies that has ever been created in the United Kingdom, and its constitution, of course, would require to be very carefully considered indeed. It would be partly representatives elected and partly nominated. I am not sure that at first starting, at all events for some years, I should not be in favour of a considerable nomination for such a body, but subsequently—even perhaps from the first—the constitution should be an elective one. There are so many interests to be considered in connection with that that it would be very presumptuous for me, as a private individual, to give anything but a broad view of what I think is a necessary change, but I have no doubt that after the evidence which is being taken by this commission is completed, various bodies will be ready to come forward with suggestions.

2008. But you are Chairman of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and you represent not only your company, I presume, but the feelings of other large shipowning companies?—Yes. I represent to-day the British India Company. I may say that I represent generally the feelings of those large companies regu-

larly trading to the Port of London. In fact, I know that I do.

2009. You have not formulated any idea as to how the revenue is to be raised, have you?—The revenue must be raised, of course, from ships and dock dues, and I think also from goods. In every port in the kingdom, as far as I know, goods are made to contribute, and, though you may perhaps think that I am acting on my selfish shipowner's feeling, I say that it is more important that you should make a port cheap to ships than that you should refrain from exacting some contributions on goods, because the initial effort in creating trade, after all, depends upon shipping; and if a shipowner finds a port cheap so far as he is concerned, he will most likely bring his trade there. The mere charge of a few pence upon goods will never have the effect of preventing goods from being carried. I was just going to show you a little calculation which I have here as to the difference between the cost of a ship entering the docks in London and going to the quays in Antwerp. I take a ship of our own, like the "Candia," which is a purely cargo vessel, and I find that she pays in conservancy dues at 1½d., £225; in dock dues at 1s., £200; in light dues, at 2⅜d. each way, £91. Exclusive of pilotage—I have not brought the pilotage into calculation for certain reasons—the total cost of bringing that ship into London into dock is £316 13s. 4d. If we send her to Antwerp, the total dues she pays are quay dues, equal to 3¼d. per ton, £54 3s. In one case the shipowner pays £54 3s., and in the other case he pays £316 13s. 4d.

[See 3423; 3511; 5628.

2010. Is that exactly under the same conditions, without touching the cargo at all?—It is for these items which I have given you.

2011. They are only shipping dues?—Yes. If I were to develop the calculation further into the other expenditure, in London it would assume very much more formidable proportions; but I simply give the difference on certain points.

2012. That is very valuable as far as it goes, but we should also like to know the difference between the cost in London and Antwerp, or any other port that you are acquainted with?—For loading and discharging, you mean?

2013. Yes. Say cargo of a similar kind, because what we want to know is how far London is a dearer port than other ports in the United Kingdom or the ports which compete with us abroad, like Antwerp?—I do not think there would be very much difficulty in giving you absolute figures for a ship as between London and Liverpool. Of course, it is very important to have the same ship. But as between London and Antwerp it would be difficult to go much beyond what I have stated, because, as I say, ships chiefly load in Antwerp—at least our ships do—they do not discharge. We hardly take any cargo over there. The discharge rate, of course, it is easy to get.

2014. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Were these dues that you have given us the dues of a ship going into Antwerp to discharge?—These have nothing to do with the actual cost of discharging, which is a labour charge. These are dues compared with the dock charge.

2015. But sometimes dock dues here are different upon a loaded ship from what they are upon a light ship. My question really is whether the ship that went into Antwerp was light and the ship that went into London was loaded?—I do not see where the difference comes in.

2016. We are told here that a light ship going into the docks does not pay the same tonnage dues as a loaded ship, or is exempt altogether?—But if she subsequently loads in dock? A ship may go to the dock in ballast. If she subsequently loads in dock I do not know that she pays lower rates.

2017. I wish to be quite clear upon all the points of comparison?—I do not think it has a very important bearing, but it may have some little bearing. My impression is that if a ship goes into dock in ballast and loads in dock she pays the same as the loaded ship.

2018. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Can you assure us that in that comparison you are comparing like with like? That is the whole point?—To the best of my belief I am comparing one ship under the same conditions as another.

2019. You will admit that the whole value of the comparison depends upon that?—The figures are so wide that even if you assumed that there is some slight difference it would be immaterial.

2020. (*Chairman.*) In order to make the comparison perfectly fair we ought to know exactly what the conditions of the port of Antwerp are, and how far they are subsidised by municipal or public funds, and are therefore able to give cheaper accommodation for vessels. From one point of view that is important, although, as far as the actual sum which the shipowner has to pay goes, from your point of view you do not care what the cause of the reduction of the charges is as long as they are less?—In one respect the port of Antwerp is fortunate. They have a civilised government, which pays light dues. Excepting Turkey, Great Britain is the only other country, I believe, which charges light dues. But the fact remains that to the shipowner who does not go into those questions the difference in point of cost in working the quay at Antwerp and working the docks in London is a very important matter.

2021. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you tell us at this point the reason why you omitted pilotage?—The reason is because I have not got the proper figures for the pilotage of what I may call ordinary vessels. We carry pilots, as it were all the year round. I have the figures for that, and I may say in passing that it is one of the hardships which we think we have to contend against that we are compelled to pay those gentlemen—very excellent men—much larger salaries in the course of the year than we pay to our captains. Our pilotage to the Port of London is on that account very much higher than the casual pilotage. If I were to compare the casual pilotage in the Port of London with the casual pilotage in the port of Antwerp I think the port of Antwerp, seeing that the river is so very much bigger a thing, would come out about 25 per cent. higher in pilotage; but I have not got the actual calculations upon that point.

2022. (*Chairman.*) It is rather important that we should have your opinion as to whether you think it is desirable that all these questions of buoying and pilotage, which are now partly under the Thames Conservancy and partly under Trinity House, and partly under the Government, should all be under one Board?—Most distinctly.

2023. You think that the Conservancy Board should only deal with the upper part of the river from London Bridge?—To London Bridge, I suppose.

2024. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What is the tonnage of the British India Company?—Do you mean the tonnage of individual ships?

2025. No; the gross tonnage you represent?—The tonnage coming to the Port of London is not so large as ours, most of their business being coasting business in India.

2026. Do you find that the system of discharging overside into barges is a growing system, and getting larger?—Yes, I think so.

2027. Therefore, if the docks are suffering from it now financially, they will suffer from it more in time to come?—I should think so.

2028. Have you formed any opinion whether the Liverpool system would be suitable to the Port of London?—The Liverpool system, in my opinion, would be very suitable for a considerable portion of the trade of London at all events, but no doubt the wharf system in London has a big footing in connection with very many trades. Why the dock companies have allowed all this storage business to slip out of their hands in all these past years is more than I can see; but at all events the wharves have a very big hold in that direction, and it would be a question whether, if we are to have one authority for the Port of London, the wharves should be embraced, as it were, within that authority, or whether the docks should be put in a proper and efficient state to do a great deal more work in the way of storage of goods than they do now. If that were done, I think it would be rather a bad look-out for the wharves.

2029. You mean that they would then compete with the wharves on better terms than they do now?—I think so. It seems to me to be absurd that there should be so much moving about of cargo as there actually is in the Port of London.

2030. The great desideratum nowadays is, is it not, to discharge a ship very quickly?—That is my opinion.

2031. On account of the great expenses which fall on the ship when she is lying idle?—Yes; the great desideratum is rapid discharge.

2032. The shipowners would urge that before a[illegible]

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anything, and, I suppose, would consider that within certain limits despatch is worth paying for?—Just so.

2033. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You mentioned that the average tonnage of each of your ships has doubled within the last twenty years?—Yes.

2034. Can you give us some idea of the increased draught of water of your vessels during that time?—The increased draught of water is not so great as one would suppose from the doubling of the tonnage, for two reasons. In the first place, the ships constructed nowadays are lighter, they are made of steel; and in the next place they have very much better forms—more buoyant forms—than the ships which were constructed five-and-twenty years ago, which were all wedge-shaped, and so on. In the next place, our ships are all built so as to go through the Suez Canal on a draught of 26ft.—in fact, 25ft. 6in.—in salt water.

2035. That is your guiding point. The Suez Canal determines things?—Yes, that is our guiding point.

2036. Then the whole of your 65 vessels are under the figure that you have just mentioned?—Yes.

2037. You have no vessels drawing more water than that?—No; 26ft. is what we aim at, but that we shall have vessels drawing more than that I have no doubt, and that in course of time the Suez Canal will admit of vessels of deep draught going through it I have also no doubt. The Suez Canal has been deepened within the last few years 3ft.

2038. And the process is likely to go on?—Yes, that is the tendency—bigger ships, and therefore deeper draught.

2039. You attach very great importance to this deep-water channel, I think, do you not?—Yes.

2040. You were many years in the House of Commons?—Yes.

2041. It was through your act that the Instruction was carried on the 28th May, 1894, which eventuated in Section 189 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894?—I remember it was so.

2042. You succeeded in persuading the House of Commons by a large majority to pass that Instruction?—Yes.

2043. Therefore you are really the parent of Section 189?—Yes. We were astonished at the largeness of the majority.

2044. Do you think that the end and aim of that section has been satisfactorily carried out?—I think it has never been paid any attention to as far as the Conservancy are concerned. The Conservancy have no funds, and if the Conservancy were to come to Parliament it would be a very bad look out for the Conservancy.

See 2070–6.

2045. I will refer to that in a moment, but with regard to Section 189 of this important Act of Parliament, I am to take it from you, speaking with grave responsibility, that in your opinion it has not been satisfactorily carried out?—Absolutely not.

2046. The intention of Parliament has been a *brutum fulmen* so far as that section is concerned?—Yes.

2047. With respect to the constitution of the Thames Conservancy, you moved also on the Third Reading of this Bill to re-commit the Bill?—Yes.

2048. That was a strong step after a Bill had been thirty days before a Private Bill Committee?—Yes.

2049. What was your reason?—I think my reason was more for the sake of entering a protest than with any hope of carrying the motion.

2050. As a matter of fact you made a speech, and on the appeal of the President of the Board of Trade in the debate you withdrew your motion?—I did.

2051. Your motion was: "That the Bill be re-committed to the former Committee, and that it be an instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill for establishing distinct statutory Committees of the Conservancy Board to manage the upper river and the lower river (including the port and harbour), to define the limits within which the jurisdiction of such Committees should respectively extend, and to provide for allocating to purposes of the lower river, port and harbour, the income arising therefrom." Do you hold that opinion still?—Certainly.

2052. It has been suggested by the Chairman of the Thames Conservancy before us here that you have altered your mind on that point. Is that correct?—No.

See 1586–7.

2053. In your evidence you deal with this point: You said "I think the Conservancy Board should deal only with the upper part of the river, and that the Port of London should be under the authority which from my point of view requires to be constituted for that purpose and for the control of the docks"?—Yes.

2054. You come before us speaking the mind of the P. and O. Company, and the minds of others?—Yes. I think I represent—I do not like to say entirely the shipping interests of the Port of London—but I think I represent, in the view that I have expressed, the largest shipping interests trading to the Port of London.

2055. And you suggest to us that if this Royal Commission arrives at any conclusion and proposals on the matter it will be incumbent on some Government Department to frame a Bill?—I do.

2056. That will be the Board of Trade, I suppose, because we are here through the action of the Board of Trade?—Yes. If this Commission finds the present state of things is unsatisfactory, and the general tenor of the evidence runs in the direction of constituting a public authority of the port, it will certainly be incumbent on the Government to frame a Bill.

2057. You have indicated to us some of your views with regard to the constitution of that public authority. Have you anything to add to that at all?—No, I think not. I need hardly say that the representation of the shipping interest in the present Conservancy is rather ridiculous. I think there are three shipowners out of a total of 38.

2058. That is going back to the constitution. We have dealt with that to a certain extent. May I take it from you that you think that this would not be a task beyond the wisdom of Parliament, and that it would conduce greatly to the commercial interest of the Port and City of London?—I hold it to be imperatively necessary that a change should be brought about in that way.

2059. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) The Chairman of the Thames Conservancy stated that until the depth of water over the sill of the Albert Dock is much increased, there would be no practical advantage in forming such a channel as the channel advocated. Do you agree with that?—No, certainly not. What we want increased depth of water in the river for is for the purposes of navigation. We have no difficulty whatever in getting our ships into dock over the sill of the dock some hours before high water, or some hours after high water, but what we require increased depth of the channel for is to enable ships to anchor with safety in case of need, and to swing opposite the dock wall waiting to get in or to get out, as the case may be. There is no relevancy or connection between what we advocate and the sill of the dock.

See 1384.

2060. With regard to the system of discharging cargo, you are clearly in favour of the American system, as far as regards the shipowners' point of view?—I am clearly in favour of ships getting rid of their cargo *in toto* in the same way as they do in Bombay, in the same way as they do in Calcutta, in the same way as they do in Shanghai, and in the same way as they do in Liverpool.

2061. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I did not quite gather whether the balance of your opinion is in favour of a public authority embracing wharves, or leaving them out?—It is more than I can tell you. I should like to give you an opinion upon the point, but I have not got sufficient information about the wharves to say. When the wharfingers give evidence here, if they do give their evidence, I think it would be possible to form an opinion upon that point, but not before. My first impression is that the public authority should not necessarily include the wharves. I think they may be very anxious after some time to be included.

2062. Are you satisfied that as shipowners you have done all you can to improve the system of the Port of London by insisting upon alterations in the bills of lading, and other means within your own powers?—There is always, no doubt, some room for improvement, but my impression is that the shipowner, who is a very intelligent person upon the whole, does his very best in that and every other direction.

2063. Then there are real difficulties in the way of the shipowners rectifying their position, and making it necessary to have a rearrangement of the port?—I think the rearrangement of the port is the first thing.

2064. And that cannot be done by the shipowner?—If we were to alter our bills of lading to-morrow, the

dock accommodation could not discharge the whole of our cargo.

2065. So that you cannot alter your bills of lading practically under present circumstances?—Yes; we could alter the bills of lading certainly. But could we carry out the alteration as the docks are at present? That is a point which I hold to be exceedingly doubtful; and, in fact, I go further, and say we could not carry it out. We should still be obliged to discharge cargo into lighters.

2066. Then in the matter of light dues, which were so important in the comparison between Antwerp and London, I suppose that London is not any worse than any other port in the United Kingdom?—I fancy it is; I will not be sure about it.

2067. But still, it is a charge of a kind that applies to the ports of the United Kingdom generally, and not merely to London?—Yes.

2068. (*Chairman.*) Are you satisfied with the buoying of the Thames?—Yes.

2069. As far as Trinity House is concerned, you are satisfied with the work they do?—Yes, I think the Trinity House know their work right well.

See 2044. 2070. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) In an answer you gave—I think it is susceptible of misapprehension—you said that if the Thames Conservancy had come to Parliament they would have had a hard time of it. Do you mean that if after the Report of 1896 they had come to Parliament with a well-considered scheme for deepening the river in accordance with demands of shipowners, and in accordance with the recommendations of that Commission, Parliament would not have given them the powers to do it?—I think most likely not.

2071. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You mean that the House of Commons would have opened up so many questions?—As far as I know it is a body that has not many friends in Parliament. Its constitution is not exactly what you would call a popular constitution.

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2072. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What you mean is that it would have resolved itself into a reconstitution of the Thames Conservancy under some other name and with some other powers, but you do not mean that Parliament would not have given powers to deepen the river, do you?—A great deal more than that is involved from my point of view. It seems to me that the Thames Conservancy should have charge of the Upper River, and should, of course, have some revenue, some slight toll, from shipping. In order to carry out the necessary work in the Upper River, which provides the water for the Lower River, I do not think it would be reasonable that the Thames Conservancy of the Upper River should be dependent upon the fees that they receive from riparian owners, we will say, in the Upper River. But, granting that, I say that the authority vested with the charge of the Lower River should be an authority with far greater powers than Parliament would ever give to the Thames Conservancy constituted as they now are with powers to borrow money, levy rates, and so on. I do not mean parochial rates; I mean rates upon goods and barges and ships—a different thing altogether. The reason why the Thames Conservancy could not feel very much confidence in coming before Parliament is, in my view, because the Thames Conservancy does not, as a body, command the confidence of those at large who are most deeply interested in the welfare of the Port of London.

2073. You do not mean to infer that Parliament would not have given powers to deepen the river to somebody or other?—No.

2074. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You speak with the memory of all the discussions respecting the Thames Conservancy in the House of Commons in your mind?—Surely.

2075. And especially the statement that was made on the 10th July, 1894, that this Act must not be regarded as a final settlement of that matter?—Yes.

2076. Which was admitted by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland?—Yes.

(*Lord Revelstoke at this point took the chair.*)

Mr. James George Skelton Anderson called and examined.

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2077. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are the manager of the Orient Steam Navigation Company?—Yes.

2078. You run steamers to Australia?—To and from Australia at intervals of a fortnight.

2079. You are, I think, the chairman of the company?—At present I am.

2080. How long have you been chairman?—There are two firms' managers, and we divide the honours. We take it year about.

2081. And you appear here representing the General Shipowners' Society?—Yes, I also appear here at the request of the committee of the General Shipowners' Society. The statement which I have submitted as my evidence in chief is what I think I can safely say they wish me to say. If I add anything after that, I do not know that it will be in discord with them, but I do not guarantee that everything I say over and above that is as a true spokesman of the General Shipowners' Society, but I shall be a pretty faithful spokesman of the Orient Company in anything I say.

2082. This present evidence you are giving at the request of the Shipowners' Company?—Yes.

2083. Your firm have loaded steamers to Australia since 1875?—Yes; my firm practically started the big steamer trade to Australia.

2084. And you have used in succession different docks?—The South West India Dock, the East India Dock, the Royal Albert Dock, and finally the Tilbury Dock. We went to the Tilbury Dock immediately upon its being opened.

2085. Can you tell us the greatest depth of water on which you can rely at low spring tides in the channel below Gravesend?—In the channel below Gravesend the Thames Conservancy are advised by their experts that we can rely upon 26ft., but I am advised by my experts that we cannot. By "my experts," I mean our commanders and officers and pilots. They say that 25ft. is as much as we can rely upon in some places in the buoyed channel.

See 2154–7.

2086. And some of your steamers, when loaded, draw more than that amount, of course?—Yes. We have sent some away drawing 27ft. 6in., but if there was water enough in the river, I daresay we could load them down to 28ft. 6in., while leaving sufficient free board.

2087. Will you give us your opinion as to what depth you think should be made in the channel from the sea to Tilbury?—I think 30ft. at low spring tides at least. There are steamers now using the river of deeper draught than 30ft., and no doubt there will be more steamers of a greater draught than 30ft. I may say there are two new steamers, I need not name them, which, I think, are 2ft. more than that. Immediately, I think, 30ft. should be the aim of the authority; and the width of the channel should be at least 1,000 ft.

2088. That is of greater depth than has yet been mentioned here?—I am not quite clear about that. I rather think the Thames Conservancy think that they have got that width—1,000ft.—and a depth of 26ft; I rather think they claim that. Excuse me, I thought you asked me whether the 1,000ft. was greater than the present width of the channel.

2089. No, I said than anything that has been suggested?—I rather think at present the width of the channel is 1,000ft.; the channel which I am speaking of is claimed to be 26ft. deep, but it is not quite that.

2090. Will you give us your views as to the working of the Tilbury Dock?—Yes. May I say, as I am speaking for the General Shipowners' Society, that it is their wish that the channel above Tilbury Dock should be improved. I heard the evidence of Sir Thomas Sutherland on that point, and I think to the best of my knowledge that he expressed the opinion of shipowners generally. You ask my opinion of the Tilbury Dock. I think very highly of the Tilbury Dock; I think it is a great boon to the Port of London. I feel very sorry for and sympathetic with the poor shareholders whose money was put into it, especially those who have had to sell out, because now its merits are being fully recognised, and it is working to very near its maximum capacity.

See 1992–3.

2091. Will you go on with the evidence, please?—The Tilbury Dock, in comparison with the Royal Albert Dock, suffers from being so far distant from London as to be practically out of carting range. The Albert Dock is within comfortable range for a cart—just about as far as a cart and horse can go. The Tilbury Dock is farther than is convenient for a cart and horse to go. The scheme was that the dock company should provide an ample

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receiving house in the Commercial Road, and the trains should be run as often as was wanted. But from one cause or another that has not been carried out, and the Tilbury Dock does suffer from the length of time that it sometimes takes to get goods to the ship from the receiving house. I have known, or it has been reported to me, of goods wanted to fill up a ship being despatched at 7 o'clock at night from the receiving house, and the train not getting alongside the ship till 4 o'clock on the following morning. The congestion in the railway traffic occurs somewhere about Stepney Station. The line wants widening; that is where the neck of the bottle is. At Tilbury Dock there are, no doubt, berths occasionallly vacant, and sometimes for a day or two the dock looks almost empty, but frequently it is quite full. I rather think from my observation, and from what I hear, that it would be difficult for the dock company to allot regular berths for any other lines than those at present using the dock. To the best of my knowledge, derived not so much from personal observation as in the case of the Tilbury Dock, but from reports of my officials and others with whom I am associated in business, it is just as difficult to get a loading berth in the other docks in London; in fact the dock capacity of London seems to be working pretty nearly, if not quite, up to its maximum. The tendency at present of the shipping trade of this country is to discard sailing ships in favour of steamers, and for long distance trades especially, to increase the size of steamers. Even for the short distance trades the size of the steamers is being increased as much as circumstances will permit, but for the long distance trades there is a very marked tendency to largely increase the size of steamers. I think it is very desirable in the interest of the Port of London—I am not speaking of shipowners, I am speaking of the metropolitan area, of the business and the commerce of the place—that London should be able to take in this new traffic. To my mind the most likely place to accommodate it is Tilbury. I think there should be additional docks at Tilbury with a new entrance a little higher up than the present entrance, if, as I have been told by some experts, that position should on investigation be approved for an opening. The present opening is liable to slit up with mud; I am told if an opening a little higher up round the Ness were made, it would be kept clear by natural scour; and the currents, such as they are there, would favour docking at times of the tide when docking is very difficult with the present opening. At Tilbury it is to be noted that goods are not warehoused; there are not, properly speaking, warehouses there for the storage of goods; there are merely sheds for temporary shelter of goods while they are being sorted out and moved away to their destinations, whether they go by water or whether they go by railway, and whether they go to London or into the Midlands, or wherever they go. I think that any new docks there would be of the same character, that is to say, merely a place for the safe reception of the ships and the transfer of their cargoes.

2092. Do you say that the Port of London has become unattractive by reason of the detention and the charges?—Yes. I am not prepared to say very positively that all the charges are higher, in fact I think some of the charges of the Port of London are not higher than the charges in other places. I have tried to get satisfactory statements of figures to compare the charges in London with the charges of other competing ports, but I scarcely think that the few I have been able to get are conclusive enough to be worth handing in.

2093. But you say so here in your statement?—What I do say is, that the detention of London is to my knowledge greater than the detention of other ports, and of course time is money. 4d. per registered ton per day is the usual demurrage for a steamer with crew on board; it may easily be understood that if a vessel is detained ten days longer at London than she would be at Antwerp, it is a very serious thing. I am also able to say that the wages of London are higher than in most of the competing ports, if not all; and that the working men in London are more difficult to handle; they are more apt to strike; and the pilotage also, I am able to state, is distinctly higher than in most of the competing ports.

2094. Without taking any particular item, do you suggest that from a shipowner's point of view London is a dearer port than others?—Yes, I do. Part of my business is that of a chartering broker. We charter a considerable amount of tonnage every year to the order of clients mostly. For instance, for one particular client we charter about 400,000 tons a year, and we charter to all parts of the United Kingdom and to the Continent, besides other places. What we find is that most of the owners will try to avoid London; they will want to be paid more if they are to come to London; they will certainly prefer an open charter, which gives them the chance of not coming to London, rather than a charter where there is the option of sending the ship to London direct.

2095. You have told us just now that London was a dearer port than others. Will you tell us in respect of what particular items such is the case?—I tried to guard myself against dealing with that, because beyond the pilotage and detention and labour, I am not quite sure that I could make out the case for London being dearer.

2096. Therefore when you say London is a more expensive port, you do not care to go on?—No; I do not lay great stress upon it except in these matters.

2097. You would rather lean more on the detention than on the expense?—Yes; I lean more on the detention—and the wages—of course we cannot help that.

2098. But wages are part of the expense?—Yes, but the wages are higher in London.

2099. Well, you must take one item with another, must you not?—The ships that are willing to come to London are ships that expect to get cargoes from London; and if they do not expect to get cargoes from London they do not wish to come to London, and they try to avoid it.

2100. You do not put particular stress upon London being a more expensive port than others?—I do not do so in the sense of something being required to be done by a public authority to lower the charges to ships, except with regard to pilotage, because I am not able to put my finger on anything of the kind.

2101. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What do you say about light dues that Sir Thomas Sutherland mentioned in comparison with Antwerp?—I agree with most that Sir Thomas Sutherland said, but when he said that Turkey was the only power that charged light dues, I know that has been said and it caught on, but it unfortunately is only true on the surface, because other powers do charge light dues, though under different names. See 2020.

2102. Is there anything else at Antwerp?—I have compared the expense of Antwerp with the expense of London—not in ships belonging to myself; I have not had a ship belonging to myself there; but I have applied for figures right and left. My replies have generally been vague and unsupported by figures, but the figures which I have got do not show much more than that the wages are lighter and the pilotage is lighter than in London, and there is less detention.

2103. And the detention is very serious in London?—And the detention is much less in Antwerp. The workmen are less bristling with independence than they are here. That is what I am told. The workmen here will turn up the job and go away if anything is said that they do not like.

2104. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Will you give us your ideas as to what should be done as to administration?—I generally agree with what Sir Thomas Sutherland said, that what is wanted is a public authority to take over and administer the whole system of docks and waterways of the Port of London, as has been, I believe, successfully done in the Mersey and elsewhere. How that public authority should be constituted, of course, is a rather difficult question. Sir Thomas Sutherland said it must be an authority constituted *ad hoc*. I agree with that up to a certain point, but before I come to consider what the composition of that authority ought to be, I would like to consider first the sources from which the necessary revenue would be derived. I think, to begin with, that the charges on the ships should be continued for the moment as at present, with one exception that I will mention presently. The dock companies at present have power to charge the ships 1s. 6d. per ton on the net register for the use of the docks for 28 days. They only charge 1s.; they have not thought it wise to use their powers of charging beyond that. I think they have exercised a very wise discretion in that matter, because although I have not been able to say to the Commission that the charges of the Port of London in these respects are heavier than the charges of the competing ports, they are certainly at least as heavy. For that reason I think the dock companies have exercised a wise discretion in not charging the ships more than 1s. But I think that the dock companies have been very unfortunately placed in not being able to make a charge See 2005-8.

on all goods using the docks. Up to the time when the East and West India Docks were started, which is about 100 years ago, the ships using the Port of London had, as you no doubt know, been discharged and loaded in the river. It was thought that it would be possible for them to go on doing so; it was not foreseen that the size of ships would grow so rapidly, but the size of ships has grown so much that practically all the ships coming to London must have the docks to go into, and without these docks the trade could not be carried on, and without deeper waterways the modern class of ship cannot use London; and without better waterways, and the waterways being maintained, the existing kind of ships cannot use London. I think, altogether, that the best way to raise the revenue is by charging the ships as at present, but grading the charge so that if a ship goes away in a week she does not pay so much as a ship that leaves in a fortnight, and the fortnight ship not so much as one that leaves in 28 days; but subject to that, I should continue very much the same charge upon the ships. I would impose a charge upon all the goods, as Sir Thomas Sutherland, I think, recommended. Those charges, both on ships and on cargo, will have to be limited by considerations of policy; whereas the interest upon the capital invested under this public trust would have to be paid whether trade was good or trade was bad. There would be no question of policy about that. In order to get money cheaply to begin with and to go on with, the interest must be assured; it must be practically as good as Consols; it might make a difference of 1¼ or 1½ per cent.

See 2009.

2105. I daresay you understand our wish. We came to the conclusion that we would not go into this question as to how the funds were to be raised for the moment?—I have so nearly done that perhaps you will allow me to finish my argument.

2106. Very well?—These considerations have led me to the conclusion that behind the charges upon the ships and upon the goods there must be the guarantee of the rates of the metropolitan area, and that points to the London County Council being the main authority on the subject. Now, I know that the general feeling among the shipowners—it may be a superficial one, it was my feeling until I began to think the thing out after I had been asked to give evidence here—is that the London County Council had got enough in their hands, and it would be better not to put the care of the river waterways and docks in their hands, any more than to put the School Board in their hands; but I have come to the conclusion that to do this thing economically we must have the rates of London at the back of the trust, and in that case the County Council must be the main authority. But the administration, I think, should be committed to a sub-committee of the Council; that is what I suggest, at all events.

2107. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Let us clearly understand this. Are you speaking now on behalf of the Shipowners' Society, or as an individual?—I am speaking at this moment as an individual who has consulted with other shipowners, who have agreed, but I am not speaking now for the General Shipowners' Society.

2108. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Does the Shipowners' Society agree with Sir Thomas Sutherland in this matter?—Yes, in the substance of what he said; he was present at the meeting.

2109. (*Mr. Ellis.*) He did not go so much into detail?—No; I think the administration of this work would have to be committed to a sub-committee of the London County Council.

2110. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Of course, you are speaking quite generally upon matters of policy now, without reference to any question as to what the claims of the dock companies may be, or the wharfingers, or any other bodies that may have to be dealt with?—Quite so; I am speaking in the case of a public trust, as to how it strikes me the authority should be constituted. I think that with this sub-committee of the London County Council there should be an instruction to them to associate with themselves a certain number of representatives of the commercial interests concerned in the Port of London having expert knowledge. All schemes involving the spending of money would have to be submitted, and passed by the London County Council as representing the ratepayers.

2111. (*Mr. Ellis.*) The County Council representatives are coming next week to give evidence?—I am sorry if I have gone beyond my last. I really spoke about this because it was one of the points that the General Shipowners' Society wish cleared up; but since I have hammered it out with my ship-owning friends privately, I have not had a meeting of the General Shipowners' Society, so I have not been able to speak to them. You will remember that the time has been very short; I have only had two or three days.

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2112. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) To go back to a part of your earlier evidence. Do you undertake the discharge of your own ships?—Hitherto the dock company has done that. I think we are in a transition stage just now.

2113. What is the case at present?—The dock company still continue, but they wish us to relieve them of it.

2114. But they actually do it at the moment?—Yes, they do it at the moment.

2115. I was thinking of the question of rapid discharge on which Sir Thomas Sutherland laid considerable stress. Do you think it would accelerate the discharge of ships if the shipowners chose to make it a condition that there should be no discharging overside?—No, I do not. In many cases it would, but large portions of our cargoes do not require to be sorted, and can be sent overside at once. As I have told you, Tilbury Dock does not warehouse goods, and most of our cargoes go to the wharves and go by barge. The barges are very large; they run up to 300 tons apiece; they are as big as some ocean-going ships used to be at the beginning of the century. They have of their own accord ceased to drift about with the tides. A lot of empty barges come down, about a dozen, in tow of one little tug, and they are dropped and a corresponding number of full barges taken back on the next tide. That is how it is managed.

See 1972 and 1997.

2116. When it comes to the question of barges I suppose the dock companies suffer the same inconvenience as you do?—The dock companies wish to be able to charge the barges, because in opening their gates to let the barges in and out they admit a lot of mud, and it costs them money to deal with that; and they do not like the barges drifting about in their docks all the time. I am quite of opinion that the barge use of the docks possibly requires to be regulated in some way to prevent abuses, but I think it would be a very great pity if it was thought necessary to deprive the lighters of free use of the docks; I think some way could be found round that to satisfy the dock companies. It must be remembered that while the dock companies are put to some expense in clearing away the mud that comes into their docks in admitting these barges, they are also put to expense to maintain the roadways for the land removal of cargo. If a public trust were created, a public authority to take over the docks, that authority must be absolutely impartial between the land-borne goods and the water-borne goods. Against the mud which the dock company have to remove there is on the other side the cost of keeping the roads on the landward side.

2117. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) To keep to the actual fact for one moment, you say, as a matter of fact, that your business in Tilbury Dock could not be carried on without the barges?—I think I might go that length certainly.

2118. The railway communication to the Commercial Road is not quite sufficient; you want to have the barges as well?—It would be impossible to carry on our business without barges. The lighter traffic of London is one of its great features. Of course, London differs from most other ports in that respect. At Liverpool the docks are in the town, but the docks of London, except the very old ones, are not in the town, and the goods must have the cheapest conveyance.

2119. Are not docks like the London Docks, the St. Katharine Dock, the Millwall Dock, and the Surrey Commercial Dock, very much in town?—Yes, those are very much in town.

2120. So that Tilbury Dock is an extreme case of lighterage being necessary to the business of the shipowners who come there?—It is nearly equally necessary in the Royal Albert Dock, I should think, and the Victoria Dock, and probably also in the East and West India Docks—not quite so much so, because they have storage.

2121. Tilbury Dock is an extreme case where there is absolutely no means of accommodating the customers except to have lighterage?—We could not carry on our business at Tilbury without the lighters.

2122. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) At present?—At present; and not at any time in future that we could foresee.

2123. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) There are not likely to be means of accommodating the traffic by railways at Til-

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bury Dock?—There are no means at present. I do not see how the railway could compete with the lighters for the wharves upon the banks of the Thames higher up. I do not see how it ever could possibly compete.

2124. Can you tell us the expense of lightering up to London Bridge as compared with the expense of sending goods by railway up to Commercial Road?—I am afraid I have not got figures, but it would be very much less. I could let you have figures, I daresay. From 26 steamers running in the Orient Line I could easily give you the figures, but I have not got that here. It is a thing that is never done; it is out of the question.

2125. Perhaps we shall get that from the wharfingers? Yes. From our steamers running in the Orient Mail Line last year we landed on the docks, for the purpose of sorting, 18,000 tons. These are goods not to be transmitted anywhere by land, but simply landed for the purpose of sorting because they get all mixed, and it is necessary to land them for the purpose of sorting. We landed last year 18,000 tons. I do not know whether you would like to know what the average cost of landing and sorting was which the shipowner paid.

2126. Yes?—The prices vary according to the goods. Perhaps the highest price the dock company charge is 2s. 6d. for landing and sorting, and some kinds of goods go down to about 1s. The average cost of landing and sorting was 1s. 10d. a ton.

2127. This is what the dock company does for you?—The dock company does this for us, and in our case the shipowner paid. I submit that the cost of sorting should be paid by the goods in any scheme in future, and that the cost of landing might be borne by the ship; but the cost of putting into the lighter should be borne by the goods to put the water-borne goods on equality with land goods. And I think that the ship should land or deliver overside all the goods, and there the ship's duty should end, as at Liverpool. Then sorting should be borne by the owner of the goods, and paid to the dock company, and the handling of the goods afterwards, putting them into barges or putting them on to railway trucks should be borne by the owner of the goods.

2128. Would you have to alter the bills of lading to do that?—I think it would be best done by an Act of Parliament, if there was an Act of Parliament in this case. The bills of lading could only be altered in trades where the ships are able to combine for the purpose.

2129. They have been altered in some trades, have they not?—They have been altered in some trades the conditions of which permit of the shipowners combining, but in trades where the shipowners cannot combine—and there are trades where the conditions of competition are such as to make it impossible for them to combine—if that inequality as between land-borne and water-borne goods is to be redressed it can only be done as part of a settlement of this sort.

2130. Does it not seem a very strong measure to have Parliament called in to interfere between different classes of traders, shipowners, and merchants and wharfingers?—This is a question of who is to bear the necessary expense of the docks.

2131. But is not that a question that you might expect people in business to settle for themselves?—It has been settled for them so far by Parliament. The relations between the docks and the merchants have been regulated by Act of Parliament, and so have those of the docks and the lightermen. I think it is very desirable that Parliament should continue to regulate these relations, because they are relations of monopoly, and it is of great importance to the public interest of London that they should be regulated.

2132. Is there not a difficulty in the matter, that Parliament might make some regulations which the trade would not follow? You have to consider carefully what the trade requires and what it does?—Yes, I quite think so. I am not putting forward anything as a cut and dried scheme. There must be many minds at it, and I presume Parliament would only act after reports with which it was satisfied.

2133. But the trade may go its own way after all, whatever Parliament may say?—If the docks of London are a monopoly secured by an Act of Parliament, the trade, if it is coming to London, must use these docks.

2134. You can fix the dock charges that they may make by Parliament, but when it comes to a question of handling goods, is not that rather beyond the function of an Act of Parliament?—Well, let us put it by for the present. There was something on this subject in Sir Thomas Sutherland's evidence; that was why I brought it up. I should be anxious that this public trust should be perfectly impartial and even as between the wharves and any other interest whatsoever.

2135. But you have not any plan to put before us as to how the trust is to be created, first of all, separating and dealing with all the private interests involved; and then whether it is to be a warehouse trust as well as a dock trust?—Of course, some of the existing docks have warehouses. That is a fact that has to be taken into account by all the interests, whether conflicting or otherwise. We cannot alter facts. With regard to any addition to the docking accommodation of the Port of London, so far as I can see it would be most unlikely that warehouses would form part of the scheme of this public trust. A public authority acting in the interest of the port only would not have the temptation of going into competition with existing docks or warehouses.

2136. Sir Thomas Sutherland was doubtful whether the trust would embrace wharves or not?—I know he dropped a suggestion on that point. It would, I think, be an unnecessary doubling of the magnitude of the operation, and I think that the care of these interests of the merchants and goods is best left to the competition of the wharfingers. See 2061.

2137. You have not formulated any plan in detail?—Not further than what I have indicated. I think with such guarantees for the regular payment of the interest upon the securities there would not be much difficulty in getting the money that might be necessary at a low rate of interest. Most of the present investors would probably be glad to take the new securities in place of the present ones. It would amount to something like a reconstruction of a public company, a process which is familiar to most of us; those who object to taking the new securities in place of the old would have the right to be paid off, by arbitration, if the parties could not agree. What the basis of the valuation of this property should be I would rather not enter upon.

2138. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You say that you think that if any additional dock space is provided it should be at Tilbury?—Immediately, to begin with, I think I said.

2139. In saying that, do you take into consideration that if the river was deepened as far as the Albert Docks to the 26ft. with a channel of 500ft. wide, would it not be better for the trade to go nearer London, and the extension to take place there, at the Albert Docks instead of at Tilbury?—Apparently the Albert Docks has suited very well the ships of the draught used by certain companies, particularly such companies as the P. and O. Company and the British India Company, of which Sir Thomas Sutherland spoke. But I think, owing to the depth of water in certain ports that they wish their ships to be able to go to, they do not go to very deep draughts.

2140. But I say, supposing the river was deepened as suggested to 26ft. and with a width of 500ft. as far as the Albert Docks, would not that make you modify your opinion, when you consider the Albert Docks are so much nearer London than the Tilbury Docks?—I have advocated deepening the channel as far as Tilbury to 30ft. for deep water ships. I think Sir Thomas Sutherland, if I caught what he said rightly, gave cases in which his ships had to turn back and go back to Gravesend. Well, for large traffic Tilbury is the place. See 1992

2141. The channel is not deepened at present, that is the reason the ships had to be turned back. If the channel were deepened to that depth, 26ft. at low water——?—I am quite in favour of deepening the channel, and I believe the Royal Albert Dock people have a scheme for making new docks between their present docks and the river. And I should think probably it would be a very good thing, but it would not cause me to modify my opinion; at least it does not at present—that to secure the big ship traffic and get the share of it for London that we ought to have, we want additional dock space at Tilbury.

2142. We are not talking entirely of big ships; we are talking of London, and I understand you to say you advocate a dock extension at Tilbury in preference to a dock extension at the Albert Dock. That is what I want to arrive at?—I think to secure the large traffic,

having regard to the whole traffic of London, new docks up there would be very desirable, the present ones being full because they are within carting distance.

2143. Then you said the present docks at Tilbury are without warehouses. Of course we know that. But supposing warehouses existed, would you like to see the American bill of lading substituted for the present and all goods loaded on to the wharf and there sorted, or not; or would you prefer the present system?—I am not familiar with the American bill of lading. I do not know that I have seen it, but I have been told that they have managed to introduce into the bill of lading contract a stipulation casting upon the owner of the goods the cost of sorting. I think that is a most righteous thing. I think the owner of the goods should pay the cost of sorting.

See 1968 74. 2144. Sir Thomas Sutherland told us, too, that he thought a continuation of the wharves in deep water would, in a great measure, take the place of docks. Do you agree with that opinion?—Sir Thomas Sutherland is a great authority on these subjects; he has seen arrangements of that sort abroad, I believe, but I have spoken to pilots about it, and people who know the river well, and they do not think it is a practical thing. The best advice I have been able to get upon it is that in our river it would interfere too much with the channel.

2145. It is certainly practicable in the Thames; pilots always make objections?—I scarcely think I know enough to give evidence on that subject. I can only tell you what I have been told. It would be easy to send an experienced man—there are pilots here who know the river well—to give evidence.

2146. Just now you said that no tax should be put on the lighters. You thought the river and docks should be free to the lighters?—Yes.

2147. Which, in your opinion, would be the most convenient for lighters: to unload the vessel or load the vessel, in the Thames River or in the docks?—Certainly in the docks.

2148. Therefore they get that advantage for nothing?—They get that advantage for nothing; and the carts—they come into the docks and get that advantage for nothing.

2149. But the lighters must gain a great advantage in loading or unloading a vessel in still water with no current over doing so in a rapid river?—Certainly; there is no doubt about that.

2150. They may also, I presume, gain time by not having to cast off sometimes and come on again in the river?—Certainly; the trade could not go on in the river.

2151. (*Mr. Ellis.*) How many steamers has your company?—We have 9 steamers running in the line, and we have one spare steamer.

2152. That is your fleet?—Yes. I am speaking of the Orient Line.

2153. What is the tonnage?—About 60,000 tons.

See 2085. 2154. Then, turning to the matter of depth. I rather gather from you—I think your phrase was that the experts of the Thames Conservancy gave you depths, but your experts gave you other depths. Is that so?—Yes, the Thames Conservancy, as I understand it, are advised by their engineer that there is a channel 1,000ft. wide and 26ft. deep, at low spring tides, from Tilbury to the sea, and our pilots say that they cannot count on more than 25ft. in places, and that is the opinion of their brother pilots in Gravesend.

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2155. Are we to take it from you, the Orient Company do not feel safe in relying upon information that is supplied to you, as to the depths of the River Thames, by the Thames Conservancy?—I do not wish to put it offensively, but our people require Admiralty charts to go by, or the information of their pilots. Of course, they move by the lead, and the pilots say they cannot count on more than 25ft. at certain times of the tide. See 7546.

2156. May I put it this way, that those on whom you rely inform you that the information of the public authority, or whatever it may be, is not to be relied upon as a safe thing for your ships?—They take too rosy a view of what they have effected by their dredging.

2157. That is another point. I want to stick to the point for a moment. Do you, as the manager of the Orient Company, come before us and tell us that your pilots inform you that your ships cannot safely be navigated on information supplied to you by the authority of the River Thames?—It amounts to that, certainly.

2158. Then, with regard to Tilbury, I just want to clear up that point. I understand you to say that it is rather beyond the carting distance, and that there is a bottle neck. Am I to take it from you that if the railway was improved, if there was ample railway accommodation between Tilbury and, I think, it is called the Commercial Warehouse, is it not——?—Commercial Road Warehouse. It is a large receiving house. See 2091.

2159. Erected in 1887?—Yes.

2160. Am I to take it from you that if the railway communication was perfect, we will say, between Tilbury and the Commercial Road warehouse, from a shipowner's point of view that would be perfectly satisfactory?—At present there is no doubt that Tilbury has advantages in some ways, but the Royal Albert Dock has the advantage over Tilbury that carts can get to it. It is a matter of opinion what would be the result of a very good railway communication, frequent and rapid. The goods should come down in an hour. Though London merchants are very conservative and slow to change, if they once got into the way of sending goods to this receiving house and having them alongside the ship in an hour, I think they would forget the preference for carting; but certainly at present they do have a preference for carting, and that stands in the way of the user of Tilbury Dock for vessels in an ordinary way other than mail steamers, which do not carry very much cargo, and which attract cargo by the special advantage which they offer. Albert Docks have an attraction in the way I have indicated. I would like to say that in the future I do not know what changes there will be, but perhaps these docks down the river will not be dependent entirely on the rail; there may be automotor arrangements, or we do not know what, but there is no doubt that Tilbury Docks have a great attraction to big ships *qua* such, and to lines that want to run a regular service with the smallest number of expensive steamers, because they are away from a number of dangers, they are 14 miles down the river from the Royal Albert Dock, and they can get into safety almost at once. They have a better chance to get away if a fog lifts. So there are two sides to the case.

2161. Your answer is really this: it is not only the rapid transit of goods that has to be considered, but there is a certain element of prejudice in favour of cartage. Is that so?—I think so.

Mr. ALFRED STROVER WILLIAMS called and examined.

Mr. A. S. Williams.

2162. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are director, I think, of the Atlantic Transport and National Steamship Companies?—Yes, that is so.

2163. You come here at the request of the Committee of the General Shipowners' Society?—Yes.

2164. Do you give your evidence at their request?—Yes.

2165. Will you please proceed with it?—I have given consideration to the subject and the present condition of the Port of London, and I have come to the conclusion that that condition requires to be amended, and that the formation of a harbour trust of a character similar to that created in Liverpool should be carried out. The present dock accommodation for vessels of large size is insufficient, while the river approach to the docks, and particularly to the westward of the Medway, is so inadequately dredged that vessels are constantly compelled to drop anchor at or near the Nore to await the flow of the tide to enable them to proceed to dock. I will now hand in a statement of delays from this cause which have occurred since the 1st of May last to the large vessels of our company.

(*The Witness handed in a statement of steamers of the Atlantic Transport Company and the National Steamship Company compelled to anchor in the neighbourhood of the Nore during the year* 1900 *on account of deficient draught of water. See Appendix, 6th Day, No.* 3.)

I produce a copy of a letter from the Thames Conservancy addressed to the Atlantic Transport Company regarding the grounding of our s.s. "Minneapolis" in which they practically threaten the owners of the steamer with penalties for getting aground in the necessary effort made by the pilot in charge to avoid a collision. I will

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read the letter, if the Commissioners will allow me, aloud.

2166. Yes, please do so?—"Thames Conservancy, Victoria Embankment, August 20th, 1900. Gentlemen,—When your steamer 'Minneapolis' recently grounded at the entrance to Hole Haven Creek, she threw up a bank about 5ft. high, which is a danger to small craft, and will have to be removed. Our engineer proposes to carry out this work, and I shall be glad to hear that you concur in this course. The amount of the cost incurred will be sent to you later on.—I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant, R. Philipson (Secretary)."

See 8528-32.

2167. Has this matter been carried any further?—No.

2168. Have you heard any further from the Thames Conservancy?—Nothing further.

2169. Did you reply to that letter?—We replied and told them we placed it in the hands of our solicitor. We denied any liability they sought to throw upon us, and we put it in the hands of our solicitor. Since then we have heard nothing.

2170. We ought to have had your reply, I think?—I will send it in.* I advocate the formation of a trust to undertake the care of the river and docks, etc., of the Port of London, for the reason that, if properly constituted, it could be entrusted with powers to raise necessary funds which would not be entrusted to either the dock companies or the Thames Conservancy under the present circumstances. I see no reason why barges using the various docks should not pay reasonable dues for such use, and I desire to see powers entrusted to a properly-constituted authority to levy dues on goods brought in for consumption in the port. All transhipment or entrepôt goods should, however, be free. An efficient trust should, *inter alia*, (A) increase the present dock accommodation; (B) dredge the river westward of the Nore so as to give a deeper and wider channel from the Nore to Tilbury, and thence to the Royal Albert Docks; (C) remove the Foreign Cattle Market from Deptford to a point below Gravesend; (D) assume the power at present exercised by the Watermen's Company, unless, which is preferable, the licensing of watermen be abolished and the river be thrown open. If vessels could be relied upon to go and come with absolute punctuality, the present accommodation of the port would meet the present requirements, but there can be no such reliance. Two or more vessels timed to arrive and discharge with a convenient interval between them may arrive at the same time, with unfortunate results in delay of the vessels themselves and delay in delivery of the cargo they discharge. All North Atlantic general cargo, except grain, is discharged on to quay, and is delivered thence to merchants' craft when the importing steamer leaves the quay. Should a second vessel be placed at such quay to discharge before the first cargo has been delivered, great confusion, expense, and delay arise. The river should be dredged, so as to give a wider and deeper channel westward of the Nore. With vessels of over 600ft. in length, and a draught of 33ft., the present channel, alleged to be of 1,000ft., with a depth of 26ft. at low water, is not adequate. A vessel of the size stated, if she has to deflect but slightly from her course in order to avoid collision, gets aground. To prevent the silting up of the river, the sludge steamers of the London County Council should be compelled to discharge their contents in the Barrow Deeps earlier on the tide than they do at present. I am informed by our pilots that, coming down with the ebb tide, the sludge steamers only arrive at their dumping ground on slack water, so that instead of the sludge being swept out to sea by the ebb tide, it is brought up by the flood tide, and is likely in time to seriously affect the condition of the channels. The Foreign Cattle Market is out of place at Deptford. In earlier days, when its trade consisted of cattle brought from the Continent of Europe by small vessels, its locality was not objectionable. Now the trade has completely altered, and consists almost exclusively of cattle from the Northern States of America and Canada. These cattle are carried with the least possible suffering in steamers of such size that a yearly-increasing number of them cannot go to Deptford, the consequences being that the beasts have to be transhipped at Gravesend, with some suffering and inconvenience, and at a cost of 2s. per head. This cost to the two companies I represent amounted in 1899 to £4,262. The total cost of transhipping beasts for the present year will in all probability amount to £9,000 or £10,000. Where cattle-carrying steamers can deliver their beasts direct to Deptford, much difficulty, risk, and delay occur, the vessel frequently losing one or two tides in proceeding to Deptford and returning thence back to dock. I have here a letter from the Chesapeake and Ohio Steamship Co., dated the 14th inst., on this subject, which I will read: "Chesapeake and Ohio Steamship Co., Ld., 4 Fenchurch Avenue, London, E.C., 14th November, 1900. Messrs. The Atlantic Transport Co., 108 Fenchurch Street, E.C. Dear Sirs,—In reply to your letter of the 13th, *re* number of cattle that we have carried last year and the first nine months of this, we are afraid that this information will not be of much use to you with reference to the object for which you require it, as all our steamers are of such a size that they are enabled to go to the Cattle Market at Deptford, and all our cattle have been landed there. At the same time we have often lost the tide by having to go up to the Deptford Cattle Market and back to dock. Steamers for Deptford cannot leave Gravesend until about one or two hours before flood tide; this just gives them time to go to Deptford, land their cattle, and get back to dock. Should they arrive at Gravesend only two or three hours before high water, they are too late to get to Deptford and back, and consequently lose 12 hours at anchor in the river, and sometimes 24 hours. The pilots invariably refuse to take them up to Deptford on the night tide, excepting the night is exceptionally fine. It is therefore of great importance to shipowners that the Foreign Cattle Wharf should be at a more accessible point lower down the river, London being at a greater disadvantage than any other port in the United Kingdom in respect to the position of its Foreign Animal Wharf. Yours truly, Chesapeake and Ohio Steamship Co., Ld. W. N. Diggens, Secretary." The possession by the watermen of the Thames of the exclusive right of navigating barges on the river puts into the hands of these men the power of blocking the trade of the port, and should be withdrawn. At the present moment quays and sheds are choked, and steamers are refusing certain cargo for London, for the reason that it cannot be disposed of. I will now hand in a Table of the steamers of the Atlantic Transport Company and the National Steamship Company which I represent, giving their respective length, breadth, depth, deadweight, cubic capacity and load draught. (*See Appendix, 6th day, No. 4.*) From that Table it will be seen that two of these steamers, the "Minneapolis" and the "Minnehaha" are each 600·7ft. long, 65·5ft. broad, and 39·5ft. deep, with a register tonnage of upwards of 13,400 tons gross.

See 6905.

See 8462.

2171. Will you tell us between London and what ports you trade?—New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.

2172. Do you use the docks?—Yes.

2173. Which?—Tilbury for the larger vessels; the Royal Albert Dock and the West India Dock.

2174. Do you discharge in the stream?—No; never in the stream.

2175. Do you find that the London custom entitling consignors to deliver into barge at the ship's expense entails a heavy charge upon the shipowner either in delay to his ship by delivery direct from the ship, or in expense in landing the goods to expedite the discharge?—Yes. On that account what is called the "London Landing Clause" was introduced into our bills of lading some years ago.

2176. That is something peculiar to your trade?—To the North Atlantic trade.

2177. To what we may call the western trade?—Yes.

2178. It is a clause which the P. and O. and the British and India have not got?—No.

2179. You find it of great advantage?—Yes.

* The witness subsequently forwarded to the Commissioners a copy of the reply, which was as follows:—"London, 22nd August, 1900. To the Secretary, Thames Conservancy, Victoria Embankment, E.C. Dear sir,—'Minneapolis' damage to river bed at Hole Haven Creek:—The Atlantic Transport Company have sent on to us your letter of 20th inst. The grounding in question did not result from any neglect on the part of those in charge of the steamer, but anyhow she was at the time compulsorily in charge of a duly licensed Trinity pilot, whose orders were duly obeyed. We must, therefore, decline liability. Yours truly, John Holman and Sons, Managers."

2180. The custom to which I have alluded is one over which the dock companies have no control?—No.

2181. And from which they derive no benefit?—None at all.

2182. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I gather that your evidence with regard to the trust is from your own individual experience?—Yes, that is so. It is generally held by the Shipowners' Society.

2183. Do you wish to lay it before us as with other authority than your own?—No, except that, as I say, it is generally the view adopted by the General Shipowners' Society.

2184. We have to be rather careful in these Commissions. Do I understand you are authorised by any other body or persons to say it is their view?—No. It had better be taken as coming from myself alone.

2185. There is a serious statement which you make as to sludge steamers. Have you ever made any representation to the Thames Conservancy about that?—No.

2186. It is a correct statement, is it?—It is a statement made on the authority of our pilots—not from my own knowledge.

2187. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you any experience of discharging alongside wharves in contradistinction to going into docks?—No, except that we have had some steamers going into Antwerp some years ago. I have some experience of that, but it is very small.

2188. With reference to the question I asked just now about the extension of any docks, which would you prefer, Tilbury or the Albert Dock?—I think both would bear extension. I think the trade would bear extension of both.

2189. If you had your choice of one, which would you advocate in the interests of the port?—I should say, in the interests of the port, the Royal Albert first, but the other would have to follow very quickly.

2190. With reference to the question of barges:—You are quite clear that in your opinion they should pay some reasonable dues for the advantage which they receive from going into the docks?—I think it is reasonable that they should pay a moderate charge.

2191. Do you think that the proposal to deepen the approach to the Tilbury Docks to 30ft., with a width of 1,000ft., would meet your requirements?—Yes, but we should be glad to have more if we could.

2192. Shipowners would be glad to have 40ft. probably, but 30ft. would be sufficient?—Yes. As I remarked, our boats occasionally draw over 30ft. *Mr. A. S. Williams.* 27 Nov. 1900.

2193. I see that your maximum draught is 31ft. 5in.?—Yes.

2194. Would you, if you had the depth of water, load to a deeper depth than that?—We should occasionally load deeper.

2195. What would be your maximum draught with your existing ships?—The load line of the vessels is 33ft. 2in., but as the vessel is never on an even keel we might be drawing 34ft. or 35ft.

2196. And, as a shipowner, you prefer the American bill of lading method of discharging cargo to the method at present in use in the Port of London?—Distinctly.

2197. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you give us any experience of the results of the American bill of lading method? Does it diminish the employment of lighters?—I do not think so at all.

2198. It is merely a method of relieving the shipowners to some extent?—To some extent. It gives the lightermen a little longer time to come and collect the goods. That is all. They have that advantage. It gives them 72 hours instead of 24 in which to come and claim delivery of the goods.

2199. With regard to goods coming into Tilbury Docks, do you make use of the railway at all?—Considerable use, but all grain has to go away by lighter. We carry large quantities of grain.

2200. That all goes by lighter?—Yes.

2201. Is that from the nature of the business?—Yes. There is no accommodation for it by rail.

2202. So that at Tilbury you must make use of the lighters?—We must make use of the lighters at Tilbury for grain.

2203. Then with regard to the Deptford Cattle Market, have you been in correspondence with the Agricultural Department of the Government in order to change it?—No.

2204. An Act of Parliament would be necessary, I suppose?—It would take a very large movement indeed to move that, but it wants doing.

2205. But you have not communicated with the Agricultural Department about it?—No.

Mr. Charles Edward Brightman called and examined.

2206. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are a partner in the firm of Turner, Brightman, and Co., shipowners and brokers, of 8 and 9, Great St. Helen's, E.C.?—Yes. *Mr. C. E. Brightman.*

2207. You are a member of the committee of the General Shipowners' Society, and you come here to give evidence at the request of the Committee?—Yes.

2208. Will you kindly proceed with it?—I should say that I come here especially with regard to the wood and the grain trades and representing merely cargo steamers. I have been engaged in business since 1871. My firm charter a large number of steamers for sawn wood goods, and have some of its own steamers employed in the trade. Steamers trading from the Baltic and White Sea do so from about May to November, and practically the whole of it that comes, so far as complete cargoes are concerned, to London, is discharged in the Surrey Commercial Docks. A few cargoes are discharged in the river, and some of the other docks, but they are few. A very large percentage of the trade—probably half—is done by barging the goods from the docks, and about half, I should think, is landed. In the early days of wood-carrying by steamers it went entirely on to the quay, and in those days they would receive at the rate of about 250 standards per day at a less cost for discharging than we pay now, and then there was only one consignee. Now a large proportion goes overside and perhaps for 40 receivers, each of whose goods have to be discharged separately, and some of the bills of lading are made out for as little as three standards. Now the discharging rarely exceeds 100 to 125 standards per day, and very often it is a good deal less. One of the reasons for this slower discharge is that the composition of cargoes is so much worse than formerly, and the number of bills of lading, and also the men do not work as well. This autumn a most disastrous state of things has prevailed at the Surrey Docks. Owing to their crowded state, boats to the number of twelve or fifteen at a time, sometimes more, were waiting at Gravesend to get into the Surrey Docks, and when they got in they often had to wait days before a start was made. Then discharging would go on so slowly that often only about 36 standards per day would be discharged. I, myself, had last week a steamer from Ship Island, near Mobile, that arrived at Gravesend on the 24th ult., and the earliest she could be discharged was the 23rd inst., and her whole cargo consisted of only 837 standards. My firm have also had lately, amongst others, the following steamers in to their address:—"Atbara," 22 days, with 1,500 standards; "Lady Salisbury," 16 days, with 660 standards; "Toftwood," 15 days, with 395 standards; "Rutherglen," 18 days, with 1,423 standards; and "Faedrelandet" 23½ days, with 698 standards. And two steamers, each about 21 days, have not yet finished discharging deckload. These times are from arrival at Gravesend and include Sundays. That was last week. Since then they have nearly discharged, but they have not yet finished. The cost of discharge for deals in London is 3s. to 3s. 6d, and for smaller stuff 6d. to 1s. more per standard. For pitch pine it is about 6s. At no place that I know of is the cost so much as in London, excepting Liverpool. At Southampton it is 2s 2d.; at Dutch ports 1s. 8d.; at both as a rule you get as good if not much better despatch than London. I understand the Millwall Docks are making arrangements for taking these cargoes next year. This ought to relieve the strain to some extent, and the Surrey Commercial Docks are building another dock, but this will not be ready, I think, by next year. Of course, the present congestion at the Surrey Docks is abnormal, but often the glut is great. I do not say that the Surrey Commercial Docks have not done everything, under the circumstances, in their power to surmount the difficulties, indeed I think they have done so. I think the remedy for this state of things is for the merchants to agree to take their goods into the other docks as well as the Commercial, which at present they will not do, mainly owing, as I understand, to the fact that they cannot sell the wood in the other docks at so good a price, as buyers

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will not trouble to go to docks to look at a single cargo, but if each dock had a few cargoes this would probably be overcome. Grain is discharged in nearly all the docks, but the Millwall and Surrey Commercial Docks take most of the cargoes, unless the steamers are very large, in which case they then go to one of the other docks. I do not think that there is generally much complaint as to the rate of discharge with grain, as with the appliances the docks have I think this is all right. At all events I have not found the other ports in the United Kingdom quicker, excepting Liverpool. The cost of trimming bulk grain in London is 4d. per ton grain, and nothing charged the steamer for discharge. The cost of discharging grain in bags is 1s. 2d., to 1s. 3d. per ton grain. The dock dues range from 4½d. per ton net register to 6d., according to size of steamer.

2209. Do you say that London is a dearer port than Liverpool?—No, I think Liverpool is dearer.

2210. The dock dues are dearer in Liverpool, are they not?—Yes, and the discharging with wood is dearer.

2211. The dock dues in London are cheap for wood?—Yes, the dock dues in London are very cheap for wood.

2212. Will you give us any ideas you have as to the future administration of the Port of London?—I favour a dock trust, but I am not prepared to go into how that should be managed. I was not asked to do that.

2213. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What is the cause of the expense of discharging being greater in London if it is not a question of dock dues?—I cannot really say. I think labour, altogether, probably, is more expensive.

2214. Just because everything else is more expensive in London this is more expensive also?—I think so.

2215. But the differences are much greater than that. At Southampton it is 2s. 2d., and at Dutch ports 1s. 8d., where it is 3s. and 3s. 6d. in London, and in some cases more?—Yes.

2216. But wages are not twice as much in London as they are elsewhere?—No, I suppose our men want more luxuries. I do not know what it is.

2217. You have not gone into that question, how it is that the charges come out more?—No.

2218. A dock trust would not make any difference in that respect, would it?—I am afraid it would not.

2219. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You say that in the early days timber went entirely on to the quay?—Yes.

2220. Would you prefer that system to the present one?—Yes, very much. A great deal of the detention now is owing to its going into barges, I consider.

2221. From different consignments, I suppose?—Yes.

2222. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Did you hear the evidence of Sir Thomas Sutherland, and the previous shipowners, to-day?—Yes.

2223. Do you concur with them that the grievances of shipowners may be classified mainly under two heads, detention and charges?—As far as my experience goes, hardly the latter, because I do not consider that London, for what I deal in, at present, is such an expensive port.

See 2092–2100.

2224. Then you rather concur with Mr. Anderson, as I gather, that it is detention rather than charges?—Yes.

See 1972 and 1997.

2225. And I suppose you would concur with all that Sir Thomas Sutherland said about quick despatch being the essence of the matter?—Yes, certainly.

2226. And that anything and everything that is done to promote quick despatch is so far beneficial to the Port of London?—Yes.

See 2158-61.

2227. Did you hear the few questions I asked Mr. Anderson about Tilbury?—Yes.

2228. Do you wish us to infer that if railway communication is good between a dock on the Thames and the warehouse very much higher up, the distance does not matter so much?—Yes, I think that would be so.

2229. Do you think there is anything in the matter of cartage—a kind of prejudice, or whatever it may be called, in favour of cartage?—I think there is the prejudice which would be overcome in course of time.

2230. Is it prejudice. Is it a matter of finance, or is it what we all have—the prejudice against change?—I am inclined to think that it is the prejudice.

2231. And if the dock has rapid communication and uninterrupted communication by rail with a good warehouse at the other end, so far so good?—I think so.

2232. What is the number of your fleet?—Fifteen.

2233. And about the tonnage?—They range from 1,250, dead weight, to 6,200.

2234. Do you concur with all that has been said by shipowners about dredging and deepening the channel?—Yes.

2235. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) How do you account for the fact that the percentage of overside deliveries has increased so very greatly in the last ten years. We had Tables handed in to us by the chairman of the Surrey Commercial Docks, and it has increased, in round numbers, from 19 per cent. in 1890 to nearly 41 per cent. in 1899?—I may state that I had prepared my evidence before he gave that evidence, and, therefore, mine concurs pretty well with what he said with regard to the quantity. The reason, I take it, is that the dock charges are so heavy, and that the barges going in there pay nothing. See 1739.

2236. Therefore it is entirely financial, and not for the convenience of trade?—No, I think there would be more convenience if it were landed in the dock.

2237. Then supposing this was not discharged overside, somebody would have to pay more money. I mean supposing the percentage of nearly 41 per cent. was not so great or if the barges had to pay more money than they do now?—Certainly.

2238. And as a shipowner you say that would be a better thing than continuing the present system—looking to despatch?—Of course it would all depend upon the cost, but that being reasonable, certainly.

2239. You say that within moderate bounds that would be a better thing for the trade than continuing the present system?—I think so.

2240. And it would tend to diminish the delays upon the ships?—Yes.

2241. Then supposing this quantity of 41 per cent. was not discharged overside into barges, would not there of necessity be required a much larger quay space and wharf space?—Yes, I was going to say that. I think it would be an impossibility for the dock company to practically take any more on to the quays than they do now. At the present time, of course, the quays are very much blocked, and the docks too, but if all the goods that go overside had to go into the docks the thing could not be done.

2242. Not under present circumstances?—No, the trade has so enormously increased.

2243. That matter we have heard might be met, in general cargoes, by the construction of warehouses of two or three floors?—Yes.

2244. But do you see any way of meeting that point with regard to the timber trade?—Unless you go into another dock, because, quite apart from the question of sheds, which there are for the better class of goods, the dock sides themselves are all filled up.

2245. But there is no means of meeting the question for the timber trade such as there is for general cargoes by piling it up higher?—No, they are piled up pretty high now.

2246. Therefore, unless you had more quay space and more dock accommodation, the trade would suffer if you stopped the overside deliveries?—Yes, decidedly.

2247. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do I understand you, in reply to the questions put by Sir John Wolfe-Barry, to say that the trade in the goods in question would bear a higher charge in transit if they obtain thereby more rapid despatch—within reason?—You mean from the shipowners' point of view now, do you?

2248. I am putting it from every point of view?—I think the shipowner would be inclined, if he could get better despatch, to pay something towards that, but I do not think that the way the timber trade is conducted at present a very large proportion of it could probably bear the expense of having to pay quay room, which it would have to do, instead of going into barges. The amount of profit in a good many instances is cut very fine indeed, and I do not think it could be done.

Adjourned to Thursday next, November 29th, at 12 o'clock.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

SEVENTH DAY.

Thursday, 29th November 1900.

PRESENT:

Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D., (*in the Chair*).

Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S. | Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.

JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. WILLIAM BECKET HILL called and examined.

2249. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Will you kindly give us your evidence?—I carry on business in Liverpool and London. I am a director and manager of the firm of Allan Brothers and Company (Liverpool and London), Limited (commonly known as the "Allan" Line). I am also a member of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce. Our steamers, amounting to a tonnage of about 150,000 tons, run from Liverpool to Quebec, Montreal, Newfoundland, Halifax, U.S., Philadelphia, Monte Video, and Buenos Ayres; and I have been connected with the management of these steamers since 1867. In 1883 we opened an office in London, and run lines of steamers from London to New York and Montreal. I had the establishment and management of these for fifteen years, so that I am well acquainted with steamer requirements and dock management in both London and Liverpool. When I came to London in 1883 to commence these steamers to New York and Montreal, I was surprised to find the London dock system so much behind Liverpool. Steamers that could be discharged in Liverpool in three or four days occupied fourteen days in London, owing to the prevailing system of discharging direct into lighters, thus necessitating sorting the cargo on the ship's deck, and continual shifting of lighters.

2250. Which of the docks in London do you specially refer to?—I commenced in the Victoria Dock; I then discharged the steamers in the Millwall Dock, and I finally used the Royal Albert Dock. At the time I came to London the Royal Albert Dock had only just been completed, and was almost empty, so I began in the Victoria Dock. You can see that if 80 or 90 per cent. of a ship's cargo is discharged into lighters it occasions a very great delay. If we attempt to discharge direct into lighters, it will take us two or three weeks to sort the goods on board the ship if the marks do not come straight. If, for instance, in a lot of flour the marks always came straight you could put it into the lighters, but if another mark of flour came, or another merchant was taking the same mark of flour, the work would be suspended. Then it was found to be impossible to sort general cargo on board to put into lighters, so that in the attempt to put into lighters to save the enormous dock charges on the quay, we often lost fourteen days. Steamers on which large sums of money had been spent in fuel and machinery to enable them to shorten the passage from the other side a day or two, were actually delayed as long as another voyage, in order to allow them to discharge; so that the speed of the steamer was of little value to the merchant owing to this London system; the real basis of the London system being that everything passing over the dock quay is charged an enormous sum, something like 4s. to 5s. a ton on the average, while in Liverpool, the same thing is only charged 1s. a ton. The consequence is that all London commerce has to bear this charge of about 5s. a ton, levied by the dock wharves and the riverside wharves.

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2251. Which goods in particular do you refer to now?—Almost any goods that are imported. If you put them on the quay and cart them away from the quay, the dock charges vary according to the value of the goods; but I think you may take it as an average at about 5s. a ton. Naturally the London merchant and the London consumer has to pay this 5s. a ton, because if he does not pay it to the docks he pays it to the riverside warehouse. There is that tax on all the goods that come to London, for the simple reason that there is no free cartage. In Liverpool cargo is discharged on to the quays and sorted there. But I found that the dock charges in London, when anything passed over the quay, were prohibitive. After long negotiations I made arrangements with the Dock Companies by which, first of all, by payment of so much per ton, and latterly by payment of so much per square yard, we are enabled to discharge cargoes on the quay and sort them there for delivery to the lighters, using the quay for this purpose for a very limited time. The high charges of the dock companies still prevent goods being carted from the quay, as is the custom with the bulk of the goods in Liverpool In Liverpool there is a charge varying according to the value of the goods, but on an average it is only a little over 1s. a ton, with the result that the inland warehouses, quite as well as the waterside warehouses, compete, and a great deal of the cargo can be sold ex quay, and in that case all the dues that the consumer or the customer has to bear is just about 1s. a ton. For instance, when we bring apples from America, sometimes as many as 20,000 barrels in one steamer, they are sold on the quay, and the consumer takes them away on his own carts, or they are taken straight away to the railway or the inland warehouses. The provision trade, for instance, in Liverpool has no warehouses on the quay, but carts its goods a distance of about six miles from the north or south end of Liverpool to the warehouses in Victoria Street. If the same practice existed in London, if any dock trust like the Liverpool Trust raised a revenue by a charge on the goods of about 1s. a ton, whether they go in lighters or go away in carts, the result would be that a warehousing depôt or distributing centre in Islington would compete with warehouses on the riverside, and would be able to cart its goods right into the district of consumption at once, and any large shopkeepers would be able to buy the goods at the dock and cart away direct to their warehouses. As it is, a tax of about 5s. a ton is levied on all the goods that come to London either by docks or wharves. Out of this they do the receiving and storing, which is in most cases not necessary. The reason the dock companies pay so badly is that, owing to steam communication the consumer gets his supplies week

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by week, and there are no large quantities warehoused; therefore the Dock Companies find that a great part of their income has gone. The Commercial Dock is an exception which only proves the rule. The reason for their prosperity is that nearly all the cargoes of wood are warehoused there, and it requires a large amount of warehousing room. When I found it was impossible to turn my steamers round, and to keep up a regular line without some improvement in the arrangement, and when I found that it was impossible to alter the London system of lighterage owing to the heavy charges levied for any goods carted, I made arrangements with the Dock Company by which I should be allowed to sort the goods on the quay. Instead of keeping the ships for fourteen days while I sorted the goods on the ship, I offered to pay the Dock Company so much for the use of their wharf for the purpose of sorting. That only allowed the goods to be passed over the wharf for sorting purposes at an extra payment to the Dock Company.

2252. How much was that payment?—I think it began first at about 3d. a ton, and it now averages, I believe, about 5d. a ton. That has been the system for many years in the North American trade.

2253. And for that charge do the goods go away in lighters?—Yes.

2254. And does that charge apply to cargoes carted as well?—No. If anything is taken away by a cart it has to pay the full dock dues—the full heavy quay dues—something like 4s. or 5s. a ton; so that the wharf is really used simply to sort the goods.

2255. Can you enumerate some of the articles upon which the 5s. a ton is charged?—The Chamber of Commerce have prepared a very full list of articles, and I think they have witnesses to prove them.

2256. I merely wish you to speak from your own experience?—If you will allow me I should have to get those details from my secretary. I speak from a general knowledge. One can be generally accurate in these matters without being minutely accurate. If you want exact evidence I must supply it. So long as the Albert Docks were not fully occupied we managed to arrange for the sorting of the cargo on the quay without very great inconvenience; but the Albert Docks were never intended for this sorting on the quay, so that from an up to date point of view they are very badly arranged. You can easily see that if you discharge a ship of 6,000 tons of cargo, filling the whole of the shed, you cannot put that into lighters until the ship goes away. These are the essential points I think about the London arrangements which make them so very much worse than Liverpool, and make the port so expensive and so objectionable to shipowners. The Albert Dock was not arranged for sorting on the quay and shipping off into lighter at all. You fill the whole of the shed with your cargo, and when your steamer goes away another one comes in, and it is almost impossible to get the stuff out of the shed again, because there is no quay side available for lighters. It should have been arranged as it is in the plans which have been prepared for the Dagenham Dock, which I see has been passed by Parliament, in which behind the shed there is a light draught canal in which the lighters being of light draught can go. For instance, if flour comes with a mark which runs straight, for which a lighter is waiting, you take it straight on to the lighter, and away it goes, and if the ship goes away and another ship arrives you can go on loading off quay into lighters and get the stuff away. I have been inconvenienced sometimes, too, by the limited accommodation in the Albert Dock. When we began 10 years ago there there was ample room—it was almost a desert—and we could shift our steamer to fresh berths, and get our cargo into the lighters; but at present it is so crowded that when one ship discharges its cargo the next ship comes into the berth before you can get that into the lighters. When a man pays his steamer freight to get his goods brought to London in 12 days, the stuff is often 12 days lying on the quay before it can be put into his lighter. You can see also how bad it is for the shipowner, because a man with 6,000 tons of cargo wants a clear shed for sorting purposes, and finds it blocked up with the cargo of the previous boat. Thus he requires so many more steamers to carry on his trade than if worked on the Liverpool plan; yet as we all know, at Liverpool there is a handsome revenue and the docks are most prosperous. They have money for all purposes. For some years after I came to London in 1883 there was real competition amongst the docks. The India Docks, London Docks, and the Millwall Docks all competed for steamer traffic, and it was possible to make arrangements for convenient berths and facilities. At that time also the shipowners were very largely represented on the Boards of both the London and India Docks—the Millwall Dock was also a competing dock, and was managed very economically; it was a modern dock, and had modern appliances; but upon the amalgamation of the London and India Docks the shipowning members were almost entirely dismissed. Of recent years the Millwall Dock has been subsidised by the amalgamated docks, so that there is really no competition whatever. See 5628.

2257. How do you know about the Millwall Dock being subsidised?—That is a matter of common notoriety, but it is a matter upon which you could obtain exact information from the secretary of either dock company. I have loaded and discharged steamers in the Victoria Dock, Royal Albert Dock, and Millwall Dock. Steamers have been gradually increasing in size, and the Royal Albert Dock is the only one suitable for modern tonnage; and, as I said before, that is so occupied that it is impossible to get room for another line of steamers, and even for those that are there it is impossible to get quick discharge. I am glad to see that the dock company propose to extend it. A portion of one of the India Docks has been modernised—that is the India Basin—but that is in the hands of one firm. I tried to get a berth there, but could not. Owing to its distance from London, the Tilbury Dock is at a great disadvantage. The Tilbury Dock is almost as far from London as Manchester is from Liverpool, and Manchester has spent £16,000,000 to bring it a little nearer. It follows that berths in the Royal Albert Dock are very much sought after, and there is nothing to prevent favouritism in their allotment. See 5628. See 5628.

2258. But still that is not the same thing as an assertion that there is favouritism. You do not say that there is favouritism?—Well, I have reason to think that there is favouritism. Your own experience will show you that where there is no representation, or where there is a monopoly, it is difficult to get equity and justice. We were shareholders in the docks for some time—that was the only way in which one could get some influence—and I have attended some of the meetings and pointed out that in some respects the docks seem to be managed in an extravagant way. There are large pension funds, and very large amounts are paid for stationery, which perhaps is caused by what some of the witnesses will tell the Commission is the red tape system of the docks. A certain amount of red tape is necessary, but it may become too much. Then there is much useless expense in the handling of cargo. For instance, in Liverpool, it would be carted round in a lorry at a cost of about 1s. a ton, but here when transhipping cargo from one side of the dock to the other they often send it round in railway trains at an expense of shillings per ton. When I have asked for a lower rate from the dock company they have told me it was a great expense to put it in the train, and send it round the lines. And I have elicited that in this way it really costs a sum which, judging by what it cost in Liverpool, I could not have imagined possible. See 5628.

2259. Why should it cost more by railway than by cart?—The railway wagons are outside. The goods are to be trucked to them, loaded in them, and covered, and an engine has to be brought, and perhaps it has to be brought round for miles; then it has to go over bridges and be subject to detentions; whereas in Liverpool you would simply put it on a lorry and take it round at a cost of 1s. a ton. A railway for short distances is not economical. Another point of extravagance, I think, in the management of the docks was this—I pointed it out, although it is rather against my own interest in the matter—that when the goods come for export the dock company sends them down from their stations in London, and puts them into the shed where our steamer is loading. In Liverpool when we wanted these goods our stevedore would take them from the shed, attach the ship's tackle to them, and load them into the ship. But in London we have to send round to the dock company for men to move those goods to the ship's tackle. That is an expense of about 2d. or 3d a ton, for which the shipowner does not get any benefit. Although I have urged this at several annual meetings there has not been the slightest alteration. As, owing to the heavy charges, the bulk of the cargo goes away in lighters, it is necessary to find space along the quay front for these lighters to be loaded after the steamer has finished discharging and been removed. But such is the pressure on the space in the Albert Dock that

when one steamer has completed discharge, another arrives, and the goods are kept on the quay, and lighters detained for many days owing to the impossibility of finding loading berths for the lighters. In any properly designed dock for the London trade there should be shallow canals at the back of the sheds where the goods, after being sorted, can be put straight into lighters. I said before that the Albert Dock as a water space is admirable, but it was never designed for the London system of taking away cargo in lighters. The old dock, the Victoria Dock, was far better designed for that. In building the Royal Albert Dock they have built no double sheds like the docks in Liverpool have, so that you could load goods off into carts or lighters from the sheds by gravity; and of course, a double shed gives double the area of floor space. When a ship discharges 6,000 or 7,000 tons she wants a great amount of floor space, and if you have not enough floor space, and have to pile the cargo up, you see how the expense piles up. Then another point in which the Albert Dock is very much behind the Liverpool Docks is that instead of the sheds being close to the edge of the quay, as they are in Liverpool, they are set back about 50ft., 40ft. on the north side of the dock and 50ft. on the south side of the dock, thus exposing the goods to damages during discharge, or causing the discharge to be suspended entirely during rainy weather. Where I do my work the ship is 50ft. from the shed, and the shed is 120ft. across, that is 170ft. Look at the result! Look at the truckage that means! In Liverpool the goods go right from the ship's deck into the shed. We slide them down shoots. In London there is 50ft. of open quay that they have to cross, and the consequence is that the discharge has to be suspended entirely during rainy weather. The London workman puts on his coat the moment a shower of rain comes. In Liverpool the exposure on the wettest day is of the slightest character. The goods come up the hatch. Then they are put on a shoot, and go right under cover immediately. In the Albert Dock I cannot understand why this 50ft. space was ever left there, except that they provided it for rails. I think they have two lines of railway and one of crane rails. I had rather be without the cranes. We have no cranes in Liverpool, and discharge the cargo in half the time. In many ways the docks might be improved and modernised by judicious expenditure of capital. The India Docks require almost complete internal reconstruction. The Millwall Docks might be extended to the Isle of Dogs. Modern docks might be built at Dagenham, for which an Act of Parliament has been procured and excellent plans prepared. And there are many parts of the river where wharves, jetties or stages could be fitted for sea-going steamers to discharge promptly, like the cattle wharf at Deptford, or like that wharf just outside the entrance to the Royal Albert Dock which you have had particulars of; or like the wharf at Thames Haven, where discharge of steamers could take place quite as well as in the docks. All we want is a jetty with a light galvanised iron shed on it in which we could put the goods for sorting. If you had that parallel to the river bank you could easily see that the lighters would lie on the shallow water between the stage and the shore, and the ship would lie in the deep water outside. When the marks all come conveniently we should run the goods from the steamer across the jetty straight on to the lighter. We could manage without docks of any kind. The river is admirably adapted for wharves. Look at what has been done at Antwerp! Look at what has been done at New York, at Baltimore, and at Montreal! They have no docks there.

2260. Do you know something about Antwerp?—Yes; I am well acquainted with Antwerp. I have been there, and observed its great progress in recent years. The development of Antwerp and Hamburg has done a great deal to diminish our earnings from London. When I first came here, owing to transhipment cargo from the continent, we often got £2,000 or £3,000 freight outwards to New York. At the present time, owing to the development of Hamburg and the German ports, I do not suppose we get one quarter of that amount. Of course, if we do not get freight outwards we cannot afford to carry it cheaply homewards.

2261. I see you speak of Antwerp, and the foresight of the Municipality and the Government?—Yes; the Municipality of Antwerp is something like the Bristol Municipality in this respect. They have river and dock works there, like the works done by the Municipalities of Havre, Dieppe, and Boulogne, with the assistance of the French Government. There are magnificent engineering port works everywhere on the continent of late years.

2262. They have the assistance of the Government?—Yes. My steamers used to call at Havre, and I used to go there nearly every month, and take note of the Port progress. At Boulogne and Dieppe there are excellent dock works, paid for, not so much by the shipping or the commerce, but provided by the municipalities and the Government, with the view of attracting steamers. The discharge berths at Antwerp in the river are equal or preferable to docks for ocean-going steamers. If proper facilities are not soon provided in London for the modern type of carrying steamer, London will have to pay a heavy tax in the shape of higher freights and railway carriage from the out-ports, Southampton, Bristol, Liverpool, and Hull. I see that the Bristol Corporation has appointed a committee to consider a plan for extending their docks at a cost of £1,800,000, and one reason given for this was that the accommodation in London was very bad, and that they would be able to supply London by railway from Bristol docks.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I must interpose here. That is a statement from the witness as a matter of common knowledge. That is a piece of argument; it is not evidence in the proper sense of the word. The witness is not specifically seized of that fact; it is argument. We shall burden our notes with argument if we do not take care.

2263. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Will you confine yourself to facts?—A great deal of what I have said has been intended more, if you will pardon me saying so, as hints to the Commissioners to get evidence.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) It is not for witnesses to come here and give us hints. We are responsible to those by whom we were appointed. It is not for witnesses to come here and give us hints at all; that is beyond their function.

2264. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I think you had better go on with your statement about modern steamers.—Modern steamers to be worked economically must be of large size and must have despatch. The ordinary cargoes of provisions, food stuffs, etc., from across the Atlantic are from 6,000 to 8,000 tons, and these steamers are discharged and loaded in Liverpool within a week. Lines of steamers will avoid a port where they cannot rely upon quick despatch, as their sailing dates from both sides are fixed, and if there is any uncertainty in the facilities, an extra number of steamers is required to keep up the regularity of the line, entailing great expense The cost of a modern steamer of this class is from £110,000 to £150,000, and the daily expenses from £100 to £200. Thus you can see, if you keep up a line with regular intervals, if one steamer is delayed and you have five steamers running, it throws a similar delay on every steamer in the line, which is a very serious consideration. Owners of trading steamers (generally called "tramp" steamers) also avoid those ports where they cannot get their steamers away as fast as they can get the cargo out. The result is to diminish competition, and increase freights at those ports that are not up to date. I consider it would be an actual saving to London to have her docks and river made attractive to ocean-going steamers, even if it had to be done by levying dues upon all cargo, or even by a rate upon the property of the city itself.

2265. I think you might stop at that point. I see you desire to express the opinion that it is not desirable that the dock companies should levy the dues, but we do not wish to go into that argument now. Then you make a suggestion with regard to a dock trust?—If revenues of this kind are to be raised I should suggest that they should be raised and expended by a public trust such as we have in the Mersey and the Clyde, a trust with power to levy dues on ships and goods, and with power to raise money on the security of these rates, for the deepening of the approaches and the development of the docks and river. As in Liverpool, the payers of dues and the shippers of goods should be represented on the trust, and there should be official or nominated members, appointed by the Government, the city, and the County Council.

2266. Then you have a suggestion to make with regard to the Watermen's Company?—Yes; I consider that the monopoly enjoyed by the Watermen's Company, with regard to the licensing of men employed in barges and other craft on the river Thames should be abolished in the interests of the Port of London. On that I could also give some personal evidence founded upon my experience in Liverpool. I have had a fleet of steam and sailing barges and tug-boats in Liverpool and the Mersey ever since 1880. There are no restrictions upon what seafaring men we should employ in these tugs or in these lighters. The Mersey is very dangerous; sometimes the ferry service has to be suspended. We have gales often, and always a very strong tide running 8 or 9 knots. Many

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barges sail across the river in spite of these difficulties. Although there is no examination for the men, no apprenticeship or company to licence or examine them, the accidents with barges in the Mersey are very trifling. We have never had the least difficulty in getting competent seafaring men to man these lighters and steam tugs, and even sailing barges. I am of opinion that the City Police should be substituted for the Dock Police.

(*The witness having made some further statements*),

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I think we had better retire to consider this evidence.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Yes.

(*The members of the Commission retired to consult.*)

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) We have considered this matter, and have agreed that beyond the expression of an opinion that the present police should be replaced by other supervision, the statements you have just made must be struck out of the evidence.

(*Witness.*) This evidence was based upon Question 1,180, in which the Chamber of Commerce was asked to show by witnesses that there was a bad system prevailing in the Port of London both as to ships and the storage of goods.

2267. That is a matter we cannot go into in this form. We cannot go into criminal charges; we cannot investigate them?—Will you allow me to put in on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce correspondence with the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, complaining of the pilferage in London?

2268. Not if it goes into special cases of that kind?—It does not go into special cases

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We had better reserve that until Lord Egerton is present.

2269. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Does that complete your evidence in chief?—There was one point I had overlooked. As the Commissioners have taken into consideration the heavy London charges, there is one point I think I ought to mention briefly, and that is that the pilotages are very much heavier in London than in Liverpool. I have here, and I will leave with the Commission, pilotage bills in connection with our steamship "Livonian," of Liverpool. They are with regard to two successive voyages, one from Montreal to Liverpool, and one to London. The draughts were almost identical. You will see the difference in cost. On the London voyage her pilotage was £38 13s. 5d.; on the Liverpool voyage it was £13 10s.; that is nearly three times as much for London. The heavy cost incurred is mainly owing to there being two classes of pilots in London, one to take the steamer from the dock to Gravesend, and a second pilot to conduct her thence to the sea. In olden times, when there were few steamers, this plan may have been necessary. The ship may have been beating up a long time; perhaps she would be a week in beating up to port, and the other pilot might be tired out; but now, where the entire time occupied in the passage from the dock to Deal or Dover, or *vice versâ*, is only six or eight hours, two pilots are superfluous, and the stop at Gravesend to change the pilot causes delay. The rates charged are also excessive; they have recently been revised, but they remain much greater than they should be to give a pilot a fair remuneration. The rates I have quoted are the recently revised rates. I may say *a propos* of this, that in Liverpool a steamship line can choose its own pilot provided that the pilot's work contributes to the revenue £300 a year. In London the choice pilots will make incomes from £1,000 to £1,500 a year, which is more than we pay our best captains. That shows that the rate of pilotage is excessive. I should like, if there is a London Dock Trust, that that should be one of the things embraced in the powers of the Trust. It has been said that the dock dues on ships in London are rather lower than they are in Liverpool. We pay in London 1s. to the dock, and in Liverpool we pay 1s. 5d. That is not exactly a comparison, because in Liverpool you can use the docks for two months without payment and in London you can use them only for one month; but you must add to that charge the Conservancy dues, namely 1½d. a ton. In Liverpool the Docks and the Conservancy are one body; one body levies the rates for both purposes. So you must add to the 1s. we pay in London 1½d. for the tonnage dues paid to the Conservancy, and about 5d. a ton for the dock company for quay space to manipulate the cargo. Together these sums amount to 1s. 6½d. a ton on the net register, so that the dues on vessels in London and Liverpool are practically the same. For my part I do not fear extra dues on the steamers, because a penny or two on a steamer's tonnage is nothing compared with the importance of despatch. Considering the competition of Southampton, and the fact that many steamers have gone to Southampton, and the railway facilities to and from Southampton, it might be dangerous to increase the dues on the ships. Then as to the tug attendance in the docks. In Liverpool any tug company can put tug-boats in the docks if they pass a proper survey, but here the dock company have the monopoly of that also, so that we have no control over the boats or over their rates. Where we have control over the tugs, say, in bringing our steamers from Gravesend to the dock, about 20 miles, we pay £5 14s. 0d.; the dock company's charge for a service of about half a mile for bringing us to the dock gates is about £5, and that is really for facilitating their own business in the dock; without tugs we should simply haul the steamers. Then again, another of the excessive charges in London is the dock company's charge for water, which is very heavy. The dock company only pay the water company 6d. per thousand gallons, and they charge the steamers 6s. to 8s. per thousand gallons according to the quantity taken. That is a very large profit—1,200 per cent. As regards the depth of water in the river, the entrances of the Millwall Dock and the Royal Albert Dock are very good entrances, and excellently managed. I do not know any dock entrance in Liverpool that does its work better than the Royal Albert Dock entrance, or that does as much work in the same time. They are excellent entrances in every way, and very well suited to all except the few extreme-sized ships, which are probably increasing, and should be provided for progressively. If the depth of water in the river opposite the docks was three or four feet more than in the docks or on the dock sill, and was maintained for three or four hours before and after high water, we could manage with that, and (until the river could be deepened to the 26ft. or 30ft. that has been talked about), if a lay-bye were provided, so that in case we miss getting into the dock we could go to the buoys without going back to Gravesend, I think then we should have very little to complain about the river or the dock entrances. I think that is the whole of my evidence.

See 8471.

See 8471.

2270. Could you give us any information about the dues on shipping at Antwerp compared with London?—I cannot; I should have to get that from our books.

2271. You have not got that information present?—I have not. Another defect of the docks is that they have extremely bad roads. I do not know whether the Commissioners may have seen that.

See 5184. 7751.

2272. That has been mentioned. Have you made application to the companies to have a better representation of shipowners upon the Dock Boards?—I have not made any personal application.

2273. I merely wish to know how far the matter has been the subject of consideration and agitation amongst you to get better representation by direct application to the dock companies?—I have not heard of any application being made. There has been a great deal of dissatisfaction since the amalgamation of the companies, and since the exclusion of the shipping members from the Board. I have never heard that it has crystallised into a deputation or an agitation.

2274. You say that the dock companies are extravagant in their methods of management, and you refer to stationery and other things. But Sir Thomas Sutherland has told us that he thought the dock companies were extremely economical?—They are economical in their roads, I must say. In some points where facilities are essential they are economical, but in the matte I have mentioned, I do not think they are economic

See 1996.

2275. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You said something about maintaining the depth of water outside the dock entrance for two or three hours. What had you in view there?—So that if a steamer has to wait at the dock, and the tide is falling, or if the steamer wants to come up rather early on the tide, when there are five or six steamers entering the Royal Albert Dock that tide, you do not want to be stranded outside.

2276. That is not a question of maintaining the depth of water, but of digging the bottom away; is not that so?—Yes.

2277. (*Mr. Ellis.*) What is the number of vessels in your fleet?—I cannot tell you offhand the number of vessels; their name is legion; but we have 150,000 tons.

2278. Give us some idea. What would be about the average tonnage; have you 50 vessels or 100 vessels; you can give us some approximate idea?—I really could not tell you within 10 or 15.

2279. Give us within 10?—I will divide the 150,000 tons——

2280. You are a shipowner of great experience; you surely must know?—But one's experience is not directed to matters of that kind very much.

2281. Is it not a very high figure—100 or 150?—The tonnage is what one generally looks at. I should think about 50 steamers.

2282. I gather that you lay more stress upon the charges in London than some of your colleagues, who are shipowners, who came before us before; that is so, is it not?—No; I do not think that I complain about the charges on the steamers.

2283. But the charges of the port I am alluding to?—What I complain about, and what makes the port expensive to a steamship owner, is its want of despatch.

2284. Let me refer you to Question 2095, in Mr. Anderson's evidence. The Chairman put this to him: "You have told us just now that London was a dearer port than others. Will you tell us in respect of what particular items such is the case?" The answer to that is: "I tried to guard myself against dealing with that, because beyond the pilotage and detention and labour, I am not quite sure that I could make out the case for London being dearer." Then Question 2096: "Therefore, when you say London is a more expensive port, you do not care to go on?"—"No; I do not lay great stress upon it, except in these matters." Do you concur with Mr. Anderson?—I say, as regards the shipowners, I do not know about the merchants; it is for the merchants to show that the charges are higher. I am not a merchant; but I say, as regards the shipowner, the dock charges are not excessive, and the docks themselves, as regards their entrances and management, from a navigation point of view leave little to complain about. But they are certainly deficient in facilities for despatch. We have not got the room, the dock accommodation, to turn the steamers round as quickly as they are turned round at Liverpool.

2285. Then you concur in fact with Mr. Anderson when he goes on to say: "I lean more on the detention"?—Yes, exactly.

2286. Your evidence is similar to his on that point?—Yes.

2287. You said something about competition. You said in 1883 there was real competition?—Amongst the docks, yes. Each dock company was anxious to secure me as a tenant; consequently they would give me facilities in the way of convenient berths, convenient arrangement for discharge, and so forth.

2288. You think amalgamation, to the extent it has prevented competition, has been detrimental to the shipping?—Most detrimental.

2289. Is your ideal to have the docks of London in quite a number of hands?—Either there should be competition as you suggest in a number of hands, or the monopoly should be one carried out for the public interest by a public body. It would be most dangerous to have the monopoly in the hands of a company of shareholders.

2290. You would eliminate the desire to make interest on capital?—Exactly.

2291. You would have it as in Liverpool, I suppose, so that all the money raised in rates should be expended in the development of the port?—Then we do not care how much they raise the rates; we feel we are getting value for it.

2292. You think then there would be no temptation in the hands of the governing body to what you rather indicated—you used the word, I do not use it—favouritism?—No, we do not find it in Liverpool. Justice is done to everyone. Every interest is represented on the Board. I do not think there are any complaints in Liverpool of favouritism. A trade gets its berth accommodation according to its importance.

2293-4. When you make the statement that shipowning members are almost entirely dismissed—"dismissed" is a strong word, is it not—how did the change come about?—The moment the two companies amalgamated they reduced their Board, and they expelled the shipowning members.

2295. It so happened, for reasons which you do not enter into, that the shipowning interest disappeared?—They had an idea that the shipowning interest prevented their earning as much dividend, and that it was too much represented on the Board, consequently when they effected the amalgamation after the loss of the money at the Tilbury Dock they were on an economical basis, and they wanted to administer the docks simply in the interests of the dock shareholders; consequently they got rid of the shipowning members.

2296. You are a shareholder, I believe?—I am not a shareholder now, but I was a shareholder for several years in order that I might have some influence.

2297. I only gathered that because you say you pointed out at the meetings. You held shares?—I held shares so that I might have an opportunity of criticising matters at the annual meetings.

2298. You held the shares in the interest of the shipowners?—Yes.

2299. *Ad hoc*?—And the general interest. Our principal interest is in Liverpool; it is only in the public interest that I come and trouble you in London.

2300. You say there is money wasted in the docks. Then there is money to waste if money is wasted?—I think the docks will never pay a decent dividend on the present system. They have not even sufficient money to make good roads or for good watching, or to provide modern facilities. The Millwall Dock was a modern dock, and was far too economically managed, and still it would not pay.

2301. There it is the other way; not money enough spent, is it? You say far too economical?—Far too economical to be efficient, but with all their economy it would not pay. You cannot make a dock in London pay under the present conditions.

2302. But I do gather from your point of view there is waste at the docks, that is to say money is spent in the wrong way?—In one or two points I have mentioned, I say I do not think they are quite as economical as they might be. I took the trouble to point it out to them. It is against my own interest. I should have to make my stevedore do a little more handling to the goods, but I pointed out to the company as a shareholder, and in the general interest, that they would save 2d. or 3d. a ton if they did as is done in Liverpool; but instead of that they went on in the old fashioned way.

2303. Do you think, when comparing the railway service at the docks in London with the horse service of cartage, you are comparing precisely the same things, or things under the same conditions?—I think so. The goods that come here from North America are very much of the same class as the goods that come to Liverpool, and there we get our cartage done for 1s. or 1s. 3d. a ton. A lorry on four wheels carries five or six tons, and is drawn by one horse in the shafts and one leader.

2304. You think that traction in a trolley is really as cheap?—For short distances it is as economical, or more economical.

2305. What do you call a short distance?—Round the dock. For instance, if I had to bring goods from a ship in the Albert Dock to the Victoria Dock, it is more economical. I could not understand the Dock Company charging so much for the service. They explained to me that it was expensive to rail the goods round the dock.

2306. You used the expression that you would like to see a complete internal reconstruction of the dock system in London?—With regard to the Albert Dock, I should like to see that extended, and the new docks to be better arranged with regard to the lighterage business; that is to say, some jetty system by which we could pass cargo right across into the lighter, and keep on loading all the lighters while the ship is being discharged. As it is, we discharge the cargo, and the quay is covered with cargo; there is no room, and the merchant cannot get his goods away sometimes for a fortnight. Then I should double the sheds, so that you would have double the floor space, by putting a large portion of the goods in an upper shed, as they do in Liverpool.

2307. You lay very great stress, primary stress, upon quick despatch?—That is of the greatest importance.

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2308. Do you concur with Sir Thomas Sutherland in all that he said with regard to the deepening of the channel?—I see Sir Thomas Sutherland mentioned 26ft. up to the Albert Dock. I should think that is quite ample. You must remember that the draught of steamers is limited not by London alone, but by the whole world. For instance, at Montreal you cannot get a draught of more than about 26ft. at the best time of the year. You cannot get through the Suez Canal with more than 25ft. 6in. You cannot go to Baltimore or Buenos Ayres with deep draught ships. Ships have to be built so that they could go all over the world. Therefore, I think the deepening of the river might be done slowly and progressively, after the important point is provided of making it safe for a ship to lie somewhere if she misses docking.

See 1993.

2309. You said in your evidence: "After long negotiations I made arrangements with the dock companies by which, first of all, by payment of so much per ton, and latterly by payment of so much per square yard." Will you just give me the date when you made this arrangement?—I am afraid I should have to ask the permission of the Commission to get the exact dates and bring them here. I should think it was four or five years after I came to London.

See 2251.

2310. That would fix the date?—I could give you the date exactly from the correspondence.

2311. Would it be at the end of the eighties? Would it be about 1889?—1887 or 1888, I should think.

2312. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You were advocating just now more wharves in the Thames. Do you as a shipowner prefer a wharf to a dock?—For the mode of business adopted in London of putting the greater portion of the cargo into lighters I think wharves in the river have great advantages over docks.

2313. Wharves such as you propose to build?—Wharves such as I propose to build, and which I applied to the Thames Conservancy for permission to make.

2314. At the same time you cannot compare a wharf that you propose to be built unless you also compare the dock that you propose to be built. Supposing the dock had what you advocated, namely, a canal at the back of the shed for lighters, which do you prefer as a shipowner—docks or wharves?—A dock has the advantage that the height of the water is maintained.

2315. I understand that, but I am asking you as a shipowner which you prefer?—I should prefer a dock, but a wharf would be convenient, and would cost less to make. In Montreal we only have wharves; in St. John, New Brunswick, we only have wharves.

2316. The rise and fall comes into consideration?—You will be aware there is a very great rise and fall at St. John, New Brunswick—something like 30ft.

2317. With regard to lighters using the docks, have you ever formed any opinion whether they should be charged or be entirely exempt?—I think that goods, whether they go away in lighters or whether they go in carts, ought to pay the same rates.

2318. Therefore you say you think they should be exempt?—I think they should not be exempt. I think that on all goods equally, whether they go by carts or by lighters, the charge should be level.

2319. In advocating a trust you would place virtually everything in that trust—pilotage of the river, buoying, deepening, in fact, the whole control?—Yes, as in Liverpool. Liverpool has the conservancy of the river as well as the docks and the pilotage, and I am not sure, but I think some part of the lighting. I may say, as regards the wharf in the river, I was very anxious to make an experiment, as no public body was doing it, and I applied to the Thames Conservancy for permission to make one in the Thames near the Millwall Dock. I found, however, that their restrictions utterly prevent such a thing being done by any private person. I lost nearly two years in applying to the Thames Conservancy, and I found that not only did they require to be satisfied that there would be no injury to the navigation, and naturally so, and that there would be no injury to your neighbour's property (naturally that would be their duty); but I found they had a cut and dried rule by which you must obtain the written consent of your neighbours on both sides. That of course is impossible to obtain, or almost impossible, at all events sufficiently impossible to prevent any man attempting to build a wharf for his own steamers in the river. If I went to my neighbour—I was not proposing to put my wharf in front of my neighbour's property—but if I went to him and asked him for his consent he would ask, "What are you going to give me for my consent?" In this case I was fortunately able, after some months, to obtain the consent of my neighbours on both sides by certain concessions or privileges or opportunities I offered them. Then I found the Conservancy said: "You must not only do that, but you must get the consent of the freeholder. The freeholder's interest did not come in for fifty years. I represented to the Conservancy that the freeholder was not affected; the wharf would not depreciate the property, and the freeholder could make me remove it if he did not like it. That his interest 50 years off was very trifling. But they said, "No, you have to get the consent of the freeholder too." Well, it was evidently impossible to do anything without an Act of Parliament; so I left it.

2320. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) When you applied for permission to build your wharf, were you intending to advance the frontage line beyond that of your neighbours?—No.

2321. Were you proposing to maintain the old frontage line?—Yes.

2322. Can you tell us what the present depth of the Suez Canal is?—I think you had that from Sir Thomas Sutherland.

See 2034-7.

2323. Do you happen to know the depth of the North Holland Canal?—I do not.

2324. Or the depth into Southampton?—I have been to Southampton; my ships have been there, and I have been there myself, but I cannot tell of my own knowledge. It is an excellent harbour at all times of the tide.

Mr. JOHN ERNEST MATTHEWS called and examined.

Mr. J. E. Matthews.

2325. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You are a member of the firm of Matthews and Luff, shipbrokers, of 52, Leadenhall-street, E.C., and M. H. and J. E. Matthews, shipowners, of London and Cardiff?—Yes.

2326. I see you begin the statement of your evidence by a reference to the number of port authorities, and you quote the return of the Rivers Committee of the London County Council. As we shall have the County Council witnesses before us on Tuesday next, I do not propose to ask you anything upon that, but I will take your opinion on this. You say that there should be only one authority. Will you give me your reason for that, and then continue your evidence from that point?—The port authority should have control of the estuary as far as the Naze and the North Foreland, because the dredging, lighting, buoying, watching of tides and channels and general regulations as to the use of and preserving the channels should all be carried out with unity of aim and purpose. Lighting, buoying, dredging, and pilotage I shall refer to under separate headings. I wish, however, to call attention to the fact that at present next to no use is made of some very fine waterways in the Thames estuary. I refer to three large tidal rivers or creeks in Essex—the Colne, the Blackwater, and the Crouch. No dredging is undertaken to keep the entrances clear, and the buoying and lighting in two of the entrances, the Blackwater and the Colne, is insufficient, and at the entrance of the Crouch there is no light whatever, and the nearest buoy is five miles from the river heads, and the Crouch is the best river of the three for navigable purposes for any distance inland. This river has a deep water channel for about twelve to fifteen miles suitable for the erection of factories upon its banks, and even shipbuilding might be effectively carried on. All that is required is dredging of some five miles of the Whitaker Channel, say from the Whitaker Beacon to the West Buxey Buoy, and properly buoying and lighting the entrance from the Swin to the river heads. But my chief reason for calling attention to these bye-ports of the estuary is that they could, if the entrance channels were looked after, be developed into transhipping stations where ships could unload into sailing barges, relieving the congestion of the upper or central port. This transhipping is at the present time continually taking place in the River Orwell, 20 to 30 miles further from London, and if from the River Orwell why not from these other stations? The result of transhipments from the River Orwell to London is that

See 9791-3

the goods can be brought up to London by sailing barge at 2s. 6d. per ton, taken direct to the spot they are wanted, or to a railway wharf, and save some 7s. or 8s. of landing or warehousing charges at the London Docks, and in the case of foreign wheat possibly save the consumer some 4s. or 5s. per ton in the price of flour, etc. There are not many wharves in London that would take grain steamers, but if a steamer went to a wharf it would be so much less. At the time I am writing steamers with wood cargoes are waiting six to eight days outside the Surrey Commercial Docks for permission to enter, owing to congestion of traffic. There are a thousand acres of land flooded every high water from the waters of the Crouch, which would make splendid timber ponds, which are quite close to Farnbridge Railway Station on the Great Eastern Railway, and which could be bought for a nominal sum; and plenty of cheap land adjacent suitable for storage of deals, about one hour by rail from London (2s. 6d. return fare), could relieve this congestion in the wood trade if the channel into the Crouch were buoyed, lighted, and dredged. I mention the passenger fare because it is a convenience for people to go down and sample goods or anything of that kind. There is a very large district down Ilford way—from Bow to Ilford, and even as far as Romford, on which a great deal of building is going on. Also such goods could be despatched by rail to the East End of London at about the same expense as from the Surrey Commercial Docks.

See 2418-20.

2327. Now will you deal with the question of dredging?—Yes. I cannot give you direct evidence on that.

2328. We had rather not take it from you if we can get it more direct from somebody else?—I have only what evidence has been put before the Commission.

2329. Then we will go on to the next question, what have you to say with regard to lighting and buoying?—You have had evidence as to buoys. I cannot give you any more evidence on that. I can particularly give you evidence on matters of pilotage.

2330. Then we will take what you have to say about pilotage?—The pilotage authority is also the Elder Brethren of the Trinity, and yet one may say it *is* or is *not*, and both with some truth. The Brethren license the pilots, compile the tariff, and the pilots are called Trinity pilots. The Brethren have powers which enable them to enforce their pilots upon shipping coming from foreign ports beyond Brest. That means south of Brest. The tariff is very high on small ships. The Brethren accept no responsibility if their pilot by carelessness or incompetence causes damage to your ship or causes your ship to damage another; you have no recourse against the Trinity House, and your recourse against the pilot is worth nothing, for the pilot, although making good money, is careful to own nothing. The pilot nominally has to give security for the sum of £100, but I have never heard of a case where the cash was seizable. The Trinity House enforces their tariff, but the pilot, except in the case of foreign vessels, has to collect his own pilotage from the shipbroker, who becomes responsible for this money, if he report the ship at the Customs House, though the shipowner may never refund the money. In practice the money is usually collected by a publican or an agent. Now as to the justice of the pilotage tariff. The charge is so much per foot. A ship of 500 tons will probably draw 15ft.; a modern steamer of 3,000 tons will draw possibly only 19ft., say 22ft. The former will pay £7 10s. 0d. and 20s. landing money, the latter £11 and 20s. landing money from the Downs. This, it can be seen at once, is very unfair. The charge is excessive on the small ship and very easy on the large ship. What should be charged is a tonnage rate. It should all be collected by the pilotage authority, and the pilots paid a regular salary. I may add here that I consider that the pilot's employment should be an exclusive employment. At present a pilot may be a coal merchant down at Gravesend, or in some places he has possession of some of the moorings in the Pool which he makes the money out of, and so on. I consider that a pilot should be paid a salary, and that it should be an exclusive employment. Then with regard to the question of whether the authority should be liable for damages in the case of a drunken, incompetent or careless pilot causing an accident, that is rather a difficult subject, and perhaps I have gone a little too far in that. I would qualify that, because I conceive it might be somewhat difficult to make an authority responsible for damages in such a case.

2331. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Then perhaps you will withdraw that?—Yes, I withdraw that. At present some pilots are hardly making a living. They hang round for jobs, and they come to our office sometimes asking for jobs. Those are, I suppose, the newer pilots that are taken on. Others are making a great deal of money. Evidence has been given to-day that some of them make up to £1,500 a year. The excessive charge on a small steamer occurs again in a different form on a small vessel trading just beyond Brest, say Nantes or St. Nazaire; she draws, say, 12ft., and is liable to £7 pilotage, including landing money, Downs to Gravesend. This vessel may be coming into London 12 times in the course of a year. There are a number of small sailing vessels which come into London, say, with nuts from Spain. Perhaps they only carry about 100 tons, and draw 11ft. or 12ft. of water. They may come in several times a year, and they have to pay this heavy pilotage every time and 20s. for landing money. The captain knows the river and estuary channels as well as the pilot, and can handle his little ship much better, but he has to pay £7 for what he does not want, and, say, carries only 150 to 200 tons. It is those kinds of injustice in connection with port charges which give a port a bad name, and make owners avoid it whenever possible, which eventually means a higher rate of freight to go to London than to Harwich or Southampton. The system is full of anomalies that it is impossible entirely to go into—well, it is not impossible, but it would take a long time to go into all of them. The pilotage tariff should be re-organised, and this matter taken over by the port authority. I should like to add here that there is also a question of overlapping between the Thames Conservancy and the Trinity House in the question of pilotage. For instance, on the 7th February a little sailing ship called the "Adelaide," from a port in Mexico, came in. She delivered part of her cargo at Antwerp, and then came over with the balance to London. As his port of loading was not Antwerp, but "beyond Brest," the captain was under compulsory pilotage. He was compelled to take the Trinity pilot. He told the Trinity pilot to what place he was ordered to go, and the Trinity pilot took him to a certain buoy, and made him fast there, and left him there. He had not been there many hours before one of the harbour masters or deputy harbour masters came along and said: "Get out of this. You have no business here. That is not the place for you to lie. You must go over *there*." The man said: "No; I was taken in charge by a pilot of the port; he put me here, and I will remain here until I see my broker." He came up to consult me on the matter, and we wrote to the Thames Conservancy on the subject, but we got no satisfaction out of them at all. What occurred was this:—At a cost of £4, he had to employ a tug to shift him to the place where the Thames Conservancy said he was to lie; and also the Thames Conservancy sued him at the Police Court for not shifting when he was told, which caused him further expense for appearance there. That was caused by having the two authorities.

2332. Then have you anything to say about floating coal derricks?—Yes. Those floating coal derricks are now in the hands of one firm. There is now a combination; it is all one concern. I think this should be in the hands of the port authority and worked by them. The Thames Conservancy have said that they have not sufficient money, but they are throwing money away by handing them over for a very small sum. I have tried to get at what it is, but I have not been able to. I have asked one of the members of the Thames Conservancy, and he has asked the Secretary, but I have not been able to get the amount, even from the report or their accounts, of what is paid by this firm for the derricks.

2333. Then you complain of their action?—I say that here is an opportunity for them to make money for other purposes, and they hand it over to another firm instead of keeping it in their own hands.

2334. Then with regard to moorings in general?—The Thames Conservancy report an annual loss of about £6,000 on moorings, and no wonder, for a more antiquated system of working the moorings exists nowhere, and in looking over some old Parliamentary Reports I found the same system existed 100 and even 200 years ago. Most of the moorings in the Thames belong to the Thames Conservancy; there are some, I understand, that are private property. One does not get any enlightenment from the Conservancy balance-

See 7544—5.

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sheets, but one must presume that the £6,000 per annum debited to moorings goes to their upkeep. The Conservancy do not make a charge directly to the shipping using them, and they do not employ any staff to serve them; in fact, there is no tariff for moorings in the Port of London. These moorings are either let or farmed out, and, if so, I should like to know what rent the Thames Conservancy receive for them, or are they handed over to private individuals free of rent to make what they can out of them. I am presuming this. I do not know it direct, but I am showing you that I have evidence on the subject of payments. Those individuals have often other work to attend to, and sub-let or hand them over to others to work them, and in some cases they are handed over to the charge of a third party. As I have said, there is no fixed tariff, and there are often disputes arising as to the charge made. A steamer trading regularly to certain moorings has, of course, fought the matter out to begin with, and afterwards pays a regular sum, but this varies in different cases, and not always in accordance with the size of the steamer. A stranger will always be charged more; in fact, the principle seems to be to charge what they can get. This causes friction and unpleasantness, and works against the popularity of the port. Certainly it would be a much better system to have fixed charges according to tonnage, and to have a responsible official of the Port Authority in charge to serve the moorings.

2335. Then we come to the subject of public or municipal wharves and quays?—Yes. I can give evidence direct as to that, having been in Hamburg and knowing Antwerp well.

2336. Will you tell us what you have to say on that subject?—There are no public or municipal river wharves and quays in the Port of London, and therefore we have no deep water river wharves and quays where large modern steamers can come alongside at any state of the tide, and lie afloat at low water. When I say deep water, I mean in comparison with those at Antwerp, where large modern steamers can go alongside. At Hamburg there is a splendid system of such wharves, the docks are all tidal, and no locking or unlocking is necessary. At Antwerp the North German Lloyds, and other large steamers, use the river quays—municipal property—that is to say, they are managed by the municipal authority, although the larger part is paid for by the Government.

2337. Do you know that as a fact from your own acquaintance with Antwerp?—I know that as a fact from a direct statement by a gentleman on the Municipal Council, who gave me information which I will mention presently. At Glasgow they have deep water river quays, and in the Tyne and the Tees there are also many good river wharves and stages where large ships can lie safely. Is it for a port with the enormous trade of London to be behind Hamburg, Antwerp, and Glasgow in this respect? Why does she not lead the way instead of lagging behind?

2338. Now you are getting into an argument rather than giving evidence?—Yes, I quite agree, but this, I think, comes to a matter of fact. At Antwerp the municipal authority has effected the works. When, however, the works were first completed, sufficiently for traffic, the authority made this mistake, by raising all the current expenditure from the shipping and cargo using the port, with the very natural result that after a short period of increased activity, owing to the advertisement of the facilities provided, the trade began to leave the port, and at length the difference was strongly marked. I was frequently over at Antwerp at that time, and was told by the people there interested in the trade of the port, that merchandise that used to pass through Antwerp was then going to Rotterdam and Hamburg, for Antwerp, having earned a bad name as an expensive port, was being shunned when possible by both shipowners and shippers, or receivers of merchandise. The present authorities here not being representative, it might be fair to say that they have not that interest in pushing trade that a municipal authority, having more of an interest in the town, would have.

2339. I think if you tell us what Antwerp has done that will be quite sufficient?—But the municipality, having the representations of those interested in this matter brought strongly to its notice, saw that another policy must be adopted, namely, the port charges lowered, and what other amount was necessary supplied by the municipality, and, as I believe in this case, assistance from the Central Government, with the result that Antwerp now well holds her own with her rivals, Hamburg and Rotterdam. I therefore advocate the purchase of riverside property by the port authority, if one is formed, below the old Thames Tunnel at Wapping. When I say below, I do not mean immediately below, but it must not be above that, because over the Thames Tunnel there is only about 12ft. of water at low tides. There are miles of rickety old warehouse premises in suitable situation for the construction of deep water quays or jetties on the Antwerp plan, and there is no reason why there should not be an improvement on that plan.

2340. And do you think the docks should also be purchased?—I feel that that is a very difficult question, because it is difficult to arrive at a fair valuation, but I think that the unity of control is of sufficient importance for me to say that I should prefer that the new port authority purchased the docks. There might be another way suggested that, instead of entirely purchasing the docks, they should make the water of the docks free, and leave the dock companies in the position of a wharfinger.

2341. Have you thought out any distinct plan?—Merely that instead of buying the whole of the docks from the companies you should pay them a certain sum for making the water free, and then they could reconstruct their business and carry on business as wharfingers. They ought to be able to do that as successfully as the wharfingers in the river. They certainly would not be at a disadvantage as compared with the other wharfingers, they would rather have an advantage.

2342. But you have not formulated any distinct plan for separating interests and showing how the thing could be done, have you?—I have made no valuation. I am not competent to make a valuation on that subject, and it would be a question of valuation.

2343. I do not think we will go into the historical portion of the statement of your evidence now?—I think I can give you some information as to the London and St. Katherine Docks. That is as to the amount of work that is done there. It is quite true that the London and St. Katharine Docks are full of work at the present time, but the point is this: it is not being done on payable terms. I submit that it is not, and I have certain evidence of my own on the subject. For instance, I was in treaty with the dock company to run steamers from the London Dock; they offered me a warehouse or shed there. At the time it was an open space; it was not then boarded off. It was under one of those tall warehouses supported by pillars. They said they would enclose that for me as a transit shed, and give me the sole use of it for a warehouse at a certain rent, and with regard to any landing of goods the profit would be mine and I was to run a certain number of steamers in and out of the dock free of dock dues, I paying a fixed rent; and I think you will find that until the dock began to get pretty full that was the case with other people. So that if a dock was started to do the sort of business that they are doing now it would mean a great loss. Of course, they are quite right to get what business they can. The docks were nearly empty for a long time, and then they took up this system of placing themselves in the position of wharfingers, sub-letting to me, as they offered to do, a certain portion of their premises, and then I was just as free to come out as if I had gone to one of the wharves in the river.

See 5628.

See 5628.

2344. So that your opinion is that these docks are practically the same as wharves, and they are treated as such by their owners?—Yes. They do not levy their one shilling a ton dock rate, and therefore they cannot get that profit.

See 5628.

2345. Now will you go on to what you have to say about the river police?—I think it would be better that the river police and the dock police should be all under the central port authority. There is no doubt that there is a good deal of pilfering goes on during the loading and discharging of cargo. I have had painful experience of it myself. If the whole thing were worked under one system, the detective part of the matter particularly could be better arranged than it is at present.

2346. Then you think that the regulations for licensing watermen and lightermen and boats and barges should be in the hands of the Port Authority?—Yes.

2347. Then I see you desire to say something about the passenger steamboat service, but we consider that matter outside the scope of our inquiry?—I have brought that in because I thought the Port Authority would be considered as an authority to arrange with regard to labour.

2348. And you think that the dues ought to be levied by one authority?—Yes.

2349. And the same with regard to the powers to raise loans?—Yes.

2350. Then let us come to the question of port charges on tonnage, and whether London is an expensive or a cheap port?—As I say, the question can be answered both ways. Of course, you have had the evidence of the largest shipowners, who say that London, on its port charge tariff even, is not a dear port; but that it is much about the same, as far as the actual charges are concerned, as Liverpool, as was explained to you this morning. But two-thirds of the trade of London is in small boats, that is, boats under 1,500 tons. If you take the Report of the Board of Trade Commission in 1896, Appendix B, Table 3, page 8, you get there a list of vessels that have paid tonnage dues for the year 1894, and if you take those out, you find that vessels under 500 tons, including coasting, are 47·93 per cent. of the trade paying dues; vessels under 1,000 tons, including coasting, 61·11; and under 1,500 tons, including coasting, 69·87.

2351. Then do you say the system of discharging in the docks is also expensive?—Yes; the reason of that is that there are cargoes coming in mixed, some going into lighters. It is not that part that causes the expense, but in order to get his goods clear, if he does not land the whole of the cargo, he nearly always has to land a large quantity of it, in order to sort the goods to go by lighter or by cart, and those charges in London come upon the shipowners, whereas in some other ports, for instance, in Liverpool, the sorting, after the landing is done, is paid for by the receivers of the cargo. But taking London for the trade of these boats, saying roundly for the 69·87 per cent., London is a very cheap port, and it would be very detrimental to the Port of London, I consider, if dues were put on which would prevent its being a cheap port for that class of trade. That class of trade is, I may say, a trade that will expand or contract according to competition, in this way:—London is an enormous place, and a certain amount of feeding stuff and supplies for London must come in. That trade inwards London is bound to get, because people must have it. Then the other trade, in which the increase or decrease will take place, will be the transhipment trade from London and the distributing trade from London, which will go ahead or astern according as she meets that trade. When I first came to business, in 1864, there was a very much larger coasting trade than there is at the present time, the reason for that being that a great many of the ports which are now taking large steamers were not then suited to take them. Antwerp, of course, had not got her improvements, and we transhipped a good deal of foreign produce from London to Antwerp, which is not so frequent now. Then that cargo came in direct, and that trade which used to come to London and was then transhipped and went across to continental ports, as Rouen, Havre, and so on, improved, fell away. As the tendency now is for steamers of very large tonnage to be built, it will, perhaps, possibly alter again; these largest steamers will be confined to the very largest ports, and if London keeps herself to the front in that respect, this transhipping trade should revive or increase. But if you put extra dues on, it is just that kind of trade which is sensitive, and a very little thing will divert it elsewhere. That will apply also to putting harbour dues on goods to any great extent which I believe has been advocated, because London is used as a "dumping ground." Say a man has produce abroad to ship, and he has not a buyer for it at the moment, but he cannot hold it because he wants the money, he ships it to London, where he can always raise money on his bill of lading, and it is landed here and sold out in parcels after being warehoused, and so he realises his profit as the case may be. London has obtained a good deal of its trade on that account, being what we call a "dumping ground" for certain kinds of produce. High charges in London would affect that particular use of the port.

2352. Then you say Southampton is not a dangerous competitor now?—It seems to have reached its limit, but of course they may extend. I have certainly found that from 1893 to 1897 the increase of Southampton was 30 per cent., as against 15 per cent. for London.

2353. Might I ask whether you took the figures from the official returns?—Yes. I took them from the official returns of the Board of Trade.

2354. I think perhaps we need not go into that, because we shall have the figures ourselves?—Some of the figures I do not think you will have, because they require somebody to understand not only how the figures are put in—— *Mr. J. E. Matthews.* 29 Nov. 1900.

2355. I was just going to say that there are some traps in these figures?—Yes. I have corrected them, and I do not think that there would be many people who would have the information to correct as I have. I am a practical man on the water, and connected with the river.

2356. Then I think you might give us them as you have corrected them. This is a statement as to the entries and clearances of shipping at different ports in the years 1897, 1898, and 1899?—Yes.

2357. These figures are taken from the official returns of the Board of Trade corrected by your own information?—Yes.

2358. Will you state the substance of what these figures are. First of all you will speak of clearances?—Yes. Bristol: In 1897, 1,471,000; in 1898, 1,514,000; in 1899, 1,525,000; showing an increase of 3·5 per cent. Liverpool: In 1897, 8,986,000; in 1898, 9,352,000; in 1899, 9,369,000; showing an increase of 4·9 per cent. London: In 1897, 8,992,000; in 1898, 8,513,000; in 1899, 8,250,000. These are the figures that I have corrected. On the face as I read they would show a 9 per cent. decrease, but by correction of these allowances for ballast and estuary trade, which was not formerly included, it is in fact a half per cent. increase. In the previous period London had increased 15 per cent., and for these two years she has increased half per cent. I will hand in a table showing how I arrive at that increase of half per cent.

(The Witness handed in a table showing the coasting clearances and entries of tonnage in the Port of London for the years 1897, 1898 *and* 1899. *See Appendix, 7th Day, No.* 1.)

2359. And that is allowing for everything?—Yes, allowing for everything. That is a net increase. Then Southampton: In 1897, 2,669,000; in 1898, 2,591,000; in 1899, 2,657,000, showing a decrease of 0·5 per cent. Glasgow: In 1897, 3,665,000; in 1898, 3,964,000; in 1899, 3,885,000, showing an increase of 5·6 per cent. Then I go to the entries. Bristol: In 1897, 1,510,000; in 1898, 1,516,000; in 1899, 1,556,000; which is an increase of 3 per cent. Liverpool: In 1897, 8,928,000; in 1898, 9,394,000; in 1899, 9,468,000—an increase of 6 per cent. London: In 1897, 16,017,000; in 1898, 15,287,000; in 1899, 15,388, 000. That is an increase on the two years of 2 per cent. That is the corrected figure instead of on the face figure a decrease of 4·9 per cent.

2360. You say there is a real increase of 2 per cent., while the figures show a decrease of 4·9 per cent.?—Yes. Then Southampton: In 1897, 2,767,000; in 1898, 2,704,000; in 1899, 2,784,000; showing an increase of one per cent. That may be explained somewhat in this way. During the Spanish-American War the American Line steamers were withdrawn from Southampton, which made some reduction at Southampton. Then Glasgow: In 1897, 3,408,000; in 1898, 3,710,000; in 1899, 3,550,000. That is an increase of 4 per cent.

2361. Then your final conclusion is that if anything is to be done to save the trade of London it is quite evident that prompt action is necessary?—That is so.

2362. Is there anything else you would like to add?—I would like to add with regard to these figures that any statistics in which the value of imports and exports is mentioned are very unreliable. I can give you evidence on that point. I have been through everything of this kind of business from office boy to my present position.

2363. As between port and port?—I mean this: you cannot depend on any valuation given by any Board of Trade statistics on free goods. For instance, I have been a Customs House clerk after I first was in the City. When I had to pass an entry of free goods I had to fill in the value. If I did not know the value, I made it, and I have no doubt that that is done by Customs House clerks now. I did not want to go back to the office and have another journey.

2364. Have you any information to give as to any particular trade where you think the Board of Trade information is untrustworthy?—No, I have not studied it closely enough to say that, but I have talked on the subject with others who have made out these entries, and so on, and I know that they are put down very haphazard.

2365. Of course you know that all this has been discussed from time to time during the last 30 or 40 years, and the Customs House have imposed a fine upon people for imperfect returns and false returns, and that the matter is one of continual investigation?—I see.

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2366. You are not aware of the public discussions that have taken place with regard to this?—I have not been fined.

2367. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are the pilotage laws any different in the Thames from what they are in other rivers as to responsibility and matters of that kind?—I have withdrawn that matter of responsibility.

2368. But they are really no different, I suppose?—No; nowhere are the pilots responsible in that way.

See 20–21; 7544–5.

2369. Now with regard to the moorings. The Thames Conservancy say they make no charge for moorings. Who does make a charge for moorings then, other than the private owners of moorings?—A man comes up and demands money from me for steamers mooring at certain moorings in the Pool. If I do not pay that money he says, "I shall put you in the police court," or "I shall go to the solicitors of the Thames Conservancy," and he will sue me at once for that amount. I am informed that the moorings belong to the Thames Conservancy, but that these men have a right to charge, and they always threaten us with the Thames Conservancy if we object to pay the amount. If we think it is too much, in the interests of one of the ships that are sent to us as shipbrokers, we object to it sometimes, and we are continually threatened with proceedings if we do not pay. We have in some cases got the amount reduced. I have a list of cases here, which I picked out hurriedly, of amounts I have paid for certain ships. I believe the Thames Conservancy have stated that there is no charge made for moorings, but that is incorrect.

2370. The Thames Conservancy told us that they made no charge for moorings?—They actually said further than that, that there was no charge made for moorings, as I heard it.

2371. Then do you suggest that there is a middleman comes?—Sometimes three middlemen.

2372. And they make charges against the shipowner for using the moorings which are not charged for at all by the Thames Conservancy?—Yes. The Thames Conservancy get nothing out of it, I understand.

2373. Can you give me any idea at all how these men arose; who they are; or where they come from?—There are so many antiquated things connected with the Thames Conservancy that they develop out of some old plan, or old system, when it was in the hands of the previous port authorities, or at the time the City Corporation had it, that I expect they will find a difficulty in explaining it themselves. The thing has gone on so long that I doubt if they know whether the moorings belong to them or to somebody else.

2374. At any rate the broad result is that the shipowners have to pay somebody for their moorings?—Yes, and the difficulty is that there is no fixed tariff, and there is continual friction and bother with these men, who, when they get a stranger, immediately charge him more. He comes up to me as shipbroker and says, "Am I to pay for it?" I look at it, and if it is more than I have paid before, I say "No." Then the man comes up and threatens proceedings unless we do pay him. In some cases we have referred to the Conservancy. In one case, on the 5th April, 1899, a man refunded some money for a small steamer called the "Argowan."

2375. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you tell us on what ground they make the charge?—I have never thought it out. I felt very much inclined to take it into Court, but I have not done so. It has always been very annoying to me, having to deal with small ships.

2376. How do they describe themselves when they make the claim?—One of them calls himself a "chain lighterman," but he makes the charge for moorings, and not for doing work. "To moorings," so much.

2377. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Can you tell us how much the charges are, and whether they vary from time to time? Can you put in any paper relating to these charges for moorings?—The charges seem to run from 10s. to £1.

2378. Per day?—No, for the mooring.

2379. For how long?—They are generally there four or five days.

2380. (*Mr. Ellis.*) For as long as the vessel is there?—Yes.

2381. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is that one of the bills you have in your hand?—No; it is only a memorandum of my own, putting down the dates and the amounts I paid for certain steamers.

2382. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I think you told us that you thought that quays deep enough for oversea vessels should be alongside the Thames. Is there anything to prevent that being done now, except the expense?—It can only be done in conjunction with deepening the channel. If I owned private land, wharfage property, and if I made a big quay there, it would be no use unless the port authority made me a channel up to it.

2383. But even with the existing channel there are several wharves deep enough for sea-going ships to go alongside, are there not?—For the trade of two-thirds of the port, yes.

2384. Take the Aberdeen vessels, or the Dundee vessels?—Yes; they have their own wharves.

2385. And the sea-going vessels going alongside can take in their cargoes?—Yes.

2386. The General Steam Navigation Company have also wharves for sea-going vessels?—Yes.

2387. Is it not therefore really rather a matter of expense whether the wharfinger goes to the expense of making the water deep enough?—When it comes to the modern trade for these steamers that go to Antwerp, it is another matter.

2388. It would be more expensive, and the expense would not be warranted unless there was a channel?—Yes.

2389. That is really the state of things?—Yes.

2390. There is nothing to prevent it being done?—No.

2391. And up to the present time a number of wharves have been made deep enough for sea-going ships up to the limitation of the depth of the channel?—Yes. You get good, fair-sized boats right up to London Bridge.

2392. Is not one of the great reasons why more deep water wharves have not been made the fact that the business has been carried on so much by lighters, who take the cargo out of the dock and bring it to the wharf?—Yes. Of course, it would decrease the quantity of lighters very materially if we had a system like that at Antwerp, and the steamers came alongside and discharged there.

2393. Is not the reason why people do not go to the great expense of making the deep water quays in London to be found in the fact that so large an amount of business is transacted by the lighters going into the docks, taking the cargo from the ship and bringing it into wharves?—Yes.

2394. The ship must either go into the dock or lie in the river?—Yes.

2395. Then if it lies in the river its cargo would be taken by lighters?—Yes.

2396. And a wharf that is suitable for lighters costs very much less than a wharf that is suitable for sea-going vessels, naturally?—Yes. I might mention something with regard to the working of the Port of London as compared with the working of the Port of Cardiff. We have a wharf at Cardiff.

2397. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Would you be speaking of your own experience?—Yes, we can do our work very much quicker there than we can in London.

2398. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You are talking of general cargo, of course?—Yes, we run coasting steamers between London, Cardiff, Llanelly, and Swansea. At Cardiff we hire a wharf off the Bute Docks Company. We have the sole use of that part of the dock. We have a long transit shed with three openings in it, so that we can run gangways from the steamer's rail. Say we have three hatchways, we can run three gangways from each hatchway into the sheds at different points. These sheds are raised about the height of *this* table from the ground level, about the height of the tailboard of a cart. We can perform four operations at the same time. We have just room for a single line of rails with a loop rail, every now and then, where you can shunt—a single line of rails between our shed and the water side, where the steamer lies. We can get in railway trucks between our gangways, or outside them at the ends, and we have a door on the other side of the shed where the cart waits with its tailboard against the little gangway for it to back into. Then we erect a little platform on the steamer just where its gangway is, and we lift our cargo on to there. The cargo is run at once in trucks. If it is to be warehoused it turns up into the warehouse. If it is to go for distribution into the town it is wheeled straight into the cart, and, when that cart is loaded, away it can go. If it is to lighter, it can go on the opposite side. If it is to be transhipped into another dock for abroad then

it goes away in lighters, or sometimes it goes up the Glamorganshire Canal, and then it goes into lighters; or we put it into a railway truck, as the case may be. Into lighter, railway truck, for warehousing, and wheeled direct into carts; all is going on at the same time. Consequently, we can turn over our cargo there very much more rapidly than we can here.

2399. You have plenty of space there, in fact?—Yes.

2400. You say you are acquainted with Antwerp?—Yes.

2401. Can you tell us whether Antwerp is served by the Government railways?—The Government railways run into Antwerp, but I do not know that they have it exclusively. I expect there is connection with the other lines.

2402. But the Government railways do run in there, do they not?—Yes.

See 2358-60. 2403. You gave us a very interesting statement about the various percentages of increase, and you quoted the Table on Page 8 of the Report of 1896. Have you been able to carry that table as far as 1899?—I do not think I quoted that as regards the increase of trade. I quoted that in reference to the quantity of tonnage under 1,500 tons and over 1,500 tons. I have not carried it any later.

2404. Up to the period quoted there, 1894, there is a large increase in the tonnage of large ships, is there not?—Yes.

2405. And the percentage is very rapidly increasing?—Undoubtedly.

2406. And I suppose you would be disposed to think, apart from absolute statistics, that that increase is going on still?—I feel that it is. That is why it is that, although I am connected with small ships myself, I feel that I am just as much interested in making the port suitable for these large boats as anyone else; because if we exclude these large boats we diminish the trade, and we diminish that trade of transit and transhipment that we small people are depending upon.

See 2358. 2407. Then, if the table that you have put in indicating a very small increase in the total tonnage of London is to be taken account of is true, that must indicate a decrease in the small tonnage, because we must all admit that there has been a large increase in the tonnage of large ships?—Yes.

2408. The small tonnage is going down, and the large tonnage is going up, if the total tonnage remains approximately the same now?—Yes. I should say that it is in the transhipment trade that that loss has been made, or that loss of expansion.

2409. And that transhipment trade, in which many people in London are interested, will further decrease if the large ships cannot come to London?—Yes.

2410. And if they do not have the fullest facilities for coming to London, the small ships will suffer in their trade?—Yes, that is my experience.

2411. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have had 35 years' practical experience?—Yes.

2412. And you come before us both as a shipbroker and a shipowner?—Yes.

2413. May I ask if your brokerage business relates to many classes of goods, or is confined to a few?—It is very varied. We do coasting business—almost the smallest coasters—and we do North American business in chartering. Those are the largest boats we deal with for merely chartering; but the boats we have coming in to London are from the Baltic, the Continent, and the Mediterranean. We have grain steamers from certain ports. We have a good deal of grain and wood from the Baltic.

2414. I think that I understand that your shipowning interest attached rather to smaller vessels?—Yes.

2415. Have you a large fleet?—No; we run about two boats a week between London and South Wales.

2416. Are you appearing before us as a representative witness, or as speaking in your individual capacity?—I speak in my individual capacity.

2417. You are also a representative on the London County Council of a riverside district?—Yes.

2418. You said in your evidence: "At the time I am writing steamers with wood cargoes are waiting six to eight days outside the Surrey Commercial Docks for permission to enter owing to congestion of traffic." Is that within your own knowledge?—I had a boat at that time which was kept eight days.

2419. Does that mean now?—I suppose that would be three weeks ago. There was a boat kept eight days on one occasion, and I knew there were other boats kept five days.

2420. I only want to get your own knowledge?—That is direct evidence.

2421. Then as to the inequalities of the pilotage tariff, do those arise within your own personal experience?—Yes.

2422. Have any representations been made by your firm, either as brokers or shipowners, with regard to that matter?—I believe this matter came up, and I believe there was a commission upon the pilotage matter. I know my father sent in his evidence, but he was never called.

2423. That would be many years ago?—Yes.

2424. That is rather ancient history?—Yes.

2425. Can you give us anything more recent?—I do not know how we can represent. It is no use making representations to the Trinity House.

2426. I am not asking you how you can do it, but I am asking you if it has been done?—I cannot bear in mind that I have made any representation. I should not have known exactly how to set about it. Seeing that this Commission was appointed I took the opportunity of mentioning it.

2427. But you were rather waiting for an opening?—Yes. This subject of the inequalities has been very much in my mind for a great many years, and I have been glad of the opportunity to say something about it.

2428. Turning to the Tilbury docks, do you think they are too far by rail and cartage? Have you any personal experience of these docks at all?—Yes, I know Tilbury Docks well, and the state of the docks too. The pier on this side of the dock is in a very bad state. I have personal evidence of that.

2429. Then you do not concur with what other shipowners have said. I put it to them that if the railway communication was perfect, would they be satisfied? I put it assuming there was no complaint of the railway communication between Tilbury Dock and the warehouse, would they be satisfied?—I think it is the best dock in London if it were not for the distance, but I mean there are structural defects; there are cracks in the masonry.

2430. You do not mean that if the railway communication were perfect it would be too far?—The amount charged is too large. In the grain trade they would not take cargoes there. They would not consign contracts for delivery in Tilbury Docks.

2431. Do you think the distance of the Tilbury Docks, railway communication being perfect, is still a bar?—No, not with cheap communication. With cheap communication I should not think it was.

2432. It all depends on the rate?—Yes, it depends on the rate and the communication.

2433. Then you made an interesting comment on the phrase "cheap port and dear port." You pointed out that in one aspect London may be described as a cheap port, and in another aspect as an expensive port?—Yes. See 2350-1.

2434. That you adhere to?—Yes.

2435. It is not correct to describe it as a dear port, or as a cheap port, but you must take it from the particular aspect?—Yes.

2436. I think we gather clearly that although your interest lies chiefly in smaller vessels, you wish the thing to be regarded from the point of view of all?—Yes.

2437. Large and small indifferently?—Yes.

2438. Then again you made a very interesting comment about Antwerp. You indicate to us that the municipality supplies some funds and the central government supplies some funds. Have you the same thing at all in your mind, speaking as a member of the London County Council, with regard to what ought to be done with the port and docks of London?—I am not authorised to speak on behalf of the London County Council. See 2336-9.

2439. You are speaking purely as an individual?—Yes, purely as an individual. I think if money is sup-

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plied that it would be the way in which it would have to come. It would have to come through the County Council, or through the County Council and the Corporation.

2440. At all events, speaking as a representative of the ratepayers, which you are?—Yes.

2441. You see no difficulty personally. It is a very important question?—Of course, the question of rates is one that always affects the ratepayer, and it is one that is always not a popular one, but I think that London would be benefited by the increased trade of London and the improved port, and I think London should pay for it.

2442. You will understand that I am not wishing to extract any answer from you at all. I wish you to give your view?—That is the view that I have arrived at. I think it would be fair that in some degree some money should be supplied by the rates. I believe that in Antwerp something like two-thirds is supplied by the Imperial Government and one-third by the municipality.

2443. And on the ground that you have stated, that the community benefits?—Yes.

2444. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you any opinion as to whether the Exchequer should contribute as well as the County Council?—Yes, I certainly think it should.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) That goes without saying, but I put it not from the Exchequer point of view.

Mr. WILLIAM MARTEN SMITH called and examined.

Mr. W. M. Smith.

2445. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You are a member of the firm of W. M. Smith and Sons, wharfingers and general warehousekeepers?—Yes.

2446. You carry on business at Smith's Wharf, Queenhithe?—Yes.

2447. Where is that wharf situate?—It is above Southwark Bridge, on the north side.

2448. Your firm handle chiefly East India and China produce?—Yes.

2449. You are the Chairman of the Wharfingers', Warehousekeepers', and Granarykeepers' Association of the Port of London?—I am.

2450. How many members are connected with that Association?—There are 36 actual members, as far as I can remember at the moment—that means firms, of course.

2451. And I think they represent something like 67 wharves?—Yes, that is so.

2452. Will you give us your evidence please?—My Association on receipt of letters from the Secretary to the Commission, indicating points upon which they desired this Association to furnish evidence, took steps to procure same by circularising not only members of this Association, but also all other wharfingers from Westminster Bridge down to Greenwich on the south side of the river, and from Blackfriars Bridge to Silvertown on the north side. About 320 circulars were sent out to the different wharfingers and others, to which 124 replies were received, so that it has been impossible to procure all the information desired. I hand in a schedule showing the names of the firms so circularised, with the addresses, and the gross and rateable value of each wharf, together with the distance of such wharf either above or below London Bridge. The assessments are those given in the new valuation lists. At the end of this schedule will be found a summary indicating the total number of wharves within two miles above London Bridge, and of eight miles below London Bridge, together with the total gross and rateable assessments within a distance of each separate mile. The schedule includes all the Sufferance wharves and Legal quays, a list of which has already been furnished to the Commissioners by Mr. Fleming, of the Customs.

(*The witness handed in a schedule of wharves and waterside premises, with gross and rateable assessments, from Westminster Bridge to East Greenwich on south side, and Blackfriars Bridge to Silvertown on north side of river. See Appendix, 7th Day, No. 2.*)

2453. The information in this schedule relates to all the wharves?—Yes.

2454. Not merely to those who have given you replies, but it relates to all the wharves?—All the wharves within that distance on either side.

2455. Will you give us the substance of this schedule? I should like you to give us one or two points out of it that you think important?—I could give you the summaries to which I refer.

2456. What is the total gross value?—The total gross value is £415,005.

2457. What is the net rateable value?—£332,722. That is arrived at by setting forth the assessments within the different distances of miles north and south.

2458. The greater part is within the distance of two miles?—Yes, it would be.

2459. The total gross value within a distance of one mile is £103,500?—Yes.

2460. The total rateable value is £85,800?—Yes.

2461. Beyond that, but still within a distance of two miles, the gross total is £26,812, and the rateable value is £20,560?—Yes. That is above London Bridge.

2462. Will you give below London Bridge as well; will you state us the same figures?—Within the one mile area the gross value is £147,135, and the rateable value £119,278. Within two miles the gross value is £58,340, and the rateable value is £47,666.

2463. Beyond that of course the figures are somewhat smaller?—Yes, they diminish right away.

2464. This is information relating to all the wharves, and not merely to the 124 who have replied?—Yes, to all the wharves throughout the whole length of that distance. The wharves to which the 124 returns apply are of the total gross assessment of £238,486, and total rateable assessment of £197,057. The difference between the classes of wharves in regard to privileges, or legal status, has already been explained by Mr. Fleming. As to the aggregate length of quay accommodation at the wharves, it is shown from 110 returns to this question that the total length of river frontage occupied by such 110 wharves is 16,688 feet. Respecting the point as to "what proportion of wharves have depth of water sufficient for sea-going ships of varying depths of water to lie alongside," only 57 wharves made any return, with the result that these have depth of water varying from 10 to 30 feet. See 7465-6.

2465. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Does that mean at low water, do you know?—I think not; I should say it is at high water for the wharves; that is my impression certainly.

2466. You would not call 10ft. at high water sufficient for a sea-going ship?—No, not for sea-going ships. It was in reply to that question—we made application and that was the result; some wharves have only 10ft. at ordinary high water. As to warehouse accommodation, the returns to this question show that 95 wharves have a floor space of 10,163,206 superficial feet, five others make a return of 2,266,365 cubic feet, and five others (principally in the case of granaries) make returns showing a storage capacity of 25,800 tons. All the wharves have some kind of mechanical equipment. Of those making a return it appears that 69 wharves have hydraulic equipment, 10 wharves electrical equipment, 72 wharves steam equipment, and 22 wharves gas equipment, while some have both hydraulic, electric, steam and gas. In the majority of returns made the wharves appear to have either two or three forms of the above equipments. As far as this Association is aware there has been no difficulty about sufficient wharf and warehouse accommodation in the port. As business has increased the wharfingers have rebuilt or improved their premises to meet the increased demand of trade, and the natural law of supply and demand has had full play. From the replies received firms representing 77 wharves appear within the last ten years to have reconstructed or altered their premises at a total outlay of something like £1,084,570. The estimated amount of capital invested in premises, and the estimated value of such premises in the Port of London is a matter of considerable difficulty to arrive at. Many wharfingers object to give details under this head. The total sum estimated to be employed, both fixed and floating, in the businesses of wharfingers from 99 returns made, show a total of £7,830,758. As to the quantity of goods received at the wharves, 103 returns made show that the tonnage of goods received at these premises during the last 12 months amounts to something like 3,079,280 tons. Wharfingers receive all kinds of goods, and some acquire a business of a particular type. It is impossible to give further par-

ticulars under this head. Flour, rice, and grain in particular are very largely dealt with and stored at riverside wharf premises. Generally speaking, it is obvious that the wharves and granaries have, and always will possess great importance to merchants, from the fact that goods are warehoused in close proximity to the City and the markets. There is a general complaint amongst wharfingers of the difficulty experienced in getting overside delivery, and also as regards the lightermen. It is a general opinion, I think, amongst wharfingers that the privilege at present enjoyed by the Freemen of the Watermen's Company of acting as working lightermen is one that should be abolished, as it restricts the supply of men for the service required, and in a way which is extremely disadvantageous to the employers of their labour. Speaking for our Association, I have not heard any complaint of inadequate accommodation for the storage of "dutiable" goods. There is, as far as I know, ample accommodation for dutiable goods, where such accommodation is required by merchants and others. The matters generally affecting the wharfingers are the frequent delays in the discharge of cargo. These delays arise mainly from want of sufficient quay space for the delivery of goods into craft as they are discharged from the ships. As a consequence it sometimes happens that delivery cannot be made into craft until the ship is unloaded and has been moved from her berth. These observations, however, do not apply equally to all docks or stations. We object to any provision that would throw an unequal burden upon merchants and traders importing goods, arising from the exercise of their legitimate rights as to the disposal of the same, and, therefore, especially to the proposed restrictions as regards the free water way of the port, which has been secured in every Dock Act which has been passed, and was made a condition of granting the privileges and facilities under which the docks were established. We consider also the terms proposed to be enforced in the Bill recently introduced into the House of Commons, even if there were any just ground for the demand, onerous and oppressive, as they would impose a charge on lighters and goods which would on an average be equivalent to the cost of lighterage. We say, however, that no service is rendered upon which such a charge could be fairly claimed. We consider that the traders of the Port of London should not be subject to these recurring attempts to re-open and set aside a settlement which has been solemnly confirmed in every Act of Parliament since the docks were established, and upon the basis of which their privileges were granted. The abrogation of this condition would be a manifest injustice to the owners and occupiers of wharves which have been re-erected, maintained, and increased on the faith of the promises of the Acts governing the regulation of the docks, and confirmed from time to time by Parliament. The remedy for some of the existing grounds of complaint would be—(1) An improvement in appliances and accommodation for the discharge of ships, and the delivery of their cargo. The system of jetties at the Victoria Docks appears to be the most satisfactory and expeditious; and the methods adopted in some parts of the Tilbury Docks give similar facilities. (2) The placing of the waterway of the river and also the docks as forming a part thereof, under the control of a central authority—possibly the Conservancy—with enlarged powers, and increased means. This would appear the more necessary, because the required improvements not only consist in better dock accommodation, but also, and perhaps especially, in a greatly improved waterway and approach to the port. The call for reformation arises not so much from an increased trade, but from great changes in the methods of trade, the altered and enlarged construction of ships to meet present requirements. It is not possible that a mere trading corporation can be called upon to perform the required works, which are, so to speak, municipal in character, even if they had the means at their command, as they would be for the benefit of the whole trading community, and are demanded in order that London should maintain its position as a great trading centre.

2467. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is there anything you wish to add to that statement?—There is nothing I wish to add; I am ready to answer any questions if you have any to put.

2468. We hardly propose to ask you any questions on the subject of the proposals for increasing dues that have lately been made, as that is a subject we propose to deal with later. You must therefore take it that your evidence on that subject, although we do not ask questions about it just now, is reserved for later consideration?—Then you do not wish to trouble me any further now?

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2469. We have some questions to put as to the information which you have given. With reference to the capital invested, which you derive from 99 returns, you say that these 99 returns show a total capital invested of £7,831,000?—Yes.

2470. Looking at the proportion of rateable value of those who have made returns compared with those who have not made returns, do you think that this sum might be doubled as the value of the capital invested in the wharves of London?—One would require to look through the wharves that have not made returns; it possibly might be so.

2471. You said that the 124 returns which you have received include a rateable value of £197,000, and the total rateable value of all the wharves put together is £333,000, but these returns as to capital invested relate to a still smaller number than the 124?—Yes.

2472. So that it would seem that a very large part is omitted in these 124, and still more in these 99 returns?—Yes.

2473. You would not like to make a statement as to whether it would be proportionate in any way?—I do not think it would be doubled; I do not think that that which is not returned will be equal to what we have returned; at least, I should judge not, judging from the character of the property itself. What I said just now was that I could not tell positively without looking through to see which were omitted in the returns.

2474. You would have to make a considerable addition in any case?—Oh, yes, a very considerable addition.

2475. Do you think you could give us further information, to the best of your ability, upon these points upon a subsequent occasion?—I am sure I could.

2476. Will you endeavour to do so?—Yes, I will, with pleasure. What you require is that, looking at the rateable value, and so on, of the property which has not made a return of its capital, we should estimate about what worth it might be.

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and 2649-50.

2477. The best you can give, or whether you think it would be a considerable sum; the best that you can do?—Yes.

2478. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With reference to what you said as to "The placing of the waterway of the river, and also the docks as forming a part thereof, under the control of a central authority." By that do you mean a trust?—It might be a trust.

2479. Would you advocate a trust or a board similar, say, to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—My idea in that was that if the Conservancy had the powers, and if they were to carry out the dredging of the river in order to give a deeper channel, as the water of the docks and the river we consider to be one, it would perhaps come under such an authority as theirs; but I do not mean to say necessarily it should be the Conservancy, but some trust or some body with Parliamentary authority to carry out the work.

2480. Would you propose to put wharves also under the control of such a body?—It is the waterway and the access to the ships in the Port of London that I am looking at. I have no wish to put the wharves or the dock warehouses under the authority. My idea there is simply the waterway and all that appertains to it.

2481. Now with regard to barges. Do you not think that they gain great advantages from the still water of the docks in loading and unloading in safety over performing the same work in the river?—You can hardly compare the work that they do in the river with that which they do in the docks, because if there is a ship in the river it is small enough to lie in mid-stream, or so near mid-stream that they can very easily come alongside and take away their goods. In the docks with these large ships, especially that we are now getting into the Port of London, you require, of course, necessarily a larger number of craft, because the ship requires that every craft should be in attendance. It is better, of course, lying in the still water of the docks.

2482. What I want to arrive at is whether you do not consider that the facilities for the barges carrying out their work are greater in the docks than in the case of

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working in a tidal river?—Yes, I think probably they are.

2483. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You said: "The matters generally affecting the wharfingers are the frequent delays in the discharge of cargoes." Then you pointed out the reasons for the delays, and then you continued: "These observations, however, do not apply equally to all docks or stations." Could you at all indicate where they do apply to them?—I rather indicated that a little later on when speaking of "An improvement in appliances," and I referred to the jetties in the Victoria Docks as being an admirable plan.

2484. Those are admirable, but where is it that they are not admirable?—They are not admirable wherever there is insufficient room given for the berth of the ship and the simultaneous loading in the craft of goods coming out of the ship.

2485. I want to get out where the shoe pinches?—It is unnecessary, I apprehend, in any one of these docks really. It occurs, say, in the Albert Dock where a ship is put alongside if she is a very large vessel, and she is berthed close to another ship, and there is no space there for the craft.

2486. I want to fix it geographically if I can. You said: "These observations, however, do not apply equally to all docks or stations." Can you tell us where the shoe pinches worst?—It pinches worst in the Albert Dock, where the accommodation for the ships and the craft combined is not sufficient, that is to say, in quay space. But I was going to say, if you will allow me, that over and over again we do have the accommodation in the Albert Dock so as to go on simultaneously loading in the lighters, which is an immense advantage in unloading ships. The sheds are not blocked up in the way they otherwise would be; very often, in eight times out of ten, or nine times out of ten, we are going on loading simultaneously where there is quay room. Where the delay occurs is where there is not that quay room for the craft to receive the goods as they come out of the ship.

2487. Where is that?—The Albert Dock really is the largest dock we have, and almost the principal dock for these large ships, excepting Tilbury.

2488. Does it apply in any other dock?—It does not apply in the same way. If there were more quay space allowed in the Albert Dock for unloading the ships, it would make a great deal of difference.

2489. Then it mainly applies in the Albert Dock?—It does as far as my experience is concerned certainly.

2490. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I noticed that you lay considerable stress upon proximity to the City?—Yes, that is so.

2491. Does that apply, in your judgment, to the docks as well as the wharves?—It would apply to the nearer docks.

2492. Would not the inconvenience of being as near to the City as possible apply as much to the docks as to the wharves?—Yes, certainly, the nearer docks and the dock warehouses as well; they are most conveniently placed.

2493. As near as can be, having regard to the sea access to ships?—The dock warehouses we are now speaking of are not near to the river at all, but wherever it is possible that trade requires that the goods should be brought up as near to the City as possible; that is an advantage to the merchants.

2494. I did not know whether your answer applied to bringing goods up in ships or in lighters?—That is really as against the necessity of bringing goods up in lighters. The docks themselves are obliged to lighter up a great quantity of their goods, because they must bring them to the City.

2495. That leads me to ask you this question. Can you give us the relative cost per ton of lightering from Tilbury as compared with lightering from the Albert and London Docks?—You might put on 25 or 30 per cent certainly, but we are in this difficulty, if you will allow me to explain. Where you have ships in the Tilbury Docks, a lighterman requires that he should be paid a minimum charge, and if the minimum charge is not covered by the tonnage on the goods, you are very much at a higher cost in regard to the Tilbury Docks, because the minimum charge in the Tilbury Docks is very much higher than that in the Albert Dock.

2496. Could you put it into money per ton?—Not exactly; it is very difficult. Being a minimum charge it might be a small quantity of goods you are bringing up, and the percentage per ton might be very high.

2497. That would be for a separate parcel. I wanted to get it rather as a matter of experience over the whole of your business?—I can only speak of my own business in regard to that. I am not aware precisely what other wharfingers may be paying, or what their arrangements are; I should say from 25 to 30 per cent.

2498. More for all lightered up from Tilbury?—Yes.

2499. Can you give us any price per ton as an average price on which to calculate the 25 to 30 per cent.?—Not to cover all prices of goods, because they are very various.

2500. Can you give me an average of your business?—Somewhere about 3s., if you take the Tilbury Docks and the maximum charges into account.

2501. 3s. from Tilbury?—Yes.

2502. Do you mean 25 per cent. less than 3s. from the India Docks, or the London Docks?—I beg your pardon—not from Tilbury; I thought you were asking me the average price I should have to pay, including Tilbury. Tilbury would run more like into 3s. 6d. with the minimum charges, and perhaps about 2s. 6d. for the other docks.

2503. Approximately, merely for the sake of getting some figure—about 1s. a ton more?—Yes.

2504. Is that 1s. a ton more in gross weight or by measurement?—Gross weight.

2505. Can you give us any information as to the percentage of goods either from the wharves of the association represented by you here, or from your own wharf, which eventually find their way on to the railway trucks of the country?—For delivery through the country?

2506. Yes, away from London. What is the proportion of goods which is delivered in London and consumed in London, as compared with what is sent away by rail?—Very little of that which wharfingers handle would be sent away by rail. Wharfingers only occasionally have an order from their merchant to send off a certain lot of goods that he might be in a hurry to send off by rail, but for the most part they move it up to their premises.

2507. That is not my point. Having got the goods into your premises, what proportion goes away direct out of London for consumption in what we call the provinces, as compared with what is carted and consumed in London?—That is rather a difficult question. You say "consumed in London." The greater part of what we receive goes away by land; I am speaking now for my own wharf. There is a little to be shipped off which has to go for transhipment, or to be shipped for some foreign vessels, but I really could not answer the question in regard to the quantity that is sent away into the country, because we do not know the destination. We deliver simply to the wagons or carts that are applying for the goods, and we do not know the destination at all.

2508. You do not know how much goes to the various railway stations and how much does not?—No, I cannot tell you that off-hand at all; it will take a long time to find out. I could tell where railway carriers have taken away goods, but I do not know even then if they are going into the country.

2509. Is there any possibility of getting a return of that sort?—It would be very difficult.

2510. It is an important question?—We will endeavour to do so; we will make inquiry to see if it is at all possible, and furnish you with it if we can.

2511. It is rather an important question to find how much goes by rail from the Port of London and how much is used within the ambit of London?—I have an impression in my mind, but I should not like to speak off-hand, because it is not evidence—it is merely a passing impression. We will bring it before the association, and see whether our Secretary can in any way get it out.

2512. If you can give us some approximate figures, I think it would be very useful?—We will endeavour to do so.

2513. The Commission is sitting for some time, you understand?—Thank you, I quite understand

2514. You said: "These delays arise mainly from want of sufficient quay space for the delivery of goods into craft"?—Yes.

2515. Does that mean that the goods are first of all put on to the quays, and then put back into the

craft?—There are two ways in which they are delivered to us. Some go over-side.

2516. Without going on to the quay at all?—Without going on to the quay at all. A great deal sometimes does. It depends on circumstances. I am speaking of quay space; it has to have room, and that a craft may be lying alongside, then, as the goods are landed alongside on the wharf, they are put into the craft.

2517. At one operation, do you mean?—Yes, it is common, wherever they can possibly do it, to lift the goods out of the hold of the ship and on to the quay, and then to drop them into the craft, and they are out of the way at once. Wherever that space can be afforded there is rapid delivery; we get the things up then within three or four days, or at most a week.

2518. Are we right in assuming that at the present time, if that operation is carried out, the wharfingers pay nothing for the use of the quay?—The ship uses the quay and pays for the use of the quay under the bill of lading.

2519. But do they pay for the quay when the goods are going into barges in that way?—I have no doubt they do. The goods are either discharged by the ship, as in the case of the P. and O. steamers, for instance; they use the wharf——. *Mr. W. M. Smith.* 29 Nov. 1900.

2520. That is their own wharf?—Yes, that is their own wharf. Then if the dock company is working the ship, they would simply land the goods and deliver them to the craft at the rate that was paid by the ship. They do it for the ship.

2521. You cannot tell whether the ship pays for it?—The dock is discharging the ship; they certainly pay for it.

2522. Do they pay for the use of the quay?—It is included in the delivery rate.

2523. I was under the impression that they did not?—They do to that extent, because that is part of the appliances by which they are enabled to do it, just as the cranes would be.

Mr. HUGH COLIN SMITH called and examined.

2524. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You are a Director of the Bank of England?—Yes.

2525. And you have been a Governor of the Bank?—Yes.

2526. You come here as a partner in the firm trading as "The Proprietors of Hay's Wharf," who are the lessees of Hay's Wharf and Dock, Beal's Wharf, and Cotton's Wharf, wharfingers, master lightermen, carmen, etc.?—Yes.

2527. You have been engaged in this business for many years?—Yes.

2528. You have prepared some evidence for us, I think, which we should like you to give now?—The appointment of the Commission arose from the fact of the dock companies bringing Bills into Parliament to relieve themselves of expenditure they were no longer able to bear, and I venture, therefore, first of all to tender evidence that there are great exaggerations in their statements on this head. If there were no wharves and no lighters, the dock companies could not accommodate the business which comes into the port, and their own lighterage, bringing goods from the lower docks to the warehouses of the upper docks, far exceeds the lighterage of any other establishment. They, therefore, benefit by the expenditure necessitated by lighters frequenting the docks as much as their competitors. Nothing of late years should have tended more to bring back prosperity to the dock companies than the establishment of the Tea Clearing House, and the various Produce Committees formed to afford increased facilities for dealing with goods imported into London. Personally, I do not believe that the trade of the port has been much affected by the inability of a few large vessels to come up the river. This might operate in time, but the trade is so much more influenced by banking and financial facilities, and markets, that in my opinion these far outweigh other considerations. I am strongly of opinion that the management of the river should be put under one representative Board. As at present constituted, the Trinity House, the Thames Conservancy, and the Watermen's Company are the authorities. The maintenance of compulsory pilotage in the River Thames constitutes a grievance which has for many years been keenly felt. If a vessel navigating the river under a compulsory pilot does damage to a barge, the shipowner is exempt from liability, provided the officers and crew can show that they gave the pilot the assistance he was entitled to, and the pilot is not responsible for damage resulting from his negligence or want of skill, beyond his pilotage fee, and the bond of £100 into which he enters with the Trinity House. If, therefore, by the negligence of the pilot of a ship, a barge containing goods to the value of some thousands of pounds is run down, there is practically no redress, but if a barge does damage to a ship when under pilotage the shipowner can sue the owner of the barge for the full amount of the damage, and can in most cases recover his loss. In view of the constantly increasing steamship traffic on the 25 or 26 miles between Gravesend and London Bridge, over which lighters are continually being navigated, and upon which these conditions obtain, I submit that in the general interest of the port, as well as the interest of the lighterage trade, compulsory pilotage should be so amended that this great injustice I have mentioned may be removed. The Watermen's Company is an anachronism, and a constant source of impediment to the trade of the port. In former days it may have had its uses, but now that crafts are mostly moved by tugs, it is not necessary that the men upon them should be able to navigate them with oars. The number of freemen has never been increased with the growth of the trade; and it is not reasonable that a body of, say, 7,000 men should be able by strikes to strangle the trade whenever they choose. I am Chairman of the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited. If I send a barge to an import ship for linseed for the company's mills at Rotherhithe, I must employ freemen of the river, so many according to the tonnage of the barge, etc., but if I send a barge for the company's mills at Rochester to the same ship, I can employ whom I choose, and no one can assert that the voyage to Rochester does not involve more risk to the owners and crew than a voyage to Rotherhithe under steam. I am strongly of opinion that the rules and regulations of the Watermen's Company have for some years only been used as a means of legalised extortion, and I hope that, in view of the evidence that will be tendered to the Commission upon this subject, the Commission will see fit to recommend the abolition of the privileges of the company, and the throwing open of the river. I think it is very important that the Customs' officers in the warehouses should work increased hours. I believe they are not well paid, but 9 till 4, from the 1st November to the 1st March, is not a reasonable day's work. The effect of this is that under modern conditions of business, warehouse-keepers are unable to get their work done, so as to meet the requirements of the markets, within the limits of the legal hours. They are thus compelled to pay largely for overtime for the officers, in order to finish their work, with the result that the charges borne by the goods are correspondingly increased. *Mr. H. C. Smith.* 29 Nov. 1900.

2529. Is there anything further that you wish to say?—No, I do not think so.

2530. We must refrain from asking you now any questions about the Bills of the Joint Committee to which you referred at the beginning, because we shall have to discuss those afterwards. Have you formed any idea of how the representative board that you refer to should be constituted?—What I think is that the water in the docks should be put under such a representative board, to be managed by representatives of the various trades, somewhat analogous to the Thames Conservancy, and that the warehouses should be left in the hands of the dock companies to carry on trade as other wharfingers do.

2531. Do you think it would be an easy matter to separate the dock business proper from that of the warehouse business?—Quite so, just the same as my own business is separated from the dock company.

2532. The suggestion has been made that the business of the wharves should be put under the central authority, and warehouses as well as dock business should be put under that?—It would be a large job.

2533. You do not agree with that?—Not at all.

2534. Not merely is it a large job, but it is an interference with private enterprise to a large extent?—Yes,

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I think so; and I think it would be almost impossible because its magnitude is so great; and really and truly a wharfinger's business is principally made successful or unsuccessful by looking into the minutest details. It is very difficult to carry on a large business of this sort at all; it must be done on a small scale more or less, and every item looked into most carefully. I think if it was done on a large scale it would be ruined.

2535. You have not formulated any plan by which the warehouse business of the docks could be separated from the other business?—The plan is the same as in my own business. I carry on a warehousing business; I go and fetch the goods from the docks. We have a very small dock of our own in which we can take some vessels.

2536. You do take some vessels, I believe?—Yes; I see no difficulty.

2537. Would you have any objection to that part of the river—the dock that you have—being put under the central authority?—It is hardly of sufficient importance, I think.

2538. Are there not some private docks which are important? They take sea-going vessels to a large extent, do they not?—Yes, they do.

2539. Would they be put under the central authority?—I do not see any necessity for interfering with the ships that come up the river and lie at the various wharves. They pay no charges for the use of the water. Their presence or their absence does not affect the question of the dock companies not being remunerative.

2540. I merely wished to ascertain what are the limits of your ideas on the subject—what you propose?—There are a great many ships which cannot come up the water towards London Bridge, and a great many will not come up the river; they will not lie aground. There are few wharves—there are only two or three—where ships of any great draught of water can lie afloat at low water.

2541. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Of course it depends upon what is meant by sea-going ships, does it not? But you say that there are very few wharves that can take sea-going ships?—I say there are very few wharves where sea-going ships can lie afloat at low water.

2542. At dead low water, you mean?—Yes. For instance, in my own place I do have a good many ships, but they all lie aground.

2543. Do the Aberdeen boats ground?—I cannot say about them.

2544. Do you know whether the Dundee boats ground?—I do not know. I am not quite sure whether the Aberdeen boats and the Dundee boats do not load in the stream and finish off at high water alongside.

2545. As a matter of fact, I think they have a jetty, and they load at the jetty, and the jetty is part of the wharf; or some of them do?—Yes.

2546. I suppose the law of pilotage that you commented upon is one which affects every river, is it not?—I do not know.

2547. Is not the Thames a very peculiar river, from the immense quantity of barge traffic?—Yes.

2548. There are very few rivers that are at all comparable to the Thames in regard to the immense quantity of barge traffic?—I should think none.

2549. You said that wharfingers are compelled to pay largely for overtime for the Customs. Could you give us any figures as to what you and other people have paid during the year?—I have not brought the figures with me; I could get them out directly. It does come to a considerable sum, and it is paid in a very peculiar way. You pay so much for the officer that you have in attendance, and then you pay so much for other superior officers. That increases to a very large rate if you employ them two or three hours. You pay so much for the man who comes, and you pay so much for somebody else to look after him, and you pay so much for somebody else who looks after the other man. These other two gentlemen do not turn up at all, and then you pay them for cab hire and all sorts of things, and it comes to a good deal. I could not tell you the details, but I could tell you what we pay per year.

See 10509.

2550. We should like to know what you, as a wharfinger, have paid?—If you will allow me I will send it to you. Do you want it for the last five years, or when?

2551. For the last five years, if you could. Perhaps one year would be exceptional; five years would give us a fair average?—I will have it made out.

(*The Witness subsequently supplied tables as to the overtime paid to officers of Her Majesty's Customs by the proprietors of Hay's Wharf during the five years ending Nov. 30, 1900. See Appendix, 7th Day, No. 3.*)

2552. Could you give us it in proportion to the volume of trade? It would not give us very much information if it was not in some proportion to the business done?—Do you wish us to send you our entries of all goods, do you mean, for five years?

2553. I did not mean that precisely. We wanted to know, rather, how much was paid for overtime to the Customs in proportion to the amount of business done at some particular wharf—or if you can spread it over a large number of wharves and give us the aggregate of both—to show what relation it bears to the value of the goods, so that we may at any rate know what we are talking about—whether it is 1 per cent., 2 per cent., or more?—Quite so; I will endeavour to do so.

2554. You recognise what we want?—Yes.

2555. But you say that it is a large amount?—It is a considerable amount; and it operates in another way. All the men are paid by the hour, and if you do not pay these Customs House officers overtime they would earn very poor money in the day. It operates in that way. It is a very undesirable thing, I think.

2556. Do you think it affects at all the time taken in discharging a ship?—I am not quite sure about that. I think that the hours for the people on board ship are longer. It is the people in the bonded warehouse who weigh goods, and the people who have to lock the place up.

2557. What you call the inside staff. That, perhaps, would not affect the question of the time taken to discharge cargo?—You see the difficulty of your question. You have the locker who has to put the Customs House lock on the bonded warehouse. He has to stop two or three hours a day. You pay him so much an hour for stopping, but that bears no relation to whether you have 50,000 packages of tea or 200 packages of tea in the place; it is all the same.

2558. Then the amount of overtime you talked about does not refer to the amount of goods coming out of the lighters?—It does to a certain extent, because where they are bonded goods the place has to be kept open. It is extremely difficult to explain, but you pay so much for the first hour and a great deal more for the second hour, and a great deal more for the third hour, because other superior officers come in for their share.

2559. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You advocate the abolition of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

2560. And throwing open the river?—Yes.

2561. Lighters would have to be under some body for licensing, I presume?—Are you talking of licensing of the lighter or of the licensing of the men?

2562. You are quite right; I see your point. I was confusing the two?—But I do not see that there is any necessity for licenses.

2563. Lighters, of course, are surveyed at present in the ordinary way, I presume?—When a lighter is first launched she is measured, and the Watermen's Company decide as to the number of men. It comes within a certain tonnage, but beyond that there is no licensing of the craft at all; any craft could do the work. All we want is, that as we have to run the risk we should be allowed to employ anybody we like; now we cannot.

Recalled 10403.

(Adjourned to Tuesday next, December 4th, at 12 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

EIGHTH DAY.

Tuesday, 4th December 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (in the Chair.)

Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Captain HENRY VAUGHAN HART-DAVIS, called, and examined.

2564. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are a partner in the firm of Hoare, Wilson and Co., wharfingers?—That is so.

2565. And you have been a partner in that firm for the past 16 years?—That is so.

2566. Will you proceed with your evidence?—Our wharves are situated on the south side of the river, a short distance below London Bridge. They are bonded for all goods with the exception of tobacco. The produce landed and worked there consists mainly of coffee, cocoa, spices, Singapore produce, tallow, tin, copper, and Colonial produce generally. From 30,000 to 40,000 tons are landed annually. The wharves are fitted with hydraulic machinery. The floor area of Willson's Wharf is, waterside, 57,000 superficial feet, landside, 102,000 superficial feet, and of Symon's Wharf, waterside, 18,000 superficial feet, landside, 152,000 superficial feet. The respective frontages to the river are 120ft. and 118ft. Owing to the comparatively small frontage a ship-alongside business is not cultivated, although there is sufficient water, that is to say, 16 to 18ft.; the produce, therefore, is brought up mainly by lighters. I am of opinion that the toll which the London and India Docks Joint Committee proposed by their recent Bill in Parliament to levy, would operate very prejudically on the trade of the Port of London. London rates and charges have already been made the subject of complaint, and it would not be possible, under present conditions, to reduce them, whilst this toll, if enforced, would increase them very considerably. Thus with coffee, under the operation of this toll, my wharf charges would be increased 8½ per cent., with sugar about 25 per cent., and with tin or copper over 50 per cent. Perhaps I may state here that I have taken these figures out on the consolidated rates. I have taken them at 1s. 6d. per ton, and I am perfectly aware that the dock companies state that that is the maximum charge that they propose to make. They are taking powers for that as a maximum amount, but I submit that we have to protect ourselves against that maximum.

2567. We do not wish to go into the dock companies' case?—I was only trying to explain my figures. Many millions of money have been sunk by private enterprise alongside the waterside, on the faith of free water and Parliamentary consistency, and this expenditure would be absolutely imperilled. May I state my views with reference to a tax on goods in that aspect?

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2568. I think there is no objection to that?—My idea is this: that the water in the docks has been dedicated for ever to the public, according to Lord Cardwell's statement.

2569. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That was a speech in the House of Commons?—Yes. I think that is public property, is it not?

2570. Certainly, but it was not a statement *ex officio.* It was merely a statement made in the House of Commons?—Yes, it was merely a statement made in the House of Commons, as a member. It appears to me that it would be equally equitable to charge goods in wagons and in carts as on the water; and if a new authority were constituted to take charge of the dock waters, and their business possibly, and that new body conceived that it was necessary in the interests of trade to put a toll upon barges, I submit that that could not be equitably met by a charge on goods. If the public who have received this freedom of water choose to give up that freedom, which of course they can do through Parliament, I submit that charge ought not to be put upon one industry. It ought to be made a tax upon the whole of the rateable value of London, raised, if necessary, by precept.

2571. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Do you suggest that the water of the dock should be separated from the warehouses?—Later on I do.

2572. But that is what you are talking of just now?—Yes. The Port of London, in my opinion, is suffering from many adverse conditions. The docks are situated too far from the centre of commerce. The appliances for loading and unloading on to quay and into lighters are not altogether up to date. The river requires deeper dredging. The warehouse accommodation for goods, though ample, is too much scattered. Further facilities for road and railway transport are necessary. The delays now experienced in London are unreasonable. Thus, to compare Southampton with London (and of my total landings in 1899 one-fifth came from Southampton and four-fifths from the docks). I will give you a few examples, taken at random from my ship entry book:—

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Name of Ship.	Port.	Date of Entry.	Date of Completion.	Number of Packages.	Days.
"Don"	Southampton	12th October 1900	22nd October 1900	2,300	10
"Orinoco"	,,	30th August ,,	7th September ,,	2,300	8
"Para"	,,	18th July ,,	27th July ,,	1,500	9
"Trent"	,,	16th August ,,	24th Aug. ,,	750	8
"Mazagon"	London "A"	28th August 1900	10th September 1900	250	12
"Sobraon"	,, "A"	31st August ,,	18th September ,,	600	18
"Stentor"	,, "A"	6th September ,,	18th September ,,	4,000	12
"Clan Mattheson"	,, "T"	19th September ,,	1st October ,,	400	12
"Calchas"	,, "A"	20th September ,,	2nd October ,,	1,300	12
"Antenor"	,, "A"	14th August ,,	23rd October ,,	800	9

I only wish to point out what my experience has been against the docks in London as compared with Southampton. I get very much better despatch from Southampton than I do from London, and I have tried to compare like with like.

2573. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Speaking with regard to the Table, what does "Date of completion" mean?—Arrival at my wharf. Of course, from Southampton goods have to be brought up by rail to Nine Elms in locked vans, and then they have to be lightered down to my wharf.

2574. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) How long does that take?—That varies a good deal. The only way I can check it is by the first date of entry and the final completion. The result to me is that despite that disadvantage I get the goods with greater despatch, and also it would appear to me from the point of view of the importer that Southampton is two days short of London in the length of the voyage of the ship. Then, continuing my evidence, the present position of the lightermen is anomalous and out of date. Formerly they were required to navigate their barges in a narrower and shallower river; now the barges are mainly brought up the river under tugs. Their monopoly should be abolished, and the freedom of the river assured, subject to registration by a central authority. There are other trade customs that in my opinion operate adversely to London, as compared with other ports, namely, our antiquated methods of weighing and taring goods. I am quite aware that these customs are not the subject of legislative enactment, but in my opinion they do operate very prejudicially to London. Bags, say of coffee, in London are weighed singly, and the turn of the scale is, therefore, entirely against the importer; on the Continent and in Liverpool such bags are weighed in drafts of 5 or 10 as the case may be. Similarly, in taring, the bags are weighed separately, and a fraction over a pound is taken as a pound Thus a bag weighing 3lbs. is tared as 3lbs., but one weighing, say, 3lbs. 3oz. is tared as 4lbs., involving a loss to the importer of 13oz. of coffee on every such bag. The trade custom of "draft allowance," I am informed, is prejudicial to London. May I state here that I have submitted this point to a very well known produce broker in London, a man of the very largest experience. It is not for me to suggest, but I do hope that some members of the London Produce Brokers' Association will give evidence before this Commission, and with your permission I would read a letter from a gentleman—I do not know that I am entitled to give his name, but I would hand the letter to you, my Lord—on that point of weighing, which is rather important.

2575. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Do you wish to put the letter in?—Yes.

2576. Then I think we must have the whole letter?—Must I give the name?

2577. Yes, we must have the whole letter or nothing?—I do not know that I have his authority. I hope that he will be here to give his evidence.

2578. Then, perhaps, we shall have the pleasure of hearing him later?—In case he is not called, I think I will take upon myself to put the letter in.

2579. Very well?—"Dear Captain Hart-Davis: 'I quite agree this as regards weights. The loss here to importers is also the ounces on gross; thus: 1cwt. 3qrs. 12lbs. 12ozs. is called 1cwt. 3qrs. 12lbs., so they often lose one-half to three-quarters of a pound a package in gross and in tare. I think all weights gross and tare should be taken to half-pounds." There I entirely agree with him. "Under 8ozs. to lower weight, over to higher weight, and returned to the half pound. These little variations often mean one-half per cent." Then he goes on later in the letter with reference to a statement that I make later in my evidence. Shall I read that as well?

2580. If you please?—"I see no real and final remedy till the whole landing, housing, working, etc., is in the hands of a public authority, one ready to take the ways of our foreign rivals and all nations into account, who will send men to learn what goes on elsewhere, and place London on equal terms. Yours very truly, S. Figgis." Mr. Figgis is a gentleman of the very largest and widest experience in the City of London, and his firm is one of the very highest standing among produce brokers. I am fully in accord with my colleagues, interested in the wharfing business, in their opinion that the control of the waterways and quays at the London docks should be taken in hand by a trust as suggested; such a trust would be of the greatest value to London. All profits made, after meeting interest charges and obligations, should be put into the river in the shape of improved accommodation and better appliances, and the river should be deepened. These improvements a trust, able to raise money at a low rate of interest, and having no shareholders to consider, could indubitably effect, but I cannot refrain from recording my own individual opinion that a much wider and bolder scheme involving a trust to embrace all waterside interests could, by effecting enormous economies, offer such inducements to merchants and shippers in the shape of the most up-to-date appliances and methods, and low charges and rates, as would lead them to prefer London to any other port, and not only arrest the present decadence of London as a port, but inaugurate a new era of prosperity. I had rather anticipated a request that was made by the Chairman at the last meeting of your Commission to Mr. Marten Smith, with reference to the capital embarked in the wharfing business, and I had endeavoured to get out some statistics with reference to that. I have made an estimate of the value and income of the docks and wharfs, which I will hand in.

See 2469-77 and 2649-50.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the estimated value and income of the London docks and wharves. See Appendix, 8th Day, No. 1.*)

I have endeavoured in these figures to arrive at what I consider to be, as nearly as possible, the valuation of the dock assets and their present values, as checked by a leading broker in London, to see what the money involved in a scheme such as I would suggest amounts to.

2581. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) These figures about the dock company are taken from their printed returns, I suppose?—Yes, and the Stock Exchange.

2582. The amount of capital is taken from their printed returns?—Yes.

2583. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you considered whether they agree with the information which has been given by the dock companies to this Commission?—I have not gone into that.

2584. The dock companies have stated their capital to this Commission, and I observe that their figures do not agree with yours?—Perhaps that could be checked over by the secretary. I got them from the best information obtainable at the time.

2585. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) I think you only put forward these figures with a view of suggesting what in your mind is a proper figure for any future capitalisation of the Trust?—I wanted to show that my view of a wider and bolder trust was within the bounds of possibility.

2586. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) For instance, you give the total capital of the dock companies, including the Surrey Commercial Dock and Millwall Dock, as £17,720,530 approximate value?—The approximate value on the 20th November.

2587. The Joint Committee claim that their value is from £18,000,000 to £19,000,000?—That, I think, is the nominal value.

2588. The actual value?—On the market?

2589. To a large extent the real value which they would claim. I am not disputing the question of the market value?—I was merely taking the market value from one of the leading brokers on the market—the Stock Exchange. I do not wish to press the point at all if I am not in order.

2590. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) We are only dealing with questions of fact?—I only wanted to suggest that the thing was possible.

2591. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You are a wharfinger, and I see you give some figures with reference to wharves. I think those figures would be valuable?—With reference to the capital involved in the wharves, we have had official and confidential returns from 99 wharves, showing £7,830,758. From the balance of the wharves with whom we corresponded —221—we got no returns. Some of them were naturally reluctant to send in returns of the capital involved, and they did not thoroughly understand the position, so I have been obliged there, in estimating, to take the gross rateable values of those wharves, and put them at an arbitrary figure of purchase—say twenty-five years. That, of course, is purely arbitrary, and must be so, but that would make a gross rateable value, leaving out working capital, of £5,310,475, or a total minimum working capital in the wharves of £13,141,233. Assuming these values to be approximately correct, the total value of docks and wharves would be £30,861,763, and the annual interest required on a 3 per cent. basis would be £925,853. Then, with reference to the income earned, I had to take an arbitrary sum as the amount that the wharf would probably earn, and I take it as an assumption that no private undertaking could be carried on at a less interest per annum than 5 per cent. If a man could not earn 5 per cent. on money he put in a wharf, he would probably go out of the business, because he could earn more than that, probably, outside. Taking 5 per cent. as the minimum interest earned by the wharves, the combined earnings would equal £657,061; then, adding to that the average assumed income of the docks as above £688,824, it gives a total of £1,345,885. No doubt, the docks and wharves may not necessarily be acquired at their absolute ground values. If they were acquired, they would have to be acquired more or less compulsorily, and therefore a certain sum would have to be added on that account. But in these figures I wish to show that, as far as I have been able to gauge them, they show a workable margin.

2592. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Is there any instance in which the yearly accounts of any wharf are published?—There may be one or two in the case of limited liability companies, but not to my knowledge.

2593. Therefore, you are not prepared to put in any statement as to the profits made by any wharfingers?—No; I could not. You must act on an assumption there. May I just suggest what my idea of the trust should be, if such a trust were formed?

2594. Yes?—I suggest a Port of London Trust—(*a*) To control the waterways, quays, docks, and public warehouses of the Port of London. (*b*) Representatives on the Council from the Corporation of London, the Thames Conservancy, from the docks, from shipowners, from wharfingers, from merchants, from brokers. (*c*) To purchase the whole of the docks and public wharf interest in the port, under a guarantee from the Corporation of London, together with, as security, the freehold of the various buildings and undertakings. (*d*) The loan to be raised at par, on a 3 per cent. basis, and after paying interest, cost of management, etc., all profits made to be employed in improving the navigable channel and dock and warehouse accommodation, and in reducing, where desirable, the rates on shipping and on produce. (*e*) The warehouse accommodation to be grouped and centralised for the various trades, unsuitable docks and warehouses to be demolished, and the sites realised for the benefit of the trust, etc., etc. (*f*) Power to levy rates on shipping and on goods. I have considered the matter rather deeply, and I have come to the conclusion that, if London is to have a cheap port, if she is to compete with foreign countries under her grave disabilities at present, that scheme would be the only solution. Anything short of that, such as a trust for the waterways and quays, would be grasping at the shadow rather than the substance. May I elaborate one little point with reference to the disabilities of the Docks? I have said that they are not up to date with regard to appliances. My contention is that in the River Thames, owing to its sinuosity and great length, the big ships must lie at a very considerable distance from the centre of commerce, and therefore we must accept the position that the bulk of London trade will have to be carried by lighters. Now what provision has been made in the docks for a lighter trade? The construction of the docks has been to my thinking excellent so long as they are self-contained, and so long as all the produce that comes into them is landed and warehoused at the dock; but if the goods have to go away from the dock to other warehouses I maintain that the accommodation is very insufficient. For instance, I will take a ship that goes, say, into the Albert Dock; she has a berth there and all the cargo, if it is a mixed cargo, is put upon the quay. My lighters are down there waiting for an opportunity, as soon as the ship clears out, to get alongside and take the goods away. I secure a good berth; the moment that berth is secured, perhaps, and probably, a dock authority comes up and says: "You must clear out of this," because another ship is coming into the same berth. The other ship comes into the same berth, and my lighters have to clear out. Then a fresh consignment of goods out of the new ship is begun to be landed; there is a great deal of confusion, and a great deal of money lost, and a great deal of time lost, and eventually the goods have to be trucked a very considerable distance along the quay, at the cost of the dock company, to my lighters. On some occasions I have had to wait two or three days before I could get my goods that were lying on the quay. It has always appeared to me that what you require for a trade such as London trade is, is a side canal about 40ft. wide and, say, 8 to 9ft. deep on the other side of the shed or quay.

2595. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) I think I am right in saying that it has already been pointed out to us that a considerable amount of warehousing is done in the sheds of the Albert Docks?—Undoubtedly, but I propose under my scheme that there should be a central shed; that the ships should come into the basin here; that on the other side of that shed there should be a shallow side canal with a separate entrance; and that there should be an overhead gantry or line of rails running down the shed with travelling engines—electrical engines preferably—I have them in one manufacturing business in which I am concerned—with a jib which would project over the hatchway, and take the goods out of the ship. They would then be brought into the shed. Goods going to lie at the docks or for transhipment from the docks or to lie at a quay rate, should be deposited in the sheds, and the remainder be passed over direct with one lift, or one handling, into the barges. I think by some such system as that you would get an enormous advantage in the way of expedition, and you would reduce the difficulty of locking the barges in and out of the main basin to a very considerable extent.

2596. You are, I suppose, in active competition with the dock companies?—Yes, undoubtedly.

2597. And with the other wharfingers?—Yes, undoubtedly.

2598. Are you in agreement with the dock companies as to the rates charged?—Yes, we had to do so to save the situation, because of the absurd competition that was going on at one time.

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2599. When you say "we" you mean your individual firm, I suppose?—And other wharfingers with whom I am associated.

2600. Not all the other wharfingers?—Not all, but the bulk.

2601. But I suppose, with regard to the wharfingers who are not in agreement, their rates practically govern the charges which are made?—Well, I hardly think it would be fair to say that, because I think the bulk of the leading wharfingers are in agreement with the docks, and trade is a very curious thing. Certain docks have a reputation with regard to the treatment of certain articles, and I think they could very probably hold the goods at a higher rate than the outside wharfinger who is not in agreement could if he had not the same reputation.

2602. But the dock companies' rates form the basis on which the wharfingers' charges are made?—Undoubtedly.

2603. And, in your opinion, those rates are equitable?—They are as low as we can make them under present conditions. Our object has been in this agreement not to put up rates unduly. We have tried to meet the trade in every conceivable manner. It would be ridiculous to put on prohibitory charges, because that would kill the trade altogether. So the result of our agreement has frequently been the lowering of rates.

2604. Then with reference to the suggestion you made for a Trust, I presume it is intended that the water should be separated from the quays?—Not in the case of my big Trust. I propose that the whole thing should be under one authority.

2605. Otherwise, I mean, the quays would be under the control of the dock companies; you do not intend that?—I propose that the whole thing should be taken over body and soul. To my mind there is some difficulty in taking the quays and the waterways alone. In the London and St. Katharine Docks the warehouses abut right on to the water. I have no doubt it might be got over, but it would be a difficulty.

2606. Do you not think it would be difficult to have the management of the warehouses and shipping business separately arranged?—I should not imagine so; I do not think so; I do not see why there should be a difficulty, but, according to my scheme, it would all be managed under one authority.

2607. Then you mentioned: "all waterside interests." Have you taken into consideration how many interests there are? For instance, there are the tributaries of the river which form practically part of the Port of London?—Well, I meant all existing waterside interests.

2608. They are existing, are they not?—Do you mean water tributaries?

2609. I mean the navigable tributaries; they are all part of the Port of London, are they not?—I have not taken those into consideration.

2610. You have never considered whether there would be difficulty in getting all these interests to agree?—I have no doubt it would be a big question and a difficult one. I may say, with regard to my suggestion, that I daresay a large number of the wharfingers might disagree with my evidence *in toto* with regard to a big scheme, but at the same time I may say there are several others who have thought the matter over, and who believe that it is the solution, and the only one.

2611. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you considered how far your scheme would affect manufacturers and those who have waterside premises to which a wharf is attached?—I presume that they would be outside the scope of the Trust, but that the Trust could arrange with them as to their business.

2612. Still that is your solution of the problem as far as that is concerned?—That is my solution.

2613. And that would leave a considerable part of the river not really included in the Trust, because it would belong to private parties?—Yes.

2614. Then coming to your figures, I suppose we may infer from them that in your opinion the business of the wharfinger is much more profitable in relation to the capital invested than the business of the dock companies, because you assume as the profit of the wharfingers at the present time £657,000 upon a capital of £13,000,000, and on the other side for the dock companies you have £608,000 upon a capital of the approximate value of £18,000,000 sterling, but where I believe something like £23,000,000 has actually been invested?—When I estimate the total value of the wharves at £13,141,000 I am under the mark, and largely under the mark, because I have merely taken 25 years' purchase of the present rateable value. I have got no floating capital.

2615. Still I am correct in taking it that you show that relation between the profit of the dock companies and the profit of the wharfingers?—There is no capital allowed for as invested in the business to begin with—there is no floating capital—and, in addition to that, I think you may take it as a rule that a private wharf working a smaller business and giving it the whole of their individual attention would probably be able to secure, by looking after *minutiæ*, better profit than another wharf owned by a public company.

2616. Or a Trust?—A Trust would be rather retarded by the fact of its being a public company, of course.

2617. It would not be able to make such a good profit as the wharfingers now make?—Not such a close profit, probably; but by grouping the wharves and saving the cost of management—because each wharf has to keep up a very costly staff to do all kinds of work which it would not be called upon to do during the bulk of the year perhaps—by grouping all that I submit that you would make a very large saving.

2618. Would it be fair to say that the wharfingers make this profit of £657,000 out of the warehousing business rather than out of the dock business?—Undoubtedly, because the bulk of the work done by wharfingers is the warehousing business. There are very few that have docks.

2619. And you have not considered the question of how much of the profit of the dock companies is made out of the warehousing business and how much out of the dock business?—I have not separated them here.

2620. Have you come to any conclusion on the subject?—I have naturally watched it with some interest, but I cannot say that I have gone very closely into the figures.

2621. Then coming to some other points of your scheme, you refer to the practice now of the barges or lighters being towed up the river by tugs. Is there any change in the last 20 years as to the use of steam barges on the river?—We do not use them at all. Our lighterage work is done by a very large lighterage company who own a very large number of tugs with a fleet of first-class barges, but there are no steam barges amongst them.

2622. Is there any difficulty about the use of steam barges that makes them unsuitable for the business?—Well, I have not gone closely into the question, but I should fancy that they might not be suitable for very valuable cargoes. I do not know how the question of insurance would be affected.

2623. The question has never arisen about the use of steam barges instead of the use of tugs with lighters?—No; but may I be allowed to state with reference to goods coming up in lighters, I have gone into this last year, 1900, and I find that not one single barge has come up to my wharf from the lower docks—I will not say from the river or possibly from St. Katharine's, but certainly not from the lower docks, except under tug, and not one single barge has gone back empty except under tug.

2624. So that you have the use of steam in that form, but not with the lighterage itself?—Yes; but the lighterman, I submit, does not earn his money, because the work is done for him by the tug.

2625. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In your proposal to form a Trust taking in the dock companies and the wharves, would you also enclose the foreshore of the river?—I should undoubtedly, if possible.

2626. That would affect the estimate that you have already given us?—It would in that case, but it would add a very valuable asset.

2627. As regards lighters, do you not consider that the loading in the docks has great advantages over loading or unloading in the stream?—It has great advantages as regards safety; it has not advantages as regards despatch. I have taken goods out of ships lying in the stream lower down without any loss and with great despatch; but, of course, in the quiet waters of the docks there is an advantage. In the same way that a cart going along any street in London has advantages from its being well paved and well looked after, for which it pays nothing.

2628. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You gave us an illustration as to the delays at London in comparison with the system at Southampton. I may take it that those are fair samples?

—I have tried to make them so. I have tried to compare like with like.

2629. What proportion do those bear to the total number of ships that you have in the year for instance?—The total number of ships in the year would be between 800 and 900.

2630. In any one year?—In any one year. We have had entries for about 900 ships. I took some later date ones—I did not want to multiply the number.

2631. Has the variation to the disadvantage of London been increasing of late years?—No, I have not noticed that. Of course, where ships are loaded from a jetty you get better despatch. I have not noticed any falling-off; I think it has always been so in my experience.

2632. It is about stationary?—It is about stationary.

2633. The delay is not increasing to the disadvantage of London?—I do not think so.

2634. Then you allude to weighing and trade customs. Is any interference with those trade customs a part of your policy?—I should like to see those trade customs varied undoubtedly, because I think it is a loss to the public as they exist.

2635. I am rather wanting to get at what is in your mind as to how you would interfere. In what way would you propose to interfere with those trade customs?—Only by bringing it permanently forward that it is a loss, and I think the weight of a recommendation from the Commission would be very very great.

2636. That is what I was going to ask you. Do you suggest to us that the Royal Commission should embody in its report some recommendation as to legislation with regard to that?—I do, most undoubtedly. Our weights in London are constantly unfavourably compared with Antwerp, or Ghent, or Havre, and for this reason, that the bags there are weighed in drafts. If you have to give all these little amounts to the buyer ——

2637. You will understand that I do not want you to argue it. I only wanted to know what was in your mind. You desire a change, and I want to get at what change you want. You really put it to us, as a Royal Commission, that it would be advantageous that there should be legislation?—Yes.

2638. It is a very important point, you will admit?—I quite admit that.

2639. Do you think the chances of getting a Bill through Parliament for the improvement of the Port and Docks of London would be increased by legislation with regard to trade customs. Have you considered that, as an experienced man?—There would be a move against it, undoubtedly, from some buyers who obtain advantages under the present system; but it seems to me to be so reasonable and so right that we should reform any antiquated methods that are causing us loss that I think a right-thinking community would agree with it absolutely.

2640. You think there would be a sufficient volume of instructed opinion among those who are interested to support any Government (it would be a Government, of course) in such a proposal?—I think so.

2641. I would ask you to rather deliberately weigh your words, because it is very important from the Parliamentary point of view?—I quite see the point.

2642. You think that those interested in the Port of London would support a proposal to compulsorily change those trade customs?—I think so.

2643. Then, turning to your figures of docks and wharves, of course, the figures relating to the docks stand on rather a different plane, anybody can work those out; but turning to the wharves, I rather infer from you that this figure of £13,141,000 would have to be increased?—It would.

2644. You do not think that that is a fair figure, then?—No; I do not.

2645. Have you any figure in your mind that would be a fair figure, because it is no use our getting on our notes a figure from a witness who thinks it is not a sufficient figure?—It is so very difficult indeed to arrive at anything that is really sound. I can only give my opinion on that point.

2646. But your opinion is that it would have to be considerably increased?—I think so, because evidently there is no working capital; no wharf can be worked without a certain amount of floating capital.

2647. You are a man of great experience. Can I get any figure from you at all? Can you give us a figure that we can work at, or would you rather say that you are not prepared to commit yourself?—I am not prepared to commit myself, but I should not be at all surprised if that amount would have to be increased to the extent of between £1,000,000 and £2,000,000.

2648. Then we are coming rather nearer. May we take it at about £15,000,000?—That would be my suggestion.

2649. As I understand, these figures are put forward by you in response to the suggestion of Sir Robert Giffen, who then occupied the chair, at Questions 2471-2477?—I had prepared these figures before that date. I only mentioned that incidentally, as Sir Robert Giffen asked Mr. Marten Smith. I think it would be desirable that the chairman of the Wharfingers' Association should have the figures worked out independently for himself, and they can be compared with mine. I have arrived at those from the best information at our disposal.

2650. You give us these after having done your best to get accurate information?—That is so.

2651. Then one further question. What you have termed your big scheme would be a matter, I apprehend, of some controversy. You speak as an individual, to put it plainly. You do not come before us in a representative capacity?—No; in no representative sense whatever.

2652. Purely as an individual?—Purely as an individual.

2653. But speaking from your own knowledge and experience?—Certainly.

2654. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) About the goods coming from Southampton, I see you say there is "a small saving of time." Is there a sufficient saving of time to warrant extra expense in bringing them from Southampton, or is the expense greater?—The expense is about the same under the arrangement that I have been able to make.

2655. From the ship's side into your warehouse?—Yes.

2656. About the same?—About the same.

2657. The cost of bringing goods, therefore, from, say, the Albert Dock into your warehouse, is about the same as bringing goods of the same description from Southampton also into your warehouse?—Yes.

2658. Expenses included?—Expenses included.

2659. With regard to the custom of weighing, is that a mere trade custom or is it a custom which is made under the regulation of her Majesty's Customs?—It is a pure trade custom. Of course, her Majesty's Customs have something to say to it. At present they would not allow me to weigh goods to the half-pound.

2660. Or with regard to single sacks?—Nor with single sacks. They would demand that the goods should be weighed singly in accordance with the trade custom.

2661. Then it is a combination now of trade custom and regulation?—Exactly.

2662. Then with regard to any change, if there is a change, of trade customs, do you think Her Majesty's Government would require also legislation in order to alter the plan, or would they follow the trade custom?—They would follow the trade custom, I take it, entirely.

2663. Then you think, I suppose, it is mainly a question of trade custom, and not a Government question?—Exactly, and it would result in an increase to the Customs in the duty paid on dutiable articles, because they would get duty on the amounts that are thrown away at present.

2664. I want rather to understand exactly what your proposal is about buying the wharves. Is your proposal that every wharf on the banks of the Thames should be bought by the Trust for a certain distance below London Bridge or only isolated wharves?—Every public wharf.

2665. What is the difference between a public wharf and the ordinary land facing the river? Do you mean a public wharf licensed by the Board of Customs, or in any way with a Government status, or do you mean ordinary wharves?—I should say all those having a Government status, of course, at first, but any public wharf that caters for the public—any public wharf that takes goods on certain rates, and does not arrange merely its own produce. There are private wharves owned by private individuals for their own private purposes. They would not do anybody else's work. They would not be competitors with the port.

2666. You will understand that my questions are not a matter of cross-examination. I am only trying to understand what your proposal is. Take the case of a wharf like the General Steam Navigation Company's wharf. Under your proposal, would that be purchased?—I should propose to purchase it.

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2667. Then take the cases of the Dundee and Aberdeen Wharves, where their steamers lie and take in cargo. Would those be purchased?—Yes.

2668. Every wharf of a public nature would be purchased?—Yes, that is my scheme.

2669. What would happen with a vast quantity of very tumble-down property that one sees along the river? Would all that be purchased?—If it is tumble-down property you would probably acquire it at a very low figure, and the site could be turned to value.

2670. I only want to understand your proposition. Would you buy that?—Yes, undoubtedly, if it is a working wharf.

2671. Suppose it is not a working wharf. Is it the proposal that the Trust should buy all property facing the river?—No, not where they are private wharves, or in some cases there are breweries and oil mills. I should not propose to acquire those.

2672. Then take the case of property that is not occupied now by a wharf, but which could be very easily turned into a wharf; would you purchase that?—I should give the Trust power to acquire such property if they thought it desirable.

2673. Then is the object at last to be that the Trust should own all the waterside property for a given length below London Bridge, as far as it is possible to devote it to public purposes?—As far as it is useful to devote it to public purposes.

2674. But what might not be useful now might very probably be most useful five or six years hence?—If the Trust were constituted as I suggest, and it was able to effect these large economies, I do not think you would find any large competition from the few private warehouses being built outside it. I do not think they could live against it.

2675. That is what I wanted to have in my mind. Would it not be possible that the Trust should own a portion of the property, and that the rest of the property should come into competition with the Trust?—I should think you could practically make it impossible for them to compete with you in a Trust of that nature. A Trust could put on prohibitory rates upon goods going to these newly-erected warehouses.

2676. Do you mean that, supposing a man had a wharf, supposing he had built his own wharf on his own land, any public Trust could put a prohibitive rate in any way against his using his own land as a wharfinger?—No, I hardly mean that.

2677. Therefore, it seems to me, subject to what your views are, that unless you buy all the property, the Trust will always be exposed to competition?—Well, it makes a larger order of it than I had expected.

2678. I only wanted to know how far you were going?—That is possible. It might be desirable, at any rate, that the Trust should have power to acquire all the waterside property.

2679. Could you give us the least idea as to the length along which this power should be exercised below London Bridge?—I should say practically six miles down below London Bridge.

2680. Six miles below London Bridge?—I should think so, probably.

2681. Then would the idea be that some public body to be constituted by Parliament should have powers of compulsory purchase over the whole of the property for six miles below London Bridge on both sides of the river?—They would have power in the interests of the trade of London.

2682. Would they have compulsory powers of purchase?—Yes.

2683. And if they exercised those powers, I suppose they would have to exercise them under the ordinary conditions of the Lands Clauses Consolidation Acts?—Yes.

2684. And, according to ordinary custom, they would have to exercise those powers as against an unwilling owner, and would have to give him the value of not only all that he could prove, but something for compulsory sale?—Something for compulsory sale.

2685. That is usually in London taken at about 10 per cent.?—As with railways.

2686. The Trust then would have to buy all the land at the valuation of the land, and of all interests, such as occupiers and traders under the Lands Clauses Acts, under the usual conditions of compulsory purchase?—Yes.

2687. Those figures, I suppose, if it were turned into money, would represent a very much larger sum than anything we have been talking about this morning?—It would represent a pretty considerable addition.

2688. Have you ever thought at all what the money involved would be in order to buy six miles of riverside property on both sides of the river?—No, I have not.

2689. It would be a very large sum?—Yes, but it is hardly conceivable that the Trust would exercise its compulsory powers excepting in localities where it was advisable to do so. It would not abruptly take and buy up the whole thing.

2690. I presume the Trust would have to elect within some given number of years whether they would buy the property or not?—Undoubtedly; they would have some experience by that time.

2691. If they did not buy the property, they would be exposed to competition?—Undoubtedly; they would have to weigh that.

2692. Now, I am going to ask one other question about what you say with reference to accommodation for goods which are unloading at a dock and going into barges and going to a warehouse. At present they are put on the quays to a great extent, are they not, and are there stored?—They are.

2693. And partly they go to the docks and partly they are taken into lighters?—Yes.

2694. Is anything paid for the use of the wharf for that purpose?—For the use of the dock quays?

2695. Yes?—No; they are landed on the dock companies' quays for the convenience of the dock companies. I should prefer their being put straight into my lighter.

2696. Would it not take a very much longer time to load into lighters if the goods were not put upon the quays?—Not if my system were adopted, of having a side channel.

2697. But I mean under the present conditions. Does not overside unloading take longer?—It depends what berth you get; it depends where your goods happen to be stored in the ship's hold. If you have got a good berth, and your goods happen to be at the top, you get very speedy despatch.

2698. Does it not depend on the facilities for sorting. If you can sort on the quays before putting into the lighters, do you not save a good deal of time?—Undoubtedly.

2699. Subject, of course, to what you say about the difficulty of taking the goods away again?—Yes.

2700. But for convenience of trade, a large quantity is put on the quays, and sorted, and then put into lighters?—Yes.

2701. And for that facility nothing is paid?—Nothing is paid.

2702. Would it be your proposal that your canal and all these other facilities for the convenience of the trade of the warehousemen should also be provided free of cost?—I think it would be equitable, because I think the saving to the authority would be so very great in time and in labour. The great difficulty of a wharfinger's business is the question of labour. That is a question that has to be watched very closely. You may easily turn a profit into a loss by being careless about your labour.

2703. Therefore, your position is that the wharfinger is entitled, not only to free water, but to a free wharf as far as it is wanted, and to canals and other conveniences for the prosecution of his trade, without any payment?—I would like to modify that to this extent. I say that if the Trust or the newly-constituted body found it necessary to levy any charge or toll on barges, that ought to be met by the public.

2704. Not by the wharfinger?—By the public. The wharfingers surrender a freedom that has been dedicated to them, and the public take it against the wish of the wharfinger. Why should they make the wharfinger bear the whole of the cost of it? That is my contention.

2705. Do you draw any distinction at all between free water and free quays and free canals?—I would draw a distinction as to free canals. If that was created, it might be a fair charge on lighters, provided it is spread over the whole community.

2706. But if it was charged on the lighters, it would not be spread over the whole community, would it?—It would be leviable by a tax.

2707. By rates?—By rates.

2708. Of which the lightermen would pay their proportion as ratepayers?—As ratepayers; just the same as a carman going along a road pays his proportion of maintaining the road.

2709. That is exactly what I wanted to find out. You suggest that some payment should be made for these facilities, but that it should be a payment spread over the whole community?—For the benefit of the Port of London.

2710. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Then do you suggest that the London ratepayers should be responsible for the final payment of interest on the securities of the Trust?—I suggested that the Corporation of the City of London should undertake the guarantee.

2711. You called it a Corporation Trust, I think?—Yes.

2712. Of course the first moneys would come in from the charges they levied; but in the event of those charges being insufficient, do you propose that the London ratepayers should be responsible for the payment of interest?—As behind the Corporation, undoubtedly.

2713. You know it would run into very large figures. The operation would be so large that you would want excellent security?—No doubt.

2714. And you suggest that the London ratepayers should form that security?—Together with the freeholds of the various properties; that of course would only be collateral; but I do not expect that the Trust would find any difficulty.

2715. But whether the Trust found any difficulty or not, you would make the London ratepayer responsible for the payment of that interest?—I think he would get his *quid pro quo*.

2716. But he would make himself responsible, whether he got his *quid pro quo* or not?—Yes.

2717. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you in your mind that this Trust should acquire and occupy up-town warehouses such as the dock companies have now?—The great idea in my mind has been the grouping of warehouses for certain trades. Trades are very kittle kattle in that way; they will only go to one place. If the up-town warehouses that the docks now possess are the very best places in the trade, I should retain them. If not I should sell them as they are on very costly sites, and try to see whether a site nearer to the river which would be less costly to bring the goods up to, could not be acquired, which the trade would accept. *Capt. H. V. Hart-Davis.* 4 Dec. 1900.

2718. Then the Trust would have power to acquire warehouses not on the riverside?—If desirable. They would have the power, I take it, if they thought it desirable to buy out the whole interest of the docks.

2719. Then it would also be possible for a warehouse not at the riverside to be in communication with Southampton or Bristol or Liverpool or Hull, and to do a warehouse business there just as you do now yourself with goods coming from Southampton?—They would have to come by road, and their having to come by road would cripple them.

2720. But you have told us you get your goods as cheaply from Southamptom as you do from the docks?—But I do not have to cart them.

2721. They go to the wharves of the railway somewhere up the river, and are lightered down to your place?—At Nine Elms, yes.

2722. Suppose there was a railway with a terminus convenient to many parts of London, would not they be in competition with you then?—I should not be afraid of it, because I think our situation near London Bridge is a more popular one.

2723. But it might be possible in the development of business that you could have warehouses in other parts of London. You say for instance that the dock warehouses are not situated in the best possible places now?—I think so, because it is so very costly to get goods up to them.

2724. So that there would be a possibility of competition with the Trust in the form of wharves in communication by railway with these outlying ports?—No doubt. It is impossible to take a monopoly that would not have some danger of competition.

2725. I have only one other question. You have not told us what your proposed legislation would be in order to alter these trade customs. What is the enactment which you would like the Legislature to give you?—Might I give you that later on. I should like to think it over.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I did not press him upon that because I understood that he was not prepared to frame a clause in an Act of Parliament or a Bill.

Mr. Henry Tait Moore called and examined.

2726. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are the managing director of Brook's Wharf?—Yes.

2727. And one of the proprietors of Bull Wharf?—Yes.

2728. Is Brook's Wharf a limited liability wharf?—Yes.

2729. Is it under the Companies Acts?—Yes, under the Companies Acts.

2730. Does it publish accounts?—No, it does not; we have only private shareholders.

2731. You have only shareholders, I suppose, without any issue of debentures or preference stock?—Without any issue of either preference stock or debentures.

2732. Is it held privately?—It is held privately.

2733. And Bull Wharf is entirely a private undertaking?—Yes, a private firm.

2734. Will you proceed with your evidence?—Brook's Wharf is bonded for all goods except tobacco. Bull Wharf is bonded for all goods except tobacco and tea. At the former there is a large business in the warehousing of tea, and the general produce consists mainly of imports from China and Japan. The warehouses are mostly of modern construction, and relying on the freedom of water, additions have been made in the last 15 years at a cost of £40,000. Bull Wharf is of modern construction, and is largely used for the storage of valuable goods, such as shells, indiarubber and gutta-percha, gums and drugs. In each wharf light showrooms of considerable area are provided with lifts, as sample packages of the principal goods have to be shown at periodical sales, attracting besides English, Continental and American buyers. I may say in passing that a very large proportion of the goods that we have do not go for consumption in London. For instance, the shells, I may say, go entirely to the provinces or to the Continent or to America, and the same largely with indiarubber, and with a great many of the gums and drugs. With regard to tea, I have had a statement got out, and I find that about half of our tea is delivered in London and the other half is delivered for use in the country and abroad. Despatch in the receipt and working of goods, especially for the periodical sales, is of the utmost importance, but it is a constant complaint of the merchants and brokers that the delay in bringing goods up to the wharf is prejudicial to their interests. In the case of China and Japan produce, the ships discharging in London have the competition of German steamers from the Far East, which discharge the cargoes at Hamburg, sending on the portion for London by steamers discharging in the river, or in the St. Katharine Dock. In the case of these we have no complaints of delay. It is fair to say that the direct steamers discharging in the Albert and Tilbury Docks bring very large cargoes, but the system of delivering these partly overside and partly from the quay after the steamer has discharged and moved from her berth, is antiquated and not equal to the requirements of the present times. That it is this method of discharging which causes delay is proved by a table which I will hand in. *Mr. H. T. Moore.*

(*The Witness handed in a table showing periods of discharging in the Victoria, Tilbury and Albert Docks. See Appendix, 8th Day, No. 2.*)

From this table it will be seen that goods delivered by ships discharging at the jetties in Victoria Dock, or at the "knuckle" in Tilbury, there is no delay, while the time taken in obtaining delivery of general cargo from ships discharging at quay berths is very great. The instances taken are of the average, and may be accepted as fair.

2735. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Would you tell me what the "Knuckle" is?—The knuckle is a place at the Tilbury Dock. One end stands out like *this*, and the ship lies along *here*, and the barge lies at the end or on the other side, so that we can get continuous delivery

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all the time the ship is discharging. The complaints usually made against London are two: (1) Delay in delivering of cargo from ships to warehouse; (2) London charges as compared with those elsewhere. Then there is that further case which Captain Hart-Davis brought before you about the system of weighing in London. As to that, I have a letter from a foreign correspondent of ours with regard to some goods that he sent to us, which I shall be happy to read.

2736. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) I think it is unnecessary to read it. Will you give us the gist of it?—He sent 200 bales of cloves to be weighed in London, and he sent us a cheque for the charges. He made no complaint about those, but he complained very much about the loss in weight. We pointed out to him that our system in London was to weigh and tare them separately. He wrote again, and said that the system in Amsterdam was to tare the cloves 10 bales in the draft. The consequence was that he made a tremendous saving on the weight. Our tare in London was 9lb. His tare for the 10 bales was 78lb. We promised to investigate it, and we did, and then we wrote and told him that we could not help ourselves—that our system of weighing and taring in London was according to custom. In reply to that he wrote:—"We are waiting the result of your investigation before we ship further 1,000 bales to you now ready for shipment, but, of course, if the loss-weight is so heavy we had better rebuy in your market, and leave our cloves here." Owing to our being unable, because of the custom of the trade, to weigh the cloves differently to the system that we had adopted before, we never had that 1,000 bales order. I venture to suggest that the question of delay in delivering can only be dealt with satisfactorily by making such improvements at the docks as will enable the ship's cargo to be delivered as the unloading proceeds. This can, I believe, be done by some outlay in certain of the existing docks. The matter of charges is more difficult, as the docks where the ships discharge are in most cases so far from the necessary destination of the goods for inspection and sale that practically all goods, whether for warehousing at the dock company's warehouses or wharves, have to be lightered. In comparing charges in London with those made elsewhere it is most important to note that this service is included in the landing charge made at the docks and wharves. The charge for this service is an increasing one, and this further increase can only be prevented by an improvement in despatch, enabling a lighterman to get a full freight promptly. May I say in passing that I think in comparing charges between London and Liverpool we sometimes look unduly unfavourably to London, because in Liverpool from the charges I have seen there they display separate items on their account. For instance, they lighter or carry the goods as a separate item for that service, whereas in London the usual rates include the landing, lightering, or the cartage of goods. Therefore the landing rate in London looks larger than it would in other ports. Wharfingers generally occupy costly premises, and their rating is consequently considerable, the increase in this item in the last ten years in the City being 21 per cent. At present they are assessed on the same principle as private occupiers of warehouses, although, from their having to pile goods so that they are always readily accessible, it is impossible for a wharfinger to make anything like so much use of his space. In spite of the incidence of rates and taxes, the increased cost of lighterage, etc., on the representation of traders the charges made on goods have been, in many cases, reduced in the last ten years, to the diminution of the profits of warehousing. I have a list here of at least twenty articles on which charges have been reduced in the last ten years. Although we are in agreement with the docks about the rates we charge on certain articles, still the committee to which I belong, with the docks, have had to meet the applications of merchants and reduce the rates in, I should think, no less than twenty cases of the goods in which I am interested alone. There is sometimes an impression, I am afraid, that the combination of docks and warehouses in agreement in London has been to raise the rates. I do not think it is so. I do not think that in the last ten years there has been a single rate in London raised; but we do try to steady things and make them fair, and we have considerably reduced many charges where the traders have pointed out to us that the charges are hitting the trade rather hardly as compared with the competition of other ports. I do not know whether I might be allowed to say with regard to rates and taxes that that question hits us quite as hard as it does the dock company.

2737. Will you tell us what articles you refer to on which the charges have been reduced?—Tapioca and sago have been reduced. Sugar we gave 14 more days' free rent on, and glucose the same. Then canes, gunnies, feathers, Lingah shells—a cheap kind of shell which come from the Persian Gulf. Then come galls, gum, pepper, sardines, honey, and several other articles which are small.

2738. Which is the most important item as regards revenue?—I should think the reduction on tapioca and sugar probably. I have left out the important item of tea, which has been reduced 10 per cent. Tea, of course, is a very large item.

2739. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What was the charge before, and what is it now?—The charges have been reduced generally by giving a different discount. In the case of tea they have been reduced by taking 10 per cent. off the rates. We made a 10 per cent. reduction on our gross rates in the case of tea. I have not got the rates with me, but I should be happy to furnish them to the Commission.

2740. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) How long has that reduction been ruling?—Since July. I think the whole complaint among wharfingers with regard to another thing is that in the assessment of our property we are not treated quite fairly compared with some of the private owners. A private owner very often takes a place at the waterside and uses it as a factory, and also to store his goods. It being a factory he gets a third off the assessment, and we as wharfingers get only one-sixth off. The cost of land and buildings in London makes it imperative that the handling of goods should be expedited if the disadvantage of London to other ports is not to increase. I would respectfully submit that it is necessary that the port should be placed under the management of a Trust, representatives of all interests, who should acquire the waterway, quays and sheds of the docks for the discharge of ships, making the necessary charges for docking, &c., of ships, and resume the discharge of all vessels entering the docks. The present dock companies should retain the existing warehouses. I may say that I think that when the docks altered the system after the great strike, when they gave up to shipowners the right of discharging the ships, they deliberately cut off a large part of their income, and, speaking as a wharfinger, I never could see why they did it. They gave up the discharge of the ships to shipowners. Presumably the shipowners make a profit, and the docks had hitherto done it and made that profit. The Trust would undertake the improvement of the existing docks and the addition of further docks as the trade of the port required it, and should the dues from ships not be sufficient the Trust should be empowered to levy an equal tonnage charge on all cargo whatever its destination. At present the shipowners receive 1s. 6d. per ton or thereabouts from the docks for goods warehoused there or at their warehouses. It is to be hoped this addition would not be necessary, as the profit from discharging ships should, under proper management, make a considerable addition to the revenue from docking ships. The duty of the Trust would be to encourage and foster trade to the port. The waterway of the river should be improved and deepened as required, but the cost of this should be borne by the rates in the same way that the cost of a county road is borne by the ratepayers. All means of locomotion should be entirely free. I do not know that I agree with those who have preceded me about the necessity of the river being under the same authority as the docks. I really think the time has come when the great highway of London should be maintained at the public expense. London benefits by the bringing of larger ships to London. London benefits by every facility that is given, and it does seem unfair that the goods which come to London, which are presumably for the benefit of the London trade, should bear the cost of maintaining the river. I think the river should be put on the same ground as a county road—a great highway. The mooring of vessels in the river should be under the control of the Trust, and the Trust should have power to levy dues for mooring. In fact, ships discharging in the stream should be subject to all the charges made on ships in docks, except the dock dues. I gave particulars in the table I handed in, of certain ships discharging at places where we have no complaint of delay, Victoria Docks, the jetties, and Tilbury Dock; and I also gave a comparison of some in the Albert Dock. It has been pointed out to me that I ought to have given

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a comparison of the same article. I gave tea at two berths at the Victoria Dock and Tilbury; and I gave general goods at the Albert Dock, so I have had another table made out—which I will hand in—to see if there is any difference.

(*The Witness handed in a table of some tea ships with other cargo discharged at the Royal Albert Docks, with particulars of date of report and arrival of teas by barge at Brooks Wharf. See Appendix, 8th Day, No. 3.*)

I do not find that there is practically very much. The time taken for tea in the first table is 4½ days, whereas the average at the Albert Dock is nine days.

2741. Is that the principal difference?—That is the same article. In the first table I have put tea in one case, and in the other case general goods.

2742. But you have mentioned the principal discrepancy?—Yes; the time is generally double in the case of discharging at the Albert Docks as compared with the jetties at the Victoria Dock or the "Knuckle" at Tilbury. I have another table which I will hand in. It shows the time taken in discharging some tea ships with other cargo at Tilbury Docks.

(*The Witness handed in a table of some tea ships with other cargo discharged at the Tilbury Docks, with particulars of date of report and arrival of teas by barge at Brooks Wharf. See Appendix, 8th Day, No. 4.*)

2743. We shall be glad if you will put in a statement of the articles to which you refer as having been reduced?—I shall be happy to do so.

2744. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is there no way of altering the custom of a port except by legislation?—Are you referring to weighing?

2745. Yes?—It occurred to me that it would be one of the most useful things if the Chamber of Commerce took it up, but they have never done so.

2746. I was just going to suggest the Chamber of Commerce?—As a matter of fact we find, dealing with both buyers and sellers, that the buyers in London are much stronger, as a body, than the sellers. The importers do not seem to take the interest in the matter that the buyers do. In the case of tea, some time ago by the half pound, and the Customs for the last twelve months have followed that.

2747. Would not the Chamber of Commerce be the proper body to take it up, if they could be made to take it up?—Yes; I hope the result of its coming out that there are other difficulties standing against London besides the charges may induce them to take it up.

2748. Is not the Chamber of Commerce a body of persons whose legitimate object is to deal with such considerations as the customs of a port?—I should imagine so.

2749. Rather than compulsory legislation on a port which makes its own customs?—I think it would be rather difficult to make compulsory legislation in a matter affecting two parties like buyer and seller. Each would be supposed by the Legislature to be able to look after himself.

2750. With regard to the reduction of rates of which you have told us; have those reductions taken place in consequence of the study of what is going on in foreign ports?—Yes, mainly; and they have been going on over the last ten years.

2751. Do you, or do any wharfingers collectively, employ any staff for the purpose of studying what is done in foreign ports, or do you wait until the matter becomes somewhat intolerable before the reductions take place?—We generally find that those who are affected by our charges do not hesitate to bring them forward as soon as they affect London.

2752. They wait till the shoe pinches?—They do not wait very long, either.

2753. Now, about the discharging of the goods in the river, where the average on your statement is two days, were those goods from small vessels?—Yes; very small vessels, coming from Hamburg. Now we are getting a great deal of competition. A great deal of China cargo comes over in these German subsidised steamers, which discharge part of their cargo at Hamburg, and the balance comes on to London. Formerly we used to get the whole of it to London, and the balance required for Hamburg went there from here.

2754. That condition of things has altered very much in consequence not only of the improvement of foreign ports, but the foreign subsidised lines?—Yes, but I think the first great help that competition had was in the dock strike, and the consequent rise in the price of lighterage. The lighterage was very much put up after that strike, and the tendency is for it to rise again; and there is still a lightermen's strike going on.

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2755. It has never gone down again to the old figure?—No, and we shall be satisfied if it is maintained at the figure we are now paying.

2756. It would not be right for us to assume that the goods discharged in the river from very large steamers would be discharged in the time that you give here for the China goods that come from the continent in small steamers, would it?—No, I should not like to say. I am not practical on that point, but I see in the evidence that has been given that Mr. Becket Hill, and, I think, Sir Thomas Sutherland, said that it was quite possible for them to discharge their steamers alongside a wharf in the stream—specially built, of course, for the purpose.

See 1968–74 and 2259.

2757. If the wharves were made deep enough?—Yes, and low down the river.

2758. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I will ask you just a question or two more about these trade customs. You put before us a letter from a correspondent of yours showing that certain cargo did not come here in consequence of the custom of weighing?—Yes.

2759. Who profits by the existence of the present system?—That is difficult for me to say. I suppose the buyer does, as he gets more for his money than the seller would perhaps think he was entitled to.

2760. I want to get, if I can, where the interest lies in the maintenance of a custom which you describe as inimical to the Port?—It is my correspondent who says that he does not send me a thousand bales in consequence of that.

2761. That is why the cargo does not come to London?—Yes.

2762. Who is the man who profits by the existence of the present system?—I do not think anybody does profit. London seems to me to be so big that one never gets these things brought home. The complaint that is usually made to a wharfinger is: "Your charges are too high, and they are driving away trade." You cannot get a man to sit down and go into the matter, so that you can show him how the thing really stands. We hear sometimes from a seller about this weighing question, but it is very seldom that we hear it. I do not get a complaint of this sort generally.

2763. Then it is nobody's interest really to maintain the present state of things. Is that what you rather put forward?—I do not think it can be.

2764. Then why is it not reformed?—Because I think the buyers are too strong for its being reformed at present. They seem almost to be. I only judge that it is to their interest to maintain the present state of things from the long fight there was over the tea. There was no tea sold in London for six weeks, I think, last year.

2765. Then am I to take it that you are not quite so sanguine as Captain Hart-Davis. You do not think that there would be a sufficient volume of instructed opinion to bring about a reform?—I think there would be if it were once made known. I do not think the public have ever caught hold of the fact that these trade customs want revision in London. I think the buyer goes on, and the seller says, "I cannot help it," and when he has the trade he goes to a port where these trade customs have not got the same strength as they have in London. I remember ten years ago the matter came before us on a question of coffee or cocoa. The complaint made against London was that we charged more for coffee in London than was charged in Havre. We sent to Havre, and we found that in Havre they weighed the bags of coffee in drafts of five, and they tared them in drafts of five. It is an easier thing to weigh coffee five bags at a time than singly. We told the people who complained to us about this, and said, "Can we weigh them in the same way, and then perhaps we can make a reduction?" They said, "No. You must adhere to the London system of weighing." It is outside my business as wharfinger to say how a man shall weigh his goods, but coming before your Commission, I thought it only right to point out that there are these trade customs to my knowledge, which have interfered with me in this particular instance of the 1,000 bales.

2766. Then you would trust rather to an enlighten-

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ment of opinion in the Chamber of Commerce than to a proposal for legislation?—I should attach a great deal more importance to it if the Commission could satisfy itself that that was one of the causes of the loss of trade in London, and could put it in their Report that one of the causes of the loss of trade in London was owing to these trade customs. Then I think the fact of this Commission having given its Report in that way would carry its weight with the Chamber of Commerce, and they would probably take it up, but my statement would not have that weight. It would be passed over.

2767. Do you think the disadvantages of the Port of London are increasing as compared with other ports?—I do not think I have found it so, except with regard to certain steamers which discharge at the Albert Dock on the quays. There, from the size of the ships frequently one steamer, as soon as it is discharged, has its berth taken by another steamer. With regard to those ships that discharge in that particular part of the Tilbury Dock, I think there has been an improvement in the last five years.

2768. Then you said, "The duty of the Trust would be to encourage and foster trade to the Port." Would you amplify those words a little? What do you mean by them?—The complaint of shipowners at present is that the river is not deep enough. The first duty of the Trust would be to put pressure on the authorities who are responsible for the river to make it all that it should be. The Trust should own the quays. I would separate the docks and the waterways from the existing warehouse business, and I would give the Trust the ownership of the water and the quays. They should work simply as economically as possible, not for the purposes of a profit. We should expect more from them than we should from a dock company.

2769. That is rather what I wanted to come to. We will pursue that question. Looking at it from a financial point of view, the Trust would, I apprehend, have a debt?—Yes.

2770. On which it would have to pay interest?—Yes.

2771. It would have certain expenses?—Yes.

2772. Where would it get its revenue?—First of all in the same way as the dock companies get their revenue—from the waterway, from ships, and from dock dues; and, secondly, I suggest from the discharge of the cargoes, by giving up which, I think, the dock companies gave up part of their income. They should resume it. And, further, if it is necessary—which I hope it will not be—they should make an equal charge of so much a ton upon all goods, but I would have no tax upon locomotion make the incidence of the rates equal. An equal in its incidence. If I had a 50-ton barge with only 20 tons of freight in it, according to the dock companies' proposal, you would tax the barges according to the tonnage of the barge, and I should have to pay as if I had 50 tons in the barge. You cannot by taxing locomotion make the incidence of the rates equal. An equal tax on goods, whatever they were, I think, would be fair. Of course, at present, if it is left to the dock companies to put on such a charge as that they, as warehouse keepers, might include that charge in their warehousing charge.

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2773. I am rather trying to get at the policy that is in your mind. Ought the Trust to bear in mind primarily encouraging or fostering trade, or the duty of making a balance sheet?—They should first of all foster and encourage the trade.

2775. But supposing that was insufficient, what is themselves able to levy, having regard to that primary duty, fell far below what they had to meet on the other side, interest and expenditure, where would the deficiency come from?—They should tax all goods equally.

2775. But supposing that was insufficient, what is their third line of defence?—If you put a tax on goods coming to London, if you get the dock dues and the discharge of the ships—which is the second line of defence—and also get a tax upon the goods, I cannot imagine, unless the Port of London is going to decrease its business by half, or more than that, that there would be any other line of defence necessary.

(*Lord Revelstoke.*) I do not think that was quite Mr. Ellis' question. Mr. Ellis asked you in the event of these items being insufficient, where would you raise the balance of income?

2776. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do you really put it before us that they would require no other line of defence, as I have called it?—I think not, if they had a right to tax goods.

2777. Have you worked it out?—No, but I know that there is a tonnage of nine or ten million tons a year coming to London.

2778. You are clearly not in favour of any suggestion such as we have heard of—a rate from the community?—I do not think it should be necessary in the case of docks, which exist, after all, for the ships.

2779. I am speaking of the Trust. You will quite understand that I am not indicating anything in my mind. I am only wanting to get at what is in yours?—At the end, if the dock dues on ships and the charge on the goods did not prove sufficient, then I think the rates should bear it. I think it should be a charge upon the rates in the same way that the improvement of the waterway and the river should be a charge on the rates, but I do not think it would ever come to that.

2780. But you do think that the Trust should have power—in the background, or in the far background, if you like—but somewhere it should have the power to derive a revenue from rating?—Yes, I think it should, but it would be in the far background.

2781. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With regard to lighters, you think they should not be charged?—I think they should not be charged at all. I do not see how the incidence of any tax upon them could be made fair.

2782. But suppose the Trust you contemplate made alterations in their docks, with greater facilities for lighters, which would enable lighters to take one or two more cargoes probably than they do at present?—I think it would be better to put a charge upon goods equally.

2783. If these facilities were given for the lighters loading, they would naturally load more quickly, and return more quickly for another load?—Yes.

2784. Then practically the owners of the lighters would be paid for their extra cargoes, and yet pay nothing at all for the facilities?—Not as barges, but the cargo that they take might bear it.

2785. If the owners of the lighters took so many more cargoes they would naturally be paid more for carrying those cargoes?—Yes.

2786. And, therefore, after having received those increased facilities, you still propose that they should not pay anything towards it?—Not as barges, but the goods that they take away might be charged an increased tonnage rate.

2787. And the owners of the barges might be making a double profit on their capital?—No, the result would be this, I think. If the barges were able to get larger freights and to get them more quickly than now, we should be in a better position to reduce charges, or to stop them from increasing, which would be a great thing for the Port of London.

2788. That you say is probable, but still at the same time the owners of lighters would probably, as the thing stands at present, earn considerably more money without being taxed at all?—If they were earning more money, there are a great many of them, and competition would soon bring down their rates. If any lighterman had increased facilities, and did more work than he does without lowering his price, it would be open to me to do my own lightering. Competition would always keep a lighterman's charge down to a fair level, but I should like to point out that if you tax barges a 50-ton barge very often goes up with only 20 tons in her, and she would have to pay 2½ times as much as if she had 50 tons in her.

2789. The question is whether the barges should not pay something irrespective of the cargo they carry. I am trying to separate the two. The barges will receive increased facilities, which will cost a great deal of money and expedite their trade. I do not think it is necessary to calculate the amount of the goods they carry. There might be a tax on that lighter of 50 tons or 100 tons?—If you did that every lighter would wait until it got its full load, and the great disadvantage of delay would be very much increased. Every lighter would wait for its full load if they had to bear a tax.

2790. That does not apply to a waterman's boat which is licensed to carry twelve. He has to pay for his licence if he starts with only six?—As a matter of fact, the railways tax passengers. We pay a passenger tax, but there is no such thing as a goods tax.

2791. You referred just now to the facilities for loading at wharves, and you quoted Sir Thomas Sutherland's evidence. In your experience does not the rise and fall of the tide interfere to a certain extent with a ship alongside,

of a barge alongside, loading or unloading. Would it not be better to unload at a fixed level?—No doubt there are advantages in the docks in the matter of loading.

2792. Does not the rise and fall of the tide to a certain extent put you in a worse position for loading and unloading, than if you had the water on the same level?—We do not find it so with unloading goods in the stream.

2793. When loading goods in the stream you are on the same level, the ship rises and falls with the tide, and the wharf does not rise and fall with the tide?—I would not like to give an opinion on that. I simply quoted Sir Thomas Sutherland as having said it would be possible to do it. I have not practical experience enough to say, and I should not like to say, as I have no experience about it.

2794. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) When you speak of an equal tax on all goods, do you mean an equal tax according to weight, or *ad valorem*?—According to weight entirely.

2795. So that tea should pay the same rate as galls?—Yes, exactly. The reason for that is this: We find practically in our China goods that the competition of these foreign ports is in the finer class of business—this stuff that comes from China. In bristles and hair, and valuable cargoes of that sort, we have more competition to stand than in the case of a commoner article, which comes to London, and has to come to London to be consumed.

2796. Then the greater charge might mean nothing upon tea, and a great deal upon other goods?—Yes.

2798. But I think that some shipowners have given us were unwise in giving up to shipowners the privileges of discharging their own ships, because it was a business out of which the dock companies made money?—Yes.

2798. But I think that some shipowners have given us a statement that they paid less to the dock companies than the discharging of ships costs them since?—Yes, that may be so, but I look at it rather from the point of view of what is good for the Port, and I am inclined to think that a Trust, looking at the thing all round, would probably be able to make better arrangements for the discharge of ships than the shipowners can. What happens very often is this. A shipowner is in a hurry to get his ship out, and the men strike for more money. The shipowner gives way to them. That has been the cause of a great many delays in London in the last ten years; there have been constant little strikes. If the men were all employed by the Dock Trust there would be one great strike, or there would be peace.

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2799. So that the dock companies have lost by the change, and the shipowners have not gained?—I think it is very likely that that is the case.

2800. And this is the reason why a Dock Trust could work to better advantage than an individual shipowner?—I think so. There is a reason for that. In the case of a shipowner employing his own men, if he has no ship coming in, his men are not at work. They would naturally when at work require higher pay.

2801. (*Mr. Ellis.*) They cannot be transferred?—No, they cannot be transferred. A dock company, or a dock trust, I take it, would be better able to give regular employment.

2802. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Was not one of the great reasons for adopting the alteration with regard to the discharge of ships, to avoid the danger of a universal strike of labour in the Port of London?—Yes, and perhaps it has avoided a universal strike, but it has left in its place these constant delays and troubles—partial strikes, which are almost worse, I think, than a general cessation, because a general cessation in London soon brings a thing to an end, while these partial strikes seem to go on without end. The present lightermen's strike goes on, but everybody is doing a certain amount of work.

2803. Whether the policy was right or wrong, that was one of the main reasons for the alteration?—Yes.

2804. And you personally think it was a mistake?—Yes. I think it is a mistake for any of us to be dealt with in detail by workmen or anyone else.

2805. You think it was a mistake from both points of view—from the point of view of the dock companies sacrificing income, and from the point of view of the interest generally of the Port of London?—Yes, I think so.

Mr. GORDON COOMBE called and examined.

2806. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are senior partner in the firm of Gordon Coombe and Company?—Yes.

2807. You have had 23 years' experience of the working of the Port of London?—Yes.

2808. And you are Vice-Chairman of the Wharfingers, Warehouse Keepers and Granary Keepers' Association, of the Port of London?—Yes. My experience is entirely limited to trade in connection with grain—what is generally called the granary keepers' trade. I have had no experience as a general wharfinger. The granaries on the river, in addition to being no mean proportion of the whole waterside, are taking an ever-increasingly important part as central depôts for the distribution of food stuffs imported to London, by vessels going principally into the Victoria and Albert Docks. These granaries are practically all situated within a mile and a half of London Bridge, and it is absolutely essential that the very large proportion of the flour and grain stored in, and passed through them, should be handled as near the centre of the Metropolis as possible, for the following reasons:—First, with regard to flour: this is nearly all taken from the granaries by vans, and the cost of collection and delivery is proportionately more as the distance from London Bridge increases (after a radius of about a mile and a half), and, in cases where delivery is to the City or West End, police regulations make it compulsory that the vans must deliver before 9 or 9.30 a.m., and in other districts where no such regulations exist, many bakers will not take in flour after 9 a.m. It would be impossible to comply with these requirements if the flour is stored in the lower docks. On most days more vans are loaded at granaries with flour between the hours of 6 and 8 a.m. than between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.. Next as to grain, various cereals and articles manufactured from cereals: large quantities of these goods are handled at riverside granaries, and the chief reasons for this are:—(1) The desire of the merchants to have their goods near the market for convenience of despatch in obtaining samples and inspection by buyers; (2) Merchants dealing in a variety of articles are enabled, by putting all their goods at a granary, to supply buyers with small quantities of various goods, which, if lying at different docks, would entail great expense and delay in collecting together to form one consignment; (3) Many of these goods are sold to small traders in the suburbs, who keep their own horses and vans for collection, and these traders insist on buying at granaries because of the short journey, as they cannot afford the loss of time and expense incurred by having to go to the lower docks; (4) A proportion of these goods also go to the southern rails, and the cost of cartage from the granaries is only about one-half the cost from the lower docks, and even then cartage contractors object to this long journey work, and only care to take it in conjunction with the shorter journeys. Then, going to the question of granary charges. The charges on goods that go to granaries are almost the lowest of any in the port. I should just like to emphasise that, because it has been always an understood thing in our trade that we have a very low scale of charges for all goods that we handle—far lower than the charge by the general wharfingers, as we term them. The cost of lighterage, which is generally felt to be far too heavy, in some instances absorbs 50 per cent. of the total charge. It would, therefore, be absolutely impossible for the granary trade to bear any extra expense in collecting from the ships, and should any impost, however small, be put on the barges using the docks, it would at once become an additional cost to the consumer. In the Bill recently presented to Parliament, the London and India Docks Joint Committee proposed the following charges——

Mr. G. Coombe.

2809. I think we will not go into that now?—May I touch on the barge question at all?

2810. I think it will be unnecessary?—I have been reading the evidence that has been given here pretty carefully, and I have a note here of one or two things that have been said, more particularly by the Surrey Commercial and the Millwall Dock Companies. I have not much to say about the evidence of the Joint Committee, but witnesses for the other dock companies that I have mentioned seem to have been using a phrase, probably by mistake, which would convey a wrong impression to your minds.

2811. Does it touch your particular business?—Yes.

2812. I think you are at liberty to tell us anything which touches your business directly, without going into the general question?—In the evidence given by both the Millwall Dock Company and the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, I take two particular examples out of many. I will refer to Questions 1066 and 1102

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in the Millwall Dock Company's evidence. This is in the answer to Question 1066: "For instance, this matter of dealing with the barges is one of great importance to us, because we are dealing with goods and we are dealing with trade, and we are spending money for which we do not get one penny in return. Whether it ought to be in the shape of charges on craft or otherwise I am not prepared to say." That would apply equally to several answers given by the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, but they do get a charge on all this overside grain. I am not speaking of timber, of course; but on all the loose grain they get a charge which is admitted by them to be a very handsome charge. The officials of the Surrey Commercial Dock have admitted to me that they make money over it. In connection with that, perhaps I might hand in a statement of the charges made by them for grain.

(*The Witness handed in a statement of dock charges on grain in the Millwall and Surrey Commercial Docks. See Appendix, 8th Day, No.* 5.)

You will see they say, "The following rates will apply to the undermentioned grain and seed in bulk discharged or landed in the Surrey Commercial Docks." They get this discharging rate for working grain out of a ship, whether it is landed in the dock or delivered to my craft, or anybody else's craft. It ranges from 1s. 9d. a ton on heavy grain to 2s. a ton on light, with an intermediate charge. I got those papers from the dock companies myself.

2813. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is it the same at the Millwall Dock?—To all intents and purposes, the charges for grain are the same at the Millwall Dock.

2814. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are they the same at the Victoria and Albert Docks?—Yes, but as a matter of fact, the Victoria and Albert Docks, I believe, discharge very little cargo themselves. But those two docks, the Millwall and the Surrey Commercial, discharge, I think, the whole of the loose grain which comes into their docks, which is a very large proportion of their trade.

2815. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do they supply the labour?—Yes; and they supply the machinery. That brings me to Question 1115, where the Millwall Dock witness spoke about their dolphins. Rear-Admiral Hext asked that question: "With regard to the dolphins, you stated that they were placed there for the convenience of discharging grain from ships into lighters? (A.) Yes. (Q.) And therefore, to a great extent they are placed there for the convenience of lighters, as well as for the convenience of ships? (A.) Yes; that is so; grain and general cargo." I would rather like to suggest there that I hardly think it is a fair construction that he has put upon that dolphin question. They have a very large business in discharging grain ships, and I should suggest that those dolphins were simply put there to enable the company to do a paying business in a probably more paying way by putting better machinery, exactly in the same way as I should put better machinery in my business if I thought I could see my way to do it profitably. I do not know that the Millwall Dock Company's figures with regard to the amount of grain and the craft could be taken as correct. That is Question 1134. The witness says: "It entails great expense, and takes away a very large amount of goods that otherwise would come to the dock, and we get nothing for it."

2816. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) That you are disinclined to agree with?—He said they get nothing for it. I think I have tackled that; but where he says that we take goods that would otherwise go into the dock, I cannot agree with that. My argument against that would be that we only take goods for lightering, not to our own warehouses, but to any other given point, for the convenience of the merchant; or else we take them away in a barge for storage in our granary. We only take goods that the merchant, for some reason of his own, is compelled to give to us, from the Millwall Dock. The Millwall Dock Company would not get them on equal terms. As a matter of fact, the terms are already slightly unequal for short periods.

2817. The point being that you get the business, but you do not take it away from Mr. Trotter?—Certainly not.

2818. You do get the business?—We are bound to get a certain amount of that business, but we do not take away business that would in any way go into his warehouse by our barges going there. While we are on this question, I should like very much to ask this. Possibly some member of the Commission can explain it to me. I cannot understand the answer given by the Commercial Dock Company at Question 1794——

2819. We cannot go through the whole of this evidence?—It is only with regard to the way the Surrey Commercial Dock Company divide their accounts into three heads.

2820. They will have perhaps an opportunity of explaining that later. We cannot very well go into it now. Perhaps you will go on with your evidence?—The next point is with regard to taking delivery from ship. A great defect in the present working of flour and grain in the port is the fact that many goods are delivered to the receivers direct by the employees of the shipowners. This is a practice that should immediately be abolished, as the tendency is for all weighing to be "too close" (this is more noticeable in the case of loose grain), and with bag goods obstacles are put in the way of time being given to the receiver for the detection of damages and checking the weights of slacked and ullaged bags. These matters are daily becoming more serious and greatly adding to the difficulties of the business; it is felt most strongly by both merchants and granary keepers that an independent authority should take goods from the ship and deliver to the receivers. I should like to say a little about that. Going back to when I first came to the waterside, it had begun to be slightly altered then, but the original arrangement for discharging grain was for a body called the City Meters to do the weighing, and for many years after I had connection with this business ships used to come in and discharge their goods, and the City Meters weighed. This weighing was always, we considered, well and impartially done. Then the Millwall and the Surrey Commercial Dock Companies took to having the ships coming into their docks for discharging, and they took to doing the weighing. How that was I do not know. We did not consider that was satisfactory. Now the shipowners in the case of the lower docks have taken to discharge the goods to us, and we consider that this is very unsatisfactory. The ship's employees are undoubtedly endeavouring to do the very best they can for the ship, which we must assume is perfectly natural, but at the same time we consider that they are one-sided in their dealing, and it makes the business very difficult. We consider that in taking goods from ships we should have an impartial authority to stand as between the ship and receiver for all goods—loose grain, bag goods, or others—and if there were any question of a Trust we consider that that should be one of their duties. Then with regard to the working of the port generally, there is a feeling among many persons who have the interests of the port at heart that the opinion of persons competent to judge should be taken as to the practicability of building a set of locks across the river at Gravesend, by this means to keep ships and craft of all kinds always afloat above that point. It is also suggested that this would materially cheapen the cost of lighterage and do away with many of the dangers at present attending navigation, by removing the necessity for the greater part of night work. I have a little to add with regard to the question of the Trust. I should like to say that the river, the docks, and working out of ships, should come under the control of a public body; and that the river itself should be kept out of rates the same as any highway in the Metropolis that is for public use.

2821. Do you suggest that the Corporation should have control?—I should not like to make suggestions of that sort. Captain Hart-Davis has been here before me, and I think he has studied these subjects more deeply than I have.

2822. Would you advocate a public body being appointed?—Yes, more particularly for those three things, the river, the docks, and the working out of all the cargoes. The river itself, if it is possible to make a separate account of it, so to speak, should be kept out of the public rates, the same as any highway in London. The docks should be kept up and worked by a tonnage charge imposed on all goods, whatever their destination. Then with regard to separating the docks from the warehouses, which seems to be a very difficult question indeed, what occurs to my mind is this: I am inclined to think that these should be all taken over, if possible, and owing to the difficulty of leaving these two large interests on a fair basis, a very slight alteration of the present position might practically ruin one or the other. What I fear as a granary keeper is that we should be left in such a position that we could not keep our granaries going owing to being put in an impossible position with regard to rates. We already have to work at the same rates as the docks, and pay out a large proportion of our charge for lighterage. Assuming that the warehouses now belonging to the

docks are to be left on their hands to trade with, it will require the utmost care to arrive at a just and equitable basis on which they and the existing river-side wharves may both continue to do business and live. We have no objection to a charge on all goods if collected by a public authority, and if care is taken that the charge is collected impartially, whether goods go to lighter for transhipment, or lighter for wharves, or are given to the dock company to store, but we cannot —I am speaking for the granaries—see any justice in the arrangement mentioned in Question 1966 or Question 2029—that is where the dock companies suggest a charge on goods except those going to their premises —and we cannot submit to anything that will alter the free access of wharfingers' craft to obtain goods on the same terms as lighters would collect from the lower docks for storage in warehouses of the upper docks of the company.

2823. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Are the Millwall Docks the only docks which are in competition with you as far as trade goes?—We are in competition with all the docks.

2824. But it is more especially Millwall, is it not? —We should say that the Millwall and the Commercial Docks are our main competitors.

2825. Although the Millwall Docks do a certain amount of general trade as well?—Yes. As a matter of fact I do not pretend to go in for a great deal of loose grain in my business, for the simple reason that we cannot very well compete with the Millwall and the Commercial Dock Companies' charges for loose grain. Their charges for the first 21 days are utterly impossible for us. We cannot touch them.

2826. Then you would not separate the docks from the warehouses in any scheme that you suggest?—If I could see an equitable basis of carrying the thing through without it I would rather see it without, but it seems to me a very difficult thing to separate them.

2827. You do not suggest separating the docks and the warehouses?—I should not mind it if I could be perfectly sure that it would leave us all on an equitable working basis.

2828. But do you think it would be practicable to do so?—It is a very difficult point, I consider.

2329. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You spoke of the charges on grain being low compared with other charges in the Port of London, and you said that they must be low. What would you say to an equal tax upon all goods according to weight?—I do not think that it would do any harm.

2830. You think that an equal tax might be found that would not be too high on grain and yet would bring in sufficient money for the purpose of the Trust? —I do not think it would do any harm if it was the same for every article that comes into the grain market. If everything had to pay exactly the same charge I do not think it would do any harm.

2831. And yet it might be a charge that would bring in sufficient money for the purposes of the trust?—Yes.

2832. You say that the warehouse must be, if possible, near the centre—near London Bridge?—Yes.

2833. And you gave us illustrations with reference to the importance of bringing goods up from the lower docks. But would it not be possible for some purposes to have warehouses even higher up the river? What I mean is this: You speak of it as if the competition was between the neighbourhood of London Bridge and the lower docks alone; but is there not a possibility of trade developing a good bit above London Bridge?—It might do so. I have one wharf just above London Bridge now.

2834. And there are wharves a good bit above London Bridge?—Yes, there are, but the Embankment has taken up a great deal of room that might have been used for wharves there.

2835. You speak of goods going by the southern railways being carted from your wharves to the railway stations; but is it not the case that some of the southern lines have wharves upon the river itself?—We lighter to the riverside depôts of some of the southern railways.

2836. So that the goods if necessary could be brought from the lower docks direct to the railway depôts themselves?—Those would have to be in comparatively large quantities.

2837. Still, for that purpose the lower dock would almost be quite as conveniently situated as your own wharf; it would simply be one lighterage from your own wharf to the railway depôt instead of two—first to the wharf and then to the railway depôt?—I do not think so. They leave my wharf in a van in comparatively small quantities, and you cannot lighter in such small quantities as you can cart.

2838. Then where is the lighterage between when the goods go to the railway depôt?—I am not talking of lighterage in connection with railways at all.

2839. I think you mentioned that in reply to my question just now?—I am afraid I misunderstood you. I am afraid I did not quite follow your question for the moment.

2840. You speak of the necessity of having wharves in the neighbourhood of London Bridge, which, of course, is obviously convenient to some extent; but I was inquiring whether for some purposes you could not have lighterage from the lower docks to the railway depôts, which you say you serve by your vans direct to rail now? —I lighter direct to rail now for some things, but it is in large lines. It has to be a whole barge load at a time. I do that at the present time, but I am speaking now of the convenience of getting small quantities away from my place to the railway.

2841. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With reference to your proposal of a dam across the river at Gravesend, you said it would remove "the necessity for a greater part of the night work." What do you allude to as "night work"?—The lighterage night work and general night navigation.

2842. The navigation of the river?—Yes.

2843. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You spoke of "taking delivery from the ship." Is that system that you indicate, of delivery direct to the receiver, growing?—In the American trade the system has grown very fast (in spite of opposition by the merchants) of shipowners taking the discharge into their own hands.

2844. And delivering direct?—Delivering direct without any third person.

2845. The elimination of the middleman?—I should hardly put it in that way.

2846. Will you use your own words: "deliver direct," will that do?—The ships employing their own labour to deliver the goods.

2847. "Direct to the receiver" is your phrase, I think? —Yes; "direct to the receiver."

2848. Then I suppose if it is growing, the shipowners find it answer and the receivers find it answer?—The receivers have always grumbled, and they have tried to stop it.

2849. What is their grievance?—Their grievance is to a great extent the grievance that I stated.

2850. Then do you appear as a receiver?—I appear as a receiver on behalf of merchants; I actually take goods into my own craft.

2851. You are covered by the word "receiver"?—Yes.

2852. Then you, speaking now as a receiver, would prefer that it should go through the merchants, would you? —I want to see an independent authority handle all these goods between the ship and myself.

2853. But you say something is changing in the trade, and I want to get at that. Are you now receiving direct the stuff that you received before through somebody else? —Yes.

2854. And you would prefer to receive it through that somebody else?—Yes.

2855. I am not sure to begin with whether this comes within the terms of our reference. This is a custom, is it not?—It has become a custom.

2856. It is one of the things to which the last witness referred under the general head of "trade customs." Customs change and this is a changing method of conducting the trade, is it not?—Yes.

2857. If it is changing, is not somebody interested in the change, or why is it changed?—The shipowners have changed this.

2858. Then the shipowner is doing something for his own interest which you think is an injury to the trade? —That is undoubtedly the case, as I can explain to you very clearly. This innovation came in some years ago under what they called the London clause. When freight is paid an extra charge is imposed of 1s. 6d. a ton on our goods; in fact, they have issued a notice that they are going to make it 1s. 9d. now—another 3d. expense. They collect this charge. They took this 1s. 6d. and they gave us 72 hours. They said "We will put all the goods out to sort; you can take 72 hours before ap-

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plying, and then apply, and take your goods." The trade objected very much indeed; as a matter of fact there was a law suit, more or less friendly, fought over it. The Secretary of the Wharfingers Association, I believe, has evidence to give you about that. The flour trade, who fought it, lost the day. I believe, to put it in very ordinary language, the judgment was "you have accepted a bill of lading with those terms in it, and you can have no help."

2859. Then something is going from A to C now which used to go through B, is not that it?—That is so.

2860. Does the elimination of B conduce to more rapid despatch?—No.

2861. You are sure of that?—Quite.

2862. Generally we find if something has to pass from A to C, and B is there, the three persons will take more time than the two will?—My reason for giving you that answer would be this: when this London clause came in or at about that time, it was then that the ships took to discharging their own cargo alongside a hired quay. That is where the delay comes, because they put the cargo of one ship after another on these quays, and we not only have to wait 72 hours, but in some cases we have to wait for 14 days before we can get our goods.

2863. Then you clearly put it before us that for reasons good to themselves the shipowners have changed the method, and are sending their goods direct, which you, as the receiver of those goods, consider an injury to the Port, and you would rather that they came through the merchants?—Yes—through B—through the third man.

2864. But would you rather go back to the old system of the merchant?—We never took them from the merchant.

2865. You would rather go back to the old system?—Yes; we would rather go back upon the old system.

2866. You do not like the new system?—No, we do not, nor do the merchants.

2867. But the new system answers the purpose of somebody, and that is the shipowners?—Yes; the merchants will be giving evidence, and I think they will tell you exactly the same.

2868. But you are parties to it. How is it that the shipowner has such power as to be able to alter the method of conducting the trade to your disadvantage; you are a party to the bargain?—Because they combine.

2869. And you cannot?—I can only take the documents that are given me by my customers.

2870. Now you say: "This practice should be immediately abolished." How do you propose to abolish this practice?—I believe the practice is practically abolished in Liverpool, or there is a practice in Liverpool going on that we should be prepared to adopt in our trade, and that would abolish it.

2871. You would like to see it abolished?—Yes.

2872. But I want to get at the method of abolishing it. Did you hear my questions to the last witness about legislation, and so on?—Yes.

2873. I am on the same line of thought. You submit to us that this new method is so serious a disadvantage that steps ought to be taken to abolish it by legislation?—Yes, I do, and I think you would find that the corn trade, with which I have to do, would fully bear me out in that.

2874. You do not think, rather following a suggestion of my colleague, Sir Robert Giffen, that the Chamber of Commerce might take this up effectually?—No, I think that would be too slow a process.

2875. You would like it done immediately, you say?—Well, not to go at it like a bull at a gate, but if there was a Trust which was worked at all on the same lines as Liverpool, this practice would be done away with at once.

2876. Do you think if a few lines were put into a Bill doing away with it at once, anybody would raise their voices against it?—The shipowners might have something to say about it.

2877. And the other interests?—They would probably like it.

2878. Not the dock people?—I do not think they would object.

2879. Then you would rather suggest that it would be a matter that would not provoke much opposition?—I do not think it would.

2880. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I rather gather that what you suggest is some method of reverting to what was done when the City weighed the corn; is that what you suggest?—Yes. I mentioned the City Meters in this way, that they did come between the buyer and seller, and gave what all parties believed to be an equitable distribution of the goods.

2881. That is not what we understand by a "middleman" so much—a man taking a profit—but a man doing a service as a kind of arbitrator between the two interests?—You will understand that somebody has to do this distributing, and we want to have an independent person to do it. "Middleman" was rather a term that I objected to. I did not quite know how to handle that word.

2882. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I think I was the author of that phrase, and it was a wrong phrase to use. Your own phrase was "independent authority." That is what you mean?—Yes.

2883. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) In old days that would have been done by the labour of the dock companies, would it not—before the alteration was made giving the labour to the shipowners?—Yes, the dock companies would do the weighing then.

2884. That would be the idea that you have in your mind as an improvement?—We go further than that. We rather maintain that the dock companies, who are competitors of ours, should not be weighing goods to us on the one hand and into their own warehouses on the other. I make no charge against them, of course. I do not mean to do that; but I do not think it is a nice system to have, and we do not like it. It is felt that it is rather an improper system. There is one man weighing for the masters, and weighing for someone else.

2885. Is it done in Liverpool by what is called the Master Porter?—The weighing is done, I think, there by the port authority. The merchants will be coming here from the corn trade, and they will have plenty of evidence to give you in detail about it.

2886. Just for the purpose of reference, would you give us the amount of business you do in grain?—Personally?

2887. Personally, and also by the association you represent?—I could give you the collective figures that we have got from the granaries on behalf of the association, but I should not like to give any individual business alone, nor should I like to give my own.

2888. I mean the association you are representing?—The Secretary has no doubt figures which would help you in that. I have never taken them out.

2889. We should like, when we are considering the evidence, to know the amount of the trade which you represent when you give evidence before us. Perhaps you can put that in?—I will make a note of it and try to get it.

2890. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have not got the figures now at hand?—No; I do not think we have them here.

2891. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I do not notice any complaint of delay in delivery of goods in your statement?—Well, I was rather cut short, if I may use the term over that. I was going to mention the delay in the clause which it was suggested I had better not go on with. I can go on with the question of delay without giving the other part of the clause, if you will allow me to do so.

2892. If you please?—The delay would come in in the cost of lighterage. I had it in my mind to say that we consider that the delay in getting the goods, so far as our trade is concerned, is on the increase. I had a very serious discussion with my lighterman not very long ago. He was talking about putting up the price under my lighterage contract. He was very emphatic—in fact, I think I had it from him in writing—that the proposal to put up my charge was not in any way due to the detention of craft on our part, but was entirely due to the longer time it took to get the goods collected into the barges at the docks.

2893. I will not ask you questions as to the construction of locks across the river, because it touches a very important engineering question on which I suppose you would not feel yourself competent to give evidence?—I was hoping that you would not ask me any questions upon that. I simply threw that out because I was particularly requested to mention it by people at the waterside, but I am not competent to give evidence upon it.

2894. I suppose we may take it for granted that you would not like to do anything to damage the river?—Most certainly not.

Mr. JAMES ARTHUR HUMPHERY called and examined.

2895. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Will you give us your evidence?—I, jointly with my brothers, am a freeholder of New Hibernia and West Kent Wharves, which were erected by my father, the late Alderman Humphery. I am also a partner in the firm trading as the proprietors of Hay's Wharf, who are lessees of Hay's Wharf and Dock, Beal's Wharf, and Cotton's Wharf, Hay's Dock being the only private dock in the Port of London. This dock can take ships drawing 17ft. of water at spring tides and 15ft. of water at neap tides. The dock and warehouses of Hay's Wharf were built by my father, and have since been added to by my firm, at an outlay of over a quarter of a million sterling.

2896. Is this the same Hay's Wharf as that about which we had the pleasure last week of hearing the evidence of Mr. Colin Smith?—Yes; he is my partner. This outlay was made on the faith of the water in the different docks being free, and I would point out to the Commission that the dock companies, in laying their capital out practically at the same time, did so well knowing that the water in their docks was free.

2897. In their docks?—In their docks. I have brought some photographs of the property. (*The Witness handed in photographs of Hay's Wharf and Dock.*) I thought the Commission might like to see the magnitude of the warehouses that have been built. I have been actively engaged as a wharfinger since the year 1855, and my father and great-uncle before me, extending back for 200 years. With respect to the improvements required in the Port of London, there is no doubt that, taking into consideration the ever-increasing size of the ships now being built, better accommodation is absolutely necessary. I believe suggestions have been made as to the possibility of making quays along the riverside, with creeks running up at intervals, so that goods could be landed and sorted and delivered to the different consignees' craft from the sheds which it would be necessary to erect. This would apply equally to goods for exportation coming by water. I am not an expert on this subject, but as it is done at Antwerp most successfully, it naturally strikes anyone that it might be done in the Thames, certainly for a large proportion of the ships using the Port of London, by which means the expense and time of docking and undocking would be avoided. Railway accommodation could also be arranged by having a line running along the back of the proposed sheds and creeks. I am of opinion that if something of this kind could be feasible, and that these quays, and also the docks themselves, were placed under the control of one authority, leaving the present companies their warehouses, greater facilities would be obtained, and the cost reduced. I would also like to call attention to the abuse the licensed lightermen are at the present time making of the monopoly they enjoy. Here is a body of men able to earn from three to four pounds a week on the present conditions, attempting to impose terms which would increase the cost of this work at least 25 per cent.; in fact, we do not know what would be the result if their demands were complied with. The wages they now receive come out 50 per cent. of the amount charged for lighterage, and we, who have to employ these men, ask that their monopoly may be abolished, and the control and management of all matters connected with the river be placed in the hands of the Thames Conservancy Board, who already have a partial control, and any offences committed by the men dealt with in the police-courts, and not by the Watermen's Company. One thing, however, has been most clearly demonstrated in the course of the present strike of lightermen, namely, that had it not been for the efforts made by the master lightermen to clear the dock quays, the discharge of ships would have been impossible, and the whole trade of the Port of London would have been at a deadlock, thus showing the enormous importance of the lighterage of goods, as without that system the dock companies would be unable to carry on their business. If a charge is made on goods coming in or out of the docks, it would most seriously affect the cost of food. The market for butter, bacon, lard, cheese, etc., is in Tooley Street, and all these articles are inspected and stored there. Expensive refrigerating machinery has been erected on the spot for this particular trade, and naturally, if more has to be paid on the goods, it must increase the cost to the consumer. The cheapest mode of conveying the produce to this market is by water, and it is the most expeditious form of transit. This has been demonstrated times out of number. In conclusion, I have been at the waterside for nearly half a century, and can say without fear of contradiction that the position the docks of London now find themselves in has been brought about by the insane competition which existed between themselves for many years; in fact, the West India Docks brought themselves to absolute ruin. The competition of the wharfingers took a very small part in their troubles. The wharves were established years before the docks, and have been managed by practical men, whereas the dock companies have been in the hands of boards of directors, who could not possibly have the same practical knowledge of, or personal interest in, the business. I may say that personally I have a very large experience in both the loading and discharging of vessels. In fact, I have done it myself. I have had practical knowledge of it, and at the present time we discharge ships—they certainly are not so large as those in the docks, but the system of doing it is to all intents and purposes the same. We have miscellaneous cargoes which have to be sorted and delivered to the different consignees' barges. Some go to wharves; some go to warehouses; and others go to all sorts of different places; and we distribute the goods in exactly the same way as the dock companies do. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the cheapest and the best and the only way is for a ship to come alongside the quay and discharge her goods; and you want places like the "A" jetty at Tilbury Docks, so that the goods may be at once sorted and passed into barges or railway trucks. We do it ourselves. You will see on *that* photograph jetties running out into the river. The ships lie alongside, the barges are in between, and as we land the goods on to the quay, a man has a list of the different marks. They are all put upon trucks, and they are run round to the barges, and delivered with great despatch, and it does not require such an immense space outside the shed. I am certain that if you have practical men from the dock companies who have to do this work, they will bear out every word that I have said about it. I have heard some of the evidence here, and I agree entirely with some of it. As to the Albert Docks, where there is a large ship discharging, there is no berth for the barge to load at until the ship is discharged; she may poke her head in, but she cannot get to do very much until the ship is discharged. Then another ship comes alongside, and there you have to wait again for your goods.

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2898. You make a suggestion that the docks should be placed under the control of one authority?—Certainly.

2899. Have you got any more detailed scheme in your mind as to the constitution of that authority?—Well, it is really a very difficult thing. It would require very expert opinion as to how it was to be done. In my opinion there is no doubt that if the water of the docks could be under one authority, leaving the dock company their warehouses, and they to become warehouse keepers, and, of course, paying them a proper sum for the money they have expended in making the docks, that would relieve you of a great deal of trouble. It has been said that now the dock companies must consult their shareholders, and therefore they cannot take ships into the docks and work them for nothing. Of course, that is out of the question.

2900. Therefore you suggest the separation of the shipping business and the warehousing business?—I suggest the separation of them if it were possible. I do not say it is possible.

2901. Do you think it is practicable?—I think it is—I think it might be practicable.

2902. Do you think it is expedient?—Certainly, I am sure it is expedient.

2903. And practicable?—I think it might be practicable. That is a matter for consultation with the dock companies. If a Committee could meet with the dock companies and go into the question with them, I have no doubt the dock companies would fall in with the suggested scheme. It would be as much to their interest as to the interest of the general public. The dock companies, so far as I have had to deal with them, are most anxious to show every facility for the discharge of goods, and the system of carrying on the work of the port.

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2904. Warehouses now have the advantage of accommodation, do they not?—At the docks?

2905. They have the advantage of wharf accommodation, I mean?—Yes, a great many up-town warehouses, and the warehouses at the smaller docks, like St. Katharine Docks and the London Docks, which would have to be fed from the lower docks.

2906. I am referring to wharf accommodation?—They must have the water accommodation the same as the present. For instance, I presume a ship discharging at Tilbury would bring her goods up to St. Katharine's, and the dock company would have to come up alongside to get their goods out just as they have now. The water would be as free to them as to other people who want it. There is another point that I have not heard anybody deal with yet. It is a point that has apparently been missed here altogether, and that is about transhipment. If you are going to tax barges, that would throttle the transhipment trade of the Port of London effectually. That is a point which does not appear to have been touched upon at all. We do a large transhipment trade to Continental steamers. There is Nestlé's milk; we do thousands and thousands of cases of milk coming from the Continent in our barges, and take them to export ships in the dock. They would not send their milk to be transhipped—they would most likely send it to Antwerp or somewhere else. They would not pay a rate for that. And the same with export stuff going to Continental steamers coming out of the dock. I quite see that you must not have the barges drifting about all over the place, but if the dock companies would allow some of the larger masters to have a small tug in the dock—paying for the privilege if you like—that would in a great measure obviate a great deal of the congestion and trouble that now goes on. It is true that they have tugs of their own in there, for which we pay if we want their services. But it frequently happens that the dock tugs are engaged on their own business, and then, of course, they will not do our work. We have tried to get this facility, but even the gentleman who does the dock company's work himself, Mr. Gray, has not got that privilege. I think if the dock officials were asked, they would bear out what I say. If it were possible to allow some of the bigger masters to have a tug in the dock, to move the craft about, it would avoid a good deal of the barges getting into the way of the ships coming in and out of the docks. I think you will have evidence on this point. I am only what they call a woodmonger, but the lightermen proper will have something to say about that when they come here.

See 5628.

See 3894.

2907. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) From your knowledge of the craft on the river, do you think any difficulty would be experienced if the monopoly of the Watermen's Company was broken up?—None whatever, for this simple reason: since this strike has been going on—and this is the seventh week—I have moved I should think—I could not say for a certainty, but I should think, 20,000 tons of stuff.

2908. In lighters?—In lighters.

2909. By employing freemen?—By employing yachtmen, and my son is a lighterman. I apprenticed him to the trade. I have no doubt you will have that brought up before you presently by some of the lightermen, who will speak the other way. They will make out there is a lot of danger attached to it, and all the rest of it.

2910. I only want your opinion?—I have only one son, and it is not likely that I should have apprenticed him to a lighterman, if I thought he was going to run the risk of being drowned or having his legs broken. I have no doubt all this will be brought before you, because they have said it to me over and over again. Absolutely, with clerks out of the office and "handy men" off the wharf, I have been navigating these barges about the River Thames ever since this strike began. If I had the power to say to 50 or 60 men: "If you will come into my service, I will give you permanent employ at £3 a week to go into my barges and sit behind the tugs and smoke your pipe," I could have any number of men. But the difficulty I am in is this: the moment these lightermen say they will come back, I am obliged to say to my men whom I have brought from the out-ports: "I am very sorry, but I cannot employ you any longer."

2911. As a practical man, you say that the traffic of the river would be just as well conducted if the monopoly of the Watermen's Company were done away with?—Every bit. I go further and say that it is a most monstrous thing. I may work in the City of London between 200 and 300 cart-horses—valuable horses—nobody has any control over any of my men—I employ whom I like—and if they do damage, I have to pay for it. Then on the other hand take the barge work on the river. Suppose a ship coming down the river in charge of a pilot runs over my barge; the stuff on my barge may be worth £20,000. But what happens? I am introduced to a gentleman on the bridge, and he is supposed to have got only £100, and all I can get out of him is that £100. Whereas, suppose that in throwing off my barge for one of the different wharves that I work for, I knock a hole in a ship and sink it, they will come and take everything I have got—they will make a bankrupt of me if I cannot pay the whole damage. And also I am obliged to employ a compulsory man. That is where the hardship comes in. I would not mind if I could employ whom I liked.

2912. You would not mind the liability if you could employ whom you liked?—Just so, and I will undertake to say that every master lighterman who comes here will tell you the same thing.

2913. Then you think the work would be better conducted if the watermen's monopoly were broken up?—I do distinctly. There are a certain number of real good lightermen—no better men in London, or in England—but it is only a limited number. When you have done with that number of men you are obliged to go to what we call wasters—any chap who may happen to be at the waterside—you are obliged to take him, because you cannot navigate your barges, unless you have a man in charge of each barge.

2914. You mean a man who is free of the Company?—Free of the Company. There is another point which I have not mentioned, and that is this. A ship is liable only for the amount of £8 a ton, and £15 a ton in case of loss of life. I am liable for everything.

2915. That is rather another question, is it not?—It is another question, but still it shows the unfairness to the poor wretched lighterman, who has to navigate his barge on the Thames.

2916. It is rather another point?—It is another point.

2917. Then I was going to ask you another question. You said that the West India Dock Company brought themselves to almost absolute ruin by insane competition. Is it not the fact that the commercial pressure which fell on the West India Dock Company was in consequence of building Tilbury Dock before the time had come for it?—I knew Mr. Dolree very well indeed; he was Chairman of the West India Dock Company; he used to live near me at Weybridge. Before the Tilbury Dock was built, when it was in contemplation, I said to him, "Why on earth do you not amalgamate or come to some terms with the other docks before you rush into this huge expense?" He said, "How can I? Look at their capital." Of course, I told him what would happen, and it has happened.

2918. But was not the idea of the Tilbury Dock to provide for deep draught ships without their going so far up the river?—Not at all. At that time it was simply one dock fighting against the other. They said they would go one better. That is the real truth. I am sure the directors of the London and St. Katharine Dock Company would bear me out when I say that there was no question about facilities for ships, there were plenty of facilities in those days for the ships using the port, but the West India Dock Company wanted to beat the London Dock Company. I remember quite well, as a young man, I used to go and get ships for my own little docks. I would go to get ships at Gravesend, and they would say, "I will give you a fiver if you come to us." Then the London Docks would go one better and say, "I will give you £10." Then the West India Dock company would say, "I will make it £15."

2919. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) This statement about the Tilbury Docks, of course, is a statement of your own. You only make it from your own point of view?—I have a very strong opinion.

2920. But it is rather an arbitrary statement, I think?—I think if you were to ask the directors——

2921. I am asking you?—My opinion is, and I have very good reason for saying so, that this was simply the case of the companies cutting one against another.

2922. That is, of course, a statement which is very interesting to hear, and for which we are obliged to you, but it is only your opinion?—It is only my opinion, but I think the directors of the other docks would bear out my observation.

2923. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) At any rate, the expense of the Tilbury Dock has been a good thing for

London?—I consider the Tilbury Dock is the best managed dock in London, and the most convenient, and as a matter of fact, I have never charged a shilling extra for coming up from Tilbury. Other lightermen have made a charge.

2924. That is rather contrary to the evidence that we have had?—I know. When the Tilbury Dock first opened some people were charging 4s. a ton. We never charged more than the usual rates from the other docks. We got better despatch and everything—the dock was better managed. Tilbury is an excellent dock.

2925. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do you think that the difficulties and disadvantages of the Port and docks of London are increasing?—I think they will increase with the size of ships that come in now.

2926. Do you think the difficulties and disadvantages are increasing?—Yes, I do.

2927. And that the position is getting more serious?—Yes, with the size of ships that come in.

2928. And therefore something should be done without delay?—Certainly. I think certainly the large shipowners would say so.

2929. I am not asking you about the large shipowners. I am asking you with your great experience to give us your views. You have come before us as a witness to speak that which you know. I may take it from you that you think something should be done without delay?—I do, in order to increase the facilities of the Port of London. A great deal has been said by these shipowners, I know (and I have been told myself) about the despatch. Well, there is no doubt about it. I fearlessly say that if you get any practical men from any of the docks, they will tell you that the only way to give despatch to ships is to turn their whole cargo out on the quay. It is no use fiddling about. You may get a run of stuff put over the ship's side, but you ought to be able to land the whole cargo on the quay, and then ship it to the barges, or railway, or what not.

2930. I think we need not go into details. You say generally that something should immediately be done to improve the facilities of the Port of London?—Certainly.

2931. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You are in favour of doing away entirely with the privileges of the Watermen's Company?—I am, certainly; most distinctly.

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2932. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You have ships drawing 17ft. of water coming into your private dock?—Yes. I have had two China clippers, in years gone by, at the same time in that dock—vessels of 600 and 500 tons.

2933. Do any of them come into the dock?—Right into the dock in the old clipper days.

2934. Is that water free?—Yes, perfectly free, and we charge no dock dues either.

2935. A barge has a right to come in just as they do into the other docks?—Certainly, and ballast barges and barges bringing goods for the ships, if they load in there, we charge them nothing.

2936. But that is not a matter of legal obligation; you can charge what you like?—It is a private place. If we chose we could charge them anything, or prevent them coming in.

2937. Then with regard to the formation of a Trust and the separation of the warehouse business from the dock business proper, have you considered the case of the warehouses actually overhanging the dock water—how they could be separated?—Well, there is a difficulty which would have to be discussed with the dock companies and gone into with their experts to see if anything could possibly be done. I only say that I think if the water could be dealt with by another authority, and the warehouses left with the dock company, if that is possible, it would be a very great thing not only for the public generally, but also for the dock companies themselves. I think the water is an incubus to them.

2938. Are there any other difficulties of that kind that would impede the separation of the businesses?—Well, the dock companies would be the better judges to say what the difficulties would be.

2939. If they tell us that the two things cannot be separated, or that it would be a work of extreme difficulty, are we to accept what they say?—Well, I was very much surprised to hear some remarks that were made by Sir Thomas Sutherland—I read his evidence. He talked about putting his valuable ships in the river. I do not think he could ever remember the time when we had the ice in the river. I have seen a ship's hawsers as big as your leg break with the weight of ice on them.

Mr. Edward Weber called and examined.

2940. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Mr. Weber, you do not represent the Wharfingers' Association. You are going to give evidence on your own account?—Yes; I am an independent witness.

Mr. E. Weber.

2941. Would you kindly give us your evidence?—I have been since 1877 a member of the firm of Anderson, Weber, and Smith, wharfingers, now occupying Metropolitan and New Cranes Wharves, Wapping Wall, and Cold Air Stores, Montague Close, London Bridge. The firm's premises are mostly bonded, and some 40,000 to 50,000 tons of goods are landed annually, consisting of coffee, cocoa, general East and West Indian and colonial produce, and frozen meat, etc. I agree with the evidence given by the chairman of the Wharfingers' Association. I consider the total warehouse accommodation of London ample for present requirements. I consider that one great defect in the administration of the port is the delay often experienced in getting goods from vessels discharging in the docks, I think in great measure owing to want of sufficient facilities for landing from ships and sorting and delivering to barges simultaneously. I also consider that the monopoly of the Freemen of the river as to navigating barges is detrimental to the interest of the port. I am of opinion that it would be to the advantage of all who use the Port of London if one central authority were established, having authority over the whole river, its maintenance, improvement, and navigation, and also of the dock companies' present waters, locks, and quays, but not the warehouses. That this central authority should be charged to provide the necessary appliances for expediting all discharging and loading operations, and have general control of them, and that the costs of these, the dredging, etc., of the river, and all the other duties, should be provided mainly by:—(1) A tonnage rate on all vessels entering the river to discharge or load cargo; (2) a further rate on all vessels entering the docks to discharge or load their cargo themselves; (3) or rates for rapidly discharging the cargoe across the quay and delivering it to consignees, paid, of course, by the ship as at present—that is the idea; (4) other charges hitherto received by the Thames Conservancy and Watermen's Hall, and (5) if the above are insufficient, a small tonnage rate on all goods imported.

2942. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You complain of want of facilities; but when it is interpreted, does that mean more quay space and more access for lighters to the quays?—More quay space.

2943. And better access for the lighters to the quays?—Yes.

2944. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Under your five heads, you contemplate the imposition of certain rates and charges. Those would all fall upon the goods eventually, would they not?—Eventually everything falls on the goods.

2945. That is what I mean. You do not contemplate anything beyond these? You think these would be amply sufficient for your central authority?—I think they would be sufficient; but doubtless, if a large amount were required to be borrowed by the central authority, there would have to be some guarantee behind it, in order to borrow at a good rate of interest.

2946. Can you indicate what that would be?—I should think the rating would cover it.

2947. You would fall back on the rating?—On the rating; but you cannot imagine that the trade of London is going to fall to such an extent that these would not be sufficient.

2948. But the consumer eventually must pay?—He must eventually pay, whatever is done. The great point I have in my mind is always free access, free water, and free delivery, as at present.

2949. Do you think the imposition of these charges, falling as they would where you have indicated, would place London at any disadvantage with other ports?—I do not think so.

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2950. You have contemplated that, of course?—The idea is to give facilities which would bring the trade here.

2951. You think the money would be so spent that the extra facilities would amply recoup those charges?—I do.

2952. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You advocate one central authority over the whole river, including the dock company's present waters, locks and quays. By "quays" do you refer to the wharves on the Thames not belonging to the dock companies?—I had not contemplated that at the time, but I suppose that would have to be so if it were made.

2953. You said, "The dock company's present waters, locks and quays." I want to know whether "quays" apply to all the quays on the river, or only to the dock companies' quays?—The dock companies' quays.

Mr. MARK BUONVENTURA FEATHERSTONEHAUGH MAJOR called and examined.

Mr. M. B. F. Major.

2954. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—I am a partner in the firm of Major and Field, which was founded by my father, Mr. Charles Messenger Major, in conjunction with others, in December, 1853, under the style of Kearns, Tuxford and Major. We carry on business at Red Lion and Three Cranes Wharf. We are wharfingers and bonded and general warehousekeepers, and do our own and a small general lighterage business and a large frozen meat lighterage trade. Our premises are situated on the north side of the river, and adjoin the east side of Southwark Bridge. In 1884 we started the husking of coffee in London, as it appeared that there was a growing desire on the part of planters to ship their coffee in the parchment, and facilities for the treatment of such coffee were already being offered on the Continent. The business has now become a considerable one in the port. I am of opinion that a master lighterman's liability for damage to cargo carried by himself, and for damage caused to other vessels and cargo, should be limited in the same manner as a shipowner's liability. At present the liability is only limited by the extent of the damage, and the risk as regards damage caused to other vessels and their cargo, is of necessity an absolutely undefined one in extent. Master lightermen, by adopting the London Lighterage Clause, can free themselves from liability for loss or damage to cargo they may carry, but, although merchants' policies can be taken out to cover the goods until finally landed, and without recourse to lightermen, their consent to the adopting of this clause cannot always be obtained. In such cases a master lighterman has either to run an undue risk, or to take out a policy to cover it, the premium on which is very heavy, thus adding indirectly to the cost of lighterage, by necessitating two policies where one would suffice. I submit this as an instance of the way in which the requirements of London merchants tend to increase charges unnecessarily. My point is that the tendency of the conditions under which a master lighterman has to conduct his business is towards increasing his risks, and therefore increasing the charges he has to make unduly. I put in tables showing the average time occupied in obtaining delivery of the same class of cargo for our wharf, from vessels discharging in the various docks, and also, in the case of coffee, at Southampton.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the average time occupied in obtaining deliveries of cargoes of coffee and tea for the wharf of Messrs. Major and Field from vessels discharging in the various docks, and, in the case of coffee, at Southampton. See Appendix, 8th Day, No. 6.*)

I may mention that this only refers to obtaining the bulk of the cargo. There are a certain number of packages that we cannot always obtain immediately from the ship. I have not taken that into account, but I do not think it makes a material difference in the point of view I am considering, because very often, for our own purposes, we should not take delivery of the last portion immediately. We should keep it down in the dock until we had received another parcel of goods. I draw the following conclusions. As regards coffee, that London does not compare unfavourably with Southampton in this class of cargo, which is, I think, the only class permitting of fair comparison. One line, the Royal Mail Company, send their mail boats to Southampton and their cargo boats to London, and I find that we are not at any disadvantage in taking delivery of our cargo in the Albert Docks. I have omitted small parcels. I have taken large parcels, and I find that the result is not unsatisfactory at all from our point of view. I do not know whether the difference that I make as against others who have given evidence to-day, is partly due to the fact that we have not taken into account what I should call the "completion" of the cargo. But the fact remains that I think the result in London is very satisfactory as regards coffee from the Royal Mail steamers.

2955. Where does the Atlantic transport trade come from?—It is transhipped at New York for London.

2956. As far as you are concerned, it comes from New York?—Yes; and there again we find the same, although the Atlantic Transport line brings a very miscellaneous cargo. It does not mean because we get the coffee in this average number of days that the cargo is all discharged; but as regards coffee we find that there is no disadvantage in its coming that way. Then my second conclusion is that, other things being equal, it would seem to be in merchants' interests that cargo vessels of a moderate, rather than of a very large size, should be employed, unless shipowners can increase the rate of discharge proportionately to the increased size of the cargoes. We notice that with the boats which discharge in the London Dock bringing coffee from Natal, and the boats discharging in the river and the St. Katharine Dock. We have only one discharging in the river which brought us a consignment comparing with two in St. Katharine Dock, and that one seems to point to the fact that cargoes from small vessels can be satisfactorily delivered overside into barges. They only took two days from the time they reported the ship to the time the coffee was at our wharf, which we thought not at all unsatisfactory. As regards tea, the return seems to confirm the widely-held view that the jetty system of the Victoria Docks is better than the quay system. I am not prepared to say, however, that this can be accepted as absolutely conclusive, as, although the jetty system is no doubt the better of the two, if vessels are only berthed on one side of the jetty, leaving the other side free for barges, I do not think that in actual working this would be done as a general rule, and the advantage in that case would be very materially reduced, so that in providing for fresh dock accommodation, considerations such as cost and convenience for other reasons, could probably be allowed their full weight without great detriment to the result. The comparison there is the "City" boats, which are about the only line of boats which discharge tea in the Victoria Docks as against the P. & O. steamers, and John Swire and Co.'s. Those steamers have very varied cargoes, which would take relatively longer to discharge. The boats in the Tilbury Docks also bring chiefly tea. I am further of opinion that by the more frequent use of a "dummy" between the vessels and the quay, delivery of the cargo could often be accelerated under the quay system, but I anticipate that modern luffing cranes would be necessary in order to plumb over the intervening space on to the vessel's deck, landing the cargo in the sheds, deliveries at the same time being made from the sheds to barges on either side of the "dummy" between the vessel and the quay. I consider that shipowners should endeavour to acquaint themselves with the plan of stowage of the vessel, so that craft need not be sent for goods, as now, on the arrival of the vessel, but only when the shipowners notified that they were ready for delivery. I am aware that that is very often not feasible, but to a considerable extent I should fancy that shipowners might do more to enable themselves to advise merchants and lightermen where the goods are stowed, and when they are ready for delivery alongside. That would be a great convenience for merchants and lightermen, and at the same time it would tend to avoid congestion of the docks by the barge traffic. Increased facilities for locking barges in and out of dock are required, and proper control should be exercised over them when entering and leaving the locks, as the almost entire absence of such control at present at the locks of the Albert Docks results in great confusion and serious delay. It is a matter for consideration whether it would not be practicable to make the lock levels by pumping water from the river into the locks. If this could be done, it seems probable that much less dredging would be required in the docks, and that barges

could be locked in and out at all states of the tide, which would be a great facility to the commerce of the port, and would tend to counteract the ever-increasing cost of lighterage. I do not know whether, from an engineering point of view, that would be feasible, but if so it would be a very great advantage to us. I am strongly of opinion that the questions of the water approaches to the port, and of dock accommodation and facilities, are questions of the greatest importance and urgency to the entire population of London, and to some extent also to the Empire. I believe and I think it is generally admitted that the physical conditions of the port in these respects are in serious danger of falling behind the requirements of modern times, even if they have not already done so, and this being so, immediate steps should be taken that will enable the port arrangements to be kept abreast of those requirements. I am opposed to any alteration of the system under which free delivery of goods and free access of barges to vessels, whether berthed in a dock or in the river, can be claimed under certain conditions, as I believe such alteration could not fail to be unjust and inequitable to the large interests which have grown up on the faith of repeated Acts of Parliament confirming this system. If I may, I should like to say here a few words with regard to the tonnage carried by barges, as having a bearing on the suggestions that have been made that dues should be levied on barges. This comes in better at this point.

2957. Are you now coming to your return of the tonnage of barges?—Yes, the measurement tonnage of barges, the burden tonnage of barges, and the actual weight of goods that barges brought up per ton.

2958. I think that encroaches on the case of the dock companies, and I do not think we can allow that to be put in for that reason?—Not at all.

2959. Not at present?—It is an important return, of course, as showing what our barges actually carried.

2960. Yes. We can deal with it later, perhaps?—If, however, it should be found impossible to obtain further revenue in any other way, any charge should, I consider, be made on all goods irrespective of destination or mode of delivery. If feasible, it might be found desirable to exempt transhipment goods from such a charge, but there would be difficulties in arranging this. At the same time, I am very strongly opposed to any additional charge whatever being placed on goods if it can possibly be avoided, as any charge could not fail to handicap London trade to some extent. Up to the present time much trade has probably come to London owing to financial considerations, in spite, possibly, of higher charges, but as foreign money markets gradually develop in importance, this cause will, it is reasonable to assume, gradually cease to operate with the same force as in the past, making the question of relative charges one of still more vital importance in the future. I do not consider that dock management and the provision of dock accommodation for the Port of London is a suitable matter to be left to a trading company for the following among other reasons:—(*a*) That the interests of London as a whole may often demand the outlay of large sums for purposes that may not be remunerative for many years, or that in themselves may never be so, and it would be unreasonable to expect such a company to provide for them, contrary to the interests of its shareholders. (*b*) That in the interests of London as a whole it may be advisable to levy charges on a basis which would not provide adequate remuneration for shareholders in a trading concern. (*c*) That if it should ever be necessary to abolish the right of "free delivery" and sanction the levy of an equal charge on all goods, irrespective of destination, by the dock companies, there would be great danger that in the stress of competition for the warehousing of goods they would directly or indirectly remit such charge on goods warehoused with them. In such case the port would have lost the benefits appertaining to the system of "free delivery," and would not derive a correspondingly full benefit in exchange. At the same time, competing interests would be seriously prejudiced. Bearing on that, I should like to point out that the Messagéries Maritime de France on their line have a clause which provides that the expenses of discharging from the steamer and manipulating are to be borne by the goods at a certain rate. The consignee, when he presents his bill of lading at the shipowners' office for a release, is asked whether he wishes for a dock release or an overside release. If he asks for a dock release he is charged at the rate of 2s. a ton, discharging expenses. If he asks for an overside release he is charged 3s. 6d. a ton. I, of course, do not know exactly what the relations between the dock company and the shipowner are, but I think it is reasonable to suppose that the shipowner will not receive less than 3s. 6d. a ton from somebody. He puts that down as being the cost of discharging, and either the dock company have to do the work of discharging and delivering the cargo to barges from their own docks, or otherwise take the delivery from the quay, or they make an allowance to the shipowner to cover that. It seems to be revenue which is given up, when really it might just as well have been retained.

2961. It is not a matter of your own knowledge, is it?—It is a matter of my own knowledge that the consignee is charged 2s. if he leaves the goods in the dock, and he is charged 3s. 6d. if he takes them overside. The business of warehousing on the other hand can be suitably conducted by such a concern, and I therefore advocate that, if possible, the dock waterways, quays, etc., should be taken over by a public Trust, and that the existing Companies should retain the warehouses in their own hands. If the Trust were to take over the warehouses it would almost certainly be necessary to compensate competing interests, or for the Trust to take them over as well, neither of which plans would, in my opinion, be to the best interests of the Port. Revenue should be obtained by dock dues on shipping, charges for quay space, etc., much as at present, but, in my opinion, a Port Trust should not undertake to supply the labour for the discharging of ships, as I believe this could be more efficiently supervised and controlled by shipowners themselves than by a concern of such magnitude as a Trust would be. In my opinion, everything possible should be done to encourage delivery to barges, which is quicker and cheaper than delivery to vans, and has the effect of keeping the traffic to London's natural highway—the river, instead of adding to the congestion of the street traffic. Should the charges received from shipping, etc., not prove adequate to provide for the interest on capital, it is a question for serious consideration, whether, as the prosperity of London as a City is bound up with the prosperity of the Port, the deficiency would not be more advantageously made up by levying a rate on all property than by placing charges on goods or unduly heavy charges on shipping. In such a case a rateable value might perhaps be placed on all craft not liable to dock dues, for the purpose of charging the rate on them also. The cost of maintaining the river approaches to the Port, and of keeping them always abreast of requirements, ought, undoubtedly, to fall on the rates, seeing that they constitute the highway to the City from all parts of the world. It would appear to be desirable that the control of the river and of the docks should be in the hands of a single authority, the members of which should be elected by the various bodies interested in the traffic, and I should say by the representatives of the ratepayers also if contributions are made from the rates. I think if the Port had been under some such control in the past we probably should not have had Tilbury Docks at present. We should have had docks nearer those which are already existing, probably additional dock accommodation at the Albert and Victoria Docks, which would have been of great advantage from the consignees' point of view. There may have been some advantage in having the dock at Tilbury, for certain traffic has been attracted that wanted to discharge a small portion of traffic, and then go elsewhere. But I doubt whether the Port, as a whole, has benefited by Tilbury Dock. It would have been better if we could have had a dock nearer other docks. Speaking for our own firm as lightermen, as well as wharfingers, the effect has been that we do not find that we could advantageously do our own lightering from Tilbury Dock. We have handed it over to an ordinary master lighterman to do it for us, because the amount of traffic that we could obtain was not sufficient for us to get a fresh staff to do that work. Also the towing charges operate very adversely to doing the work from Tilbury. The charge is about 50 per cent. more than the charge for towing from the Albert Dock, and it is about 100 per cent. more than from the Victoria Dock.

2962. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I think I gather from you that you would have liked to see Tilbury Dock nearer London?—Exactly so.

2963. But assuming that it is necessary for ships to have deep water to enter docks you could not have had the advantage of the Tilbury Dock without deepening the river?—That undoubtedly should have been done. I think if it is possible to do that it should have been done.

2964. Therefore, if there had been a central authority in former times to deal with the question, you think Tilbury Docks need not have been built at Tilbury, but

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higher up the river, the river being supposed, under the arrangement, to be deepened for big ships?—Exactly.

2965. Your proposal with regard to the dock companies and the Trust, if one is formed, I gather, would be that the warehouses belonging to the dock company would be left to be managed as a warehouse company by the docks company?—Yes.

2966. And I gather also that you would not be afraid of such a competition as that?—I do not think so. They would have to retain their warehouses at a fair valuation, I suppose, and I should fancy that that valuation would be such that they could not undercut me unduly—I do not think so. I hope not.

2967. At any rate, that would be such a fair competition that you do not think people ought to be afraid of. It would be a large warehousing company?—Undoubtedly it would; but it is now a large warehousing company.

2968. But now the warehouses are affiliated to a dock company?—I quite see that it may be handicapped by its docks, but I fancy that that is a competition that we should be able to stand.

2969. Supposing the two were separated, although it would be a very large warehousing interest you think that it would not be too large for fair competition with the other warehouses?—The fact of its size would be rather, I am inclined to think, a detriment to the warehousing company itself than to ourselves as wharfingers.

2970. That idea is based upon the primary condition, is it not, that the docks, and the quays round the docks, were under a public Trust?—Yes.

2971. So that the various warehouse proprietors in London, and the new warehouse company formed from the dock company, would be both on equal terms so far as the use of the docks and the quays is concerned?—Yes.

2972. Therefore, you would suggest that a very adequate amount of quay space should, at any rate, be left to the Trust?—The Trust, I think, would have to take over the whole of the quay space.

2973. It is not merely a question of the water, but of all the necessary quays for the discharge of ships rapidly, so as to avoid demurrage?—Yes.

2974. From which quays the goods would be distributed either to the private warehouses or to the warehouses belonging to the original dock company, on equal terms?—Exactly. The shipowners, of course, would want the same facilities as they have at present. Therefore the quay space could not be curtailed.

2975. On the contrary, I suppose that if rapid discharge is a necessity for the ships, the larger the quay space the better for the shipowner?—No doubt.

2976. And I gather from what you say, that unless some proposal of that sort is made, you see no alternative but to buy up all the competing interests?—That is so. I do not think it would be reasonable to put the warehouses into a public Trust, to compete with private interests. If the warehouses were taken over by the public Trust, then I think there would be claims for compensation from private warehouse keepers.

2977. You mean that if the warehouses and the docks and the quays were under a public Trust the competition would be too severe for private interests?—Undoubtedly, I think.

2978. That would be competition engendered by the Trust?—Yes.

2979. And in that event you see no safeguard short of buying up those private interests, as has been suggested this morning?—I do not.

2980. Then you said something about rating of the barges. Such a thing has never been heard of in this country as rating movable things, has it?—I should think not; but I should think it would be feasible under the authority which at present grants us our licences for the barges. Some such system could be made, by which we should pay the equivalent amount of rate on the barge, I should fancy. We have to get a certificate for every barge we have on the river now.

2981. Perhaps it would be more in accordance with the ordinary practice in this country to call it a licence, or something of that sort, because rateable value is invariably something which cannot be removed from the ground?—The term might be altered undoubtedly, but the effect, in my idea, was that the property should pay the same as, for instance, my warehouse property has to pay. I pay so much in the £ for my warehouse property, and therefore I should pay so much in the £ for my barge property.

2982. But it is a very different thing rating a barge which may be here to-day and gone to-morrow, and rating your warehouse, which cannot get away?—Undoubtedly; but if I lose one barge to-day, I shall probably replace it by another to-morrow.

2983. That may be so, but it does not follow?—No.

2984. (*Mr. Ellis.*) What you want is the money. You do not care whether it is a licence or a rate; but you want the money?—Money will no doubt have to be obtained, and if it has to be obtained from the rates it occurred to me that it might be reasonable that the floating property should be charged as well.

2985. In your statement you said that you were strongly opposed to any additional charge whatever being placed on goods. You have heard the evidence of some of the previous witnesses, no doubt?—I have.

2986. Do you differ from them in thinking an additional charge might be detrimental to the Port of London?—I feel that an additional charge on those goods which are not consumed in London itself must operate against the Port to the extent of the charge.

2987. And, I suppose, from what you have said, that you would desire this public Trust, supposing it were set up, to bear in mind that the trade of London must not be injured by any imposition of undue charges, and go to the rates rather than do that?—Undoubtedly.

2988. To that extent you would put the rates almost in priority. You would put them, at all events, prior to undue charges?—Prior to undue charges, of course. Those interests which already bear a charge and are not shown to be affected by that charge could fairly continue to bear that charge; but when it comes to be a question of imposing a new charge, an additional charge, the effect of that is uncertain. Therefore, the authority should be very cautious in imposing additional charges.

2989. Do you think that a public authority of that kind, if it had the open mouth of the rateable purse ever at hand, might become extravagant? Do you think it might show want of economy in its operations?—If it was a thoroughly practical body, with the trading community largely represented on the body, I do not think there would be any danger of that, because a trader would, after all, feel that, if he was wasting the money, he was imposing an additional burden upon himself. For instance, the warehousing interest would feel that very keenly. If an addition had to be made to the rates, they would know it at once.

2990. At all events, you think that the burden of the rates would be sufficient security?—I should fancy so.

2991. You have given some thought to this, perhaps, have you, as a ratepayer?—Yes.

2992. As a member of a firm which pays large rates?—Yes.

2993. And you would be perfectly willing to take the risk yourselves—I put it to you—of creating a public Trust which might conceivably increase the burden of rates considerably?—Undoubtedly, if it was an elective body which would feel the imposition of the rates directly. The constitution of that body would no doubt want very carefully considering, and it would want to be guarded against very carefully, so that one interest should not have priority over another.

2994. But coming before us as a member of a firm of large ratepayers, you yourself are willing to run the risk?—Yes.

(Adjourned to Tuesday, the 11th inst., at 12 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

NINTH DAY.

Tuesday, 11th December, 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (in the Chair).

Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Sir ALEXANDER RICHARDSON BINNIE called and examined.

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2995. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are the chief engineer of the London County Council?—Yes.

2996. And you have been in that position since March, 1890?—Yes.

2997. You are a Member of the Council of the Institution of Civil Engineers and a Fellow of the Geological and other societies?—Yes.

2998. You appeared and gave evidence before the Lower Thames Navigation Commision in 1894?—Yes, I did.

2999. Will you kindly give us your evidence?—I will first deal with the question of main drainage. The County Council and its predecessors, the Metropolitan Board of Works, have devoted much attention and expended considerable sums in improving the purity of the river by preventing the entrance of solid matter, due either to house drainage or the washing of the streets. Since 1855 up to the present time they have expended a capital sum of over £8,000,000 on the main drainage of London. Since 1889 they have expended in capital over £1,000,000 at Barking and Crossness (including the provision for ships) for the purpose of clarifying the sewage by chemical precipitation, the annual cost of working which system is over £100,000. The results have more than fulfilled the best anticipations of those who designed the works. The process may be described as adding to the crude sewage from four to five grains of lime and one grain of protosulphate of iron per gallon, and allowing the sewage so treated to deposit its grosser suspended matter in large covered tanks. The supernatant effluent is passed into the river, so far as suspended solids are concerned, in a comparatively clear state. The crude sewage as it flows to the outfalls contains about 30 to 35 grains per gallon. About 80 per cent. of this solid matter is removed by the above process. The matter deposited after the above treatment with chemicals, and which is technically termed "sludge," is a black offensive semi-fluid containing about 90 per cent. of moisture. This matter principally consists of flocculent particles containing but little solid mineral matter. The sludge is at the outfalls (Barking and Crossness) pumped into ships, sent 40 or 50 miles down the river, and discharged in the Barrow Deep, 15 or 20 miles below the Nore Lightship on the ebb tide. The discharges of sludge are watched and regulated by signal from our ships to the officers of the Trinity Board at the Maplin Lightship, who keep a record of the passage of each ship into the Barrow Deep, and report the same to the Thames Conservancy. To perform this duty a fleet of six vessels of the most modern type is constantly engaged night and day at all times of the year. Each vessel is about 1,800 tons gross and 1,000 tons net capacity, 234 feet long, by 38 feet wide, and 14 feet 6 inches deep. When light the vessels draw 7 feet 6 inches, and when loaded 10 feet to 10 feet 6 inches of water. The average cost of conveying the sludge to sea in the Barrow Deep, a distance of 45 to 50 miles from Barking to Crossness, is £14 3s. 5·7d. per trip, including the return journey empty. As each ship carries on an average 1,000 tons, this works out at about 3·4 pence per ton per trip, or, taking the journey as 45 miles, at ·075 pence per ton per mile. If you will allow me I will hand in the annual statement of the cost of working the sludge ships, which you will find on pages 6 and 7 of the annual return. (*The Annual Return was handed in.*) The channel of the Barrow Deep is not used as a general navigable channel, but has been buoyed and partly lighted with gas buoys by the Trinity Board at the expense of the London County Council; and is now used by other bodies for the deposit of refuse material without any payment on account of the buoyage of the channel. I hand in a chart of the channel showing the position of the line marked red, within which we are not allowed to deposit sludge. (*The Chart was handed in.*) With regard to Question 3318, asked me by Sir George Nares, when appearing before the Board of Trade inquiry, 1894-96, I should like to be permitted to make the following remark:—That I do not consider the light flocculent matter of the London sewage is of any permanent injury to the Barrow Deep as a possible future channel at the mouth of the Thames. But it has been given in evidence that the solid matter derived from dredging the river is now being deposited there. I rather incline to the opinion that possible injury to the channel of the Barrow Deep might be obviated, and the dredged material more economically disposed of by forming the same or similar training banks to that mentioned in paragraph 47 of the Board of Trade inquiry report. The whole of this work is carried out by me under the direction of the Main Drainage Committee. With the object of still further preventing the entrance of drainage and other solid matter into the river and the lessening of the discharge of storm overflows, the Council, on 5th December, 1899, determined to carry out, under my advice, a further extension of the main drainage works on both sides of the river. The contract for the first portion of these works has been let, and the works will soon be commenced. The estimated cost of the total scheme amounts to nearly £3,000,000, of which the first instalment of 1½ millions has been sanctioned by the Council. If you will permit me, I will hand in my report upon that. (*The Report was handed in.*) Perhaps it is not pertinent to this inquiry altogether, but I have a table which may prove of interest. I have taken out, as you will see, the increases of population within the County of London since 1851, and if you will permit me, I will read that. From the census of 1851 to the census of 1896, the increase was at the average rate of 45,994 persons per annum. From the census of 1881 to the

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census of 1891 the increase was at the rate of 39,792 persons per annum. Then if we take the Census of 1891 and the Census of 1896 the increase was at the rate of 40,180 persons per annum. Since 1896 the only data I have are the Registrar General's Returns up to the middle of 1900, and from 1896 to the middle of 1900 the population increased apparently at the rate of 44,561 persons per annum. That of course as you are aware is the County of London, but there is a very large population beyond the Valley of the Lea in the County Borough of West Ham. I am not able to give those figures so accurately as the others, but I find from the Census Returns that the County Borough of West Ham increased from 128,953 persons in 1881 to 204,903 persons in 1891; and if we take the whole of the parish of West Ham I find it increased from 200,958 in 1881 to 365,134 in 1891.

(*The witness handed in a Table showing the increases of population within the County of London since 1851. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 1.*)

3000. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you had any complaint as to the action of your Council with respect to the deposit of sludge?—None whatever.

3001. Not during the whole of your time?—No, not during the whole of my time. An allegation was once made that our sludge ships had on one solitary occasion discharged within the red marked boundary on that plan, but it was ultimately proved to be a mistake, and that it was someone else's vessel.

3002. On this map which you have put in you make the observation "Sludge has not to be discharged west of this red line. See letter from the Secretary of the Trinity House, 6th July, 1887." Are the Trinity House your governing authority as to where the sludge is to be deposited?—It was by agreement with the Trinity House and the late Metropolitan Board of Works that we were permitted to discharge in the Barrow Deep, and it is under their strict regulations that we do so now.

3003. The County Council were not in existence in 1887?—No, they only came into existence in 1889.

3004. Do the Trinity House hold the same relation to the County Council that they did with respect to the Metropolitan Board of Works? That is to say, can they lay down regulations as to where sludge is to be deposited or not?—All I can say is that if they wished to change to anywhere else we should go there. And they regulate our buoys and attend to the lighting of those buoys that are marked as light buoys, at our expense.

3005. They are your superiors?—Yes.

3006. Not the Thames Conservancy?—No. It is outside the Thames Conservancy limits.

3007. Then you go to some expense which is borne of course by the ratepayers of London with respect to this buoying?—Yes. The whole expense of buoying the channel and keeping three of the buoys lighted is borne by the County Council of London.

3008. It strikes one as rather a curious division; the superior authority does not pay for the consequences of the orders that it issues. If the Trinity House ordered you to put the sludge anywhere else, would you have to put new buoys at your own expense?—I imagine that the Trinity Board would quote what has been done in the past as a precedent, and ask us to pay for them.

3009. Then it is by friendly arrangement?—It is by friendly arrangement at present. There is no statutory obligation that I am aware of on the subject whatever.

3010. No questions have arisen as to whether moneys derived from the ratepayers of London can be expended out in the German Ocean?—That question has never been raised.

3011. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Then is the agreement a terminable agreement?—I imagine so. We work in a friendly way with the Trinity Board, and if they suggested some other channel or some other place we should bow to that at once, I think.

3012. I see the red line is not merely drawn across Barrow Deep, but it extends to the other side of West Swin, and it also extends on to the Kentish Flats?—It does.

3013. Is it your opinion that you might deposit sludge anywhere eastward of the red line, or must you deposit it entirely in the Barrow Deep?—Entirely in the Barrow Deep.

3014. Therefore the extension of the line northward and southward has nothing to do with the case. You could not deposit this material, for example, on the Flats?—Certainly not. The line is drawn in the way you see it on the chart for this reason: it is defined in the letter quoted as:—"A certain line drawn from the Maplin Lightship to the North Knob Buoy." The line is prolonged from the lightship on the north on to the Flats to make it perfectly clear where the line is.

3015. Therefore the line is of distinctly limited length?—Certainly. We are not allowed to discharge outside the Barrow Deep without, of course, it were altered by the Trinity Board themselves.

3016. What is the total quantity of sludge per annum which is sent down by your steamers?—In round figures it is about 2,000,000 tons.

3017. Can you give us any idea as to the relative amount of solids and liquid?—It is about 10 per cent. of solids. About 200,000 tons per annum of solid matter would be deposited there.

3018. Ten per cent. of the total deposit?—Yes; and of that solid matter I think three-fourths is organic and one-fourth is mineral.

3019. You said something about the solid material which is deposited by other persons in Barrow Deep being suitable for making embankments?—Some of the harder of that material I should have thought could be more economically used in carrying out that recommendation which I have quoted. If you recollect, paragraph 47 suggested that a tidal training bank should be formed to the eastward of Canvey Island.

3020. I do not know whether you are going to give us any opinion as to that mode of deepening that portion of the river, or are you going to leave it to others?—I am going to leave that lower part to others.

3021. That solid material which you allude to as being deposited in Barrow Deep by these persons comes, I suppose, from excavations of various kinds on or near the river; or is it road detritus, or what is the source from which the solid substances come?—From dredgings in the river. I think it was given by the Thames Conservancy themselves in evidence before this Commission that their dredgings between Gravesend and Canvey Island are now deposited in Barrow Deep. See 1458

3022. And I suppose there are quantities of materials brought from public works of various kinds, are there not?—I think there are.

3023. From excavations for docks, for example?—Possibly so. I cannot say exactly where they get the material from, but I have seen ships depositing the material in the Barrow Deep.

3024. I should not perhaps be wrong if I said that some of the material excavated when forming underground railways or other public works is deposited there should I?—Possibly it is so—I could not say.

3025. I suppose I am right in saying that everything which is not deposited on land adjoining the course of the river would be deposited in Barrow Deep?—At present that is so.

3026. Can you give us any idea of the total quantity that is now annually deposited in Barrow Deep in addition to what the County Council deposit there?—I cannot. I have no means of ascertaining at all.

3027. Could you indicate to us any body of persons who can give us any information on that point?—I could not. Of course, the Conservancy can answer for themselves what they are doing. The other bodies would probably be watched as our ships are watched by the officers of the Trinity Board at the Maplin Lightship.

3028. Then do you think the Trinity Board would be able to give us the information?—Possibly so.

3029. Do they keep records of your ships?—Yes, they keep records of our ships.

3030. But you do not know for certain whether they keep records of other ships?—I do not.

3031. Do you know of any surveys of Barrow Deep made from time to time by the Trinity House?—I do not, further than those mentioned in the Board of Trade Inquiry of 1894.

3032. You do not know of any surveys being made from one year to another as to the effects of depositing in Barrow Deep?—I do not. We make a biennial survey of the Barrow Deep to see if we are in any way polluting the sandbanks of the neighbourhood.

3033. You mean the surface of the sandbanks?—Yes, to see for our own satisfaction that we are ourselves not committing a nuisance, and I am glad to say that they

are very favourably reported on by the chemists who make the surveys.

3034. Have the County Council any dredging powers in the River Thames?—None whatever, except when we are rebuilding or building a bridge. There are some dredging powers necessarily combined with the bridges.

3035. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now will you give us some information as to the areas of land the levels of which are subject to flood?—There are large areas of land, now more or less built upon, within the County of London and contiguous to the river the levels of which, being below Trinity high-water mark, are subject to flooding. I will hand in a plan, on which is coloured in blue the areas of the County Council district which are below high-water mark. (*The Plan was handed in.*) There are parts down at Plumstead, Woolwich, and at North Woolwich, then the whole of the Greenwich area and a good deal of the Isle of Dogs, the whole of the big marsh which formerly extended from Deptford right up to Battersea, and a small portion of the neighbourhood of Fulham. The boundary of the county is coloured in green at either end of the map. Of course, as I need not explain, the drainage of all those parts has to be carried on by pumping. That, of course, is confined entirely to the County of London; but there is a district which we are just called upon to drain—what we call the Island—that lies between the Albert and Victoria Docks and the river. That is also, the greater part of it, below Trinity high-water mark. I should say that the area that you see coloured on the map amounts to about 11 square miles. By an Act passed in 1879, called "The Thames River Prevention of Floods Act," the Council and its predecessors, the Metropolitan Board of Works, were constituted the authority to supervise and preserve the existing embankments, walls, wharves, and temporary works so as to prevent flooding. I will hand in a copy of that Act. (*A copy of the Act was handed in.*) This duty the Council carry out by means of constant inspection. They call upon owners of property to make good any deficiencies that may arise and issue licenses for the alteration or construction of any old or new works that may be required. These alterations weekly engage the attention of the Bridges Committee and the staff which works under it. The works principally consist of the old earthen embankments, wharves and buildings abutting on the river and movable tide boards to allow of access being made to barges, &c. These banks of the river in the county of London extend on the north from Hammersmith to Blackwall at the mouth of the Lea and the further frontage of north Woolwich, and on the south side from Barn Elms, a little above Putney, to a point near Crossness just below Woolwich. The total length of river banks within the county is about 40 miles. Then I deal with other embankments. The late Metropolitan Board of Works constructed, at a cost of over £2,000,000, and the Council maintain, the Victoria Embankment, extending from Westminster to Blackfriars Bridges on the north side of the Thames, and the Albert Embankment extending from Westminster Bridge to near Vauxhall Bridge on the south side of the river. Then the next question I deal with is that of bridges. All the public bridges above Southwark to and including Hammersmith Bridge are under the control of the Council, and I am at the present time engaged in building a new bridge at Vauxhall at an estimated cost of £484,000; and designs are being prepared for a new bridge at Lambeth. Then dealing with sub-aqueous tunnels, between the years 1891 and 1897 I constructed for the Council a sub-aqueous tunnel under the river at Blackwall, the cost of which was, including approaches, about £1,500,000. This is a large tunnel to accommodate vehicular and pedestrian traffic. At the present time I am engaged in constructing another smaller tunnel for foot passengers under the Thames at Greenwich, the expenditure on which is estimated to amount to £160,000. In the last Session of Parliament an Act was passed authorising the construction by the Council of another large tunnel for vehicular and pedestrian traffic under the river between Rotherhithe and Shadwell. Of this work I am the engineer. The estimated cost is £2,300,000 for tunnel and approaches. Then I come to the steam ferry. The Council and its predecessors constructed and work the free steam ferry which crosses the river at Woolwich, the capital cost of which was £190,000, the cost of maintenance being £20,000 per annum. These various cross-river communications east of London Bridge have been undertaken mainly with the object of facilitating communication between the dense population which surrounds the docks on the north and south sides of the river. The next point is with regard to protection from fire. The Council also maintains as a branch of its Fire Brigade Department by means of six tugs, eight rafts with engines aboard, four barges and one steam fire float, an efficient service for the protection from fire of the docks, wharves, and other river-side property.

3036. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Under the head of prevention of floods, you quote the Act of 1879. Does that Act contain all the powers that you have with regard to the prevention of floods?—I think so.

3037. And have you found them amply sufficient?—We have found them amply sufficient for carrying on that work up to the present time.

3038. Speaking as an engineer, you do not desire any further powers than you have under that Act?—We do not. I think it is perfectly efficient for the object that we have in view, which is to prevent those low-lying areas which are marked on that map from being flooded at extra high tides.

3039. Has there been any alteration of the channel of the Thames during your time either by nature or art unfavourable to the prevention of floods?—I think not.

3040. Is it improving, or the contrary, or is it stationary?—During my experience, I should think it is pretty well stationary. We have had one very high tide. The high tides occur with the easterly breezes generally. We had a high tide four or five years ago, which gave us a little trouble at one place at Rotherhithe, but it was easily put right.

3041. But you would say that the natural and artificial state of things is stationary?—Yes.

3042. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What was the date of the last serious flood?—I forget now, but it was about five or six years ago. I will have the information sent in answer to your question.

3043. You do not apprehend any serious floods now?—No. The Council and its predecessors, representing, as they do, a population of over 4,500,000 persons, with a rateable value of about £37,500,000, extending over an area of 121 square miles, have expended large sums of money in improving the river and its cross communications; and the Council, and the large community which they represent, have a very material interest in the Port of London and in the river which flows from Hammersmith to Woolwich through the County of London.

3044. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Is that £37,500,000 rateable value quite recent?—Yes, it is quite recent—after the last quinquennial valuation.

3045. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now, what have you to say generally as to the river?—I am a native of London, and am well acquainted with the river from my earliest years; and I have, during the past 10 years devoted a great deal of attention to studying many of the complicated questions connected with it. London, probably, took its origin because of the facilities, defensive and otherwise, which its site, almost surrounded by marshes, on the banks of the Thames affords, and its growth and prosperity have, no doubt, been largely due to the natural facilities which the river and its estuary have always given. The great and pre-eminent advantage which the port of London possesses over many others in the Kingdom, Liverpool for example, is the non-existence of any well-marked bar at the mouth of the river. Consequently ships are able to enter and leave the port at all states of the tide. So great are the natural advantages of the river that little has been done, except some desultory dredging, to improve its condition since those almost prehistoric times when it was originally embanked. The tendency of modern commerce is in the direction of employing larger and larger vessels. The consideration therefore arises as to what should be the limit of draught which, in looking to the future, we may at the present day consider it reasonable to provide for. A large proportion of the steamships now built are constructed to permit of their passing through the Suez Canal, which is intended to accommodate ships requiring a depth of 30ft. of water. Consequently I consider that a not exaggerated estimate would be that the Port of London should be able to accommodate ships requiring a depth of 30ft. of water at low tide. The question next arises, how far up the river should such a channel be carried. There can be no doubt that it should be carried up to the entrance of

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the Albert Docks, and this is perfectly feasible; and when we look at the difficulties that have been overcome on the Clyde, on the Mersey, and other rivers, by much smaller communities, expense should not be allowed to stand in the way.

3046. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) When you say that ships are able to enter and leave the Port at all states of the tide, is there not some detention down below Gravesend owing to banks there?—That is so. It was given in evidence before the Board of Trade Inquiry that there are certain shoals below Gravesend which do prevent ships coming up. I am alluding in what I say here to the fact that there is no permanent bar at the mouth of the Thames; it is only a question of making the estuary and the river deep enough.

3047. Is not that an over-estimate of the depth of water in the Suez Canal? You say 30ft.?—That is to be, I believe, the ultimate depth of water in the Suez Canal.

3048. But it is not the present depth?—No. I believe the present depth is 26ft. to 27ft.

3049. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) 8½ metres?—8½ metres is the present depth. Sir Edwin Dawes, one of the witnesses before the Board of Trade Inquiry, said: "I am a Director of the Suez Canal Company, and we are going to have a depth of 30ft."

3050. (*Mr. Ellis.*) What year was that?—That was before the Board of Trade Inquiry. It was the 20th December, 1894.

3051. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you ever thought what the width of this channel of 30ft. should be up to the Albert Dock?—In the estimate which I am about to present you will see I have estimated it up to the Albert Dock at 600ft. wide, bottom width.

3052. Is it your opinion that that should be the width of the channel?—I think that would be an economical width of channel. It could be made wider if required, and, of course, narrower goes without saying.

3053. But that width would not provide for a long vessel anchoring and having to swing?—It would not.

3054. You would have to have lay-byes in that case?—Yes, you would have to have lay-byes if the ships were going to swing in the channel.

3055. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I gather that coming before us as the engineer for the London County Council, you wish to emphasise the importance to the Port and trade of London of a deepening of the channel, having regard to the increased draught of vessels?—I do.

3056. And you would say that if something of that kind be not done, and done speedily, the Port of London is relatively decreasing in its facilities?—I think that is the general impression produced on my mind.

3057. I want to get what is your impression?—That is certainly my impression. Having listened to all that was said at the Board of Trade Inquiry and read all that has been laid before you, that is my impression.

3058. You use an expression which is rather an alarming one, coming from a great engineer. You say that expense should not be allowed to stand in the way. Of course, in using that language, you have regard to the backs of the ratepayers of London?—I have, and when I come to the estimate I do not think the sum will be so alarming as some people think.

3059. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) When you say that the channel is perfectly feasible, have you studied the question by means of plans and surveys?—I have, and I propose to place them before you when I come to the question of estimates.

3060. Then you have quite satisfied yourself, I take it, that there is no difficulty on the part of the riparian owners' interests?—I do not think so; below the Albert Dock there is none whatever, I think.

3061. I am only dealing with the river below the Albert Dock at present, but it was indicated by some witnesses—I think by the Chairman of the Thames Conservancy—that some of the embankments were in a dangerous condition, and might be endangered by deeper dredging; and also that some of the wharfingers might object. Dealing first of all with the old earthen embankments below the Albert Dock, are you quite satisfied that there is very little in that?—I do not think there is any fear on that score, below the Albert Dock. I shall show you the sections presently, and you will be better able to judge.

See 1465-9.

3062. We will just take your general opinion first. And also with regard to private wharves?—There are no private wharves of importance.

3063. And those that there are you do not think will be endangered?—I do not think in any way. Now I will deal with the channel above the Albert Docks. A further question then arises as to how much further up the river a deep water channel could be dredged. With the exception of the occasional arrival of a few large steamers, the only large ocean-going steamers which regularly pass up the river beyond the entrance of the Albert Docks are the vessels of the Donald Currie (Castle) Line, which sail to and from the East India Dock, just below Blackwall. Portions of the river banks in the neighbourhood of North Woolwich and between it and Blackwall are, in places, of a nature to require careful consideration before the maximum depth to which the river can be dredged has been ascertained. To form a channel 30ft. deep at low water would involve dredging; but, as remarked above, the difficulties which have to be considered in this part of the river arise more from the nature of the banks when taken into account with the depth of dredging, although my impression is that, after proper investigation, it will be found perfectly feasible to carry a 30ft. channel up to Blackwall. The great advantage which would be gained by deepening the river down to 30ft. at low water as far as Blackwall would be to allow ocean-going steamers to enter the Victoria Docks, and the East and West India Docks. The Blackwall Tunnel would form no obstruction as its top is situated 53ft. below Trinity high water mark, which, allowing for a 20ft. tide, would give a depth of 30ft. at low water and still retain a cover of 3ft. over the top of the tunnel. Passing up the river we next come to the Greenwich footway tunnel, the top of which is situated 53ft. below high water mark, so that a 30ft. channel could also be carried above this point if required, but it would probably, in the neighbourhood of Greenwich, require dredging to a depth of 10ft., which would still leave a cover of 3ft. over the top of the tunnel. I have little doubt, however, that a channel 30ft. deep at low water could be carried as far as the new entrance to the Surrey Commercial and Millwall Docks above the Royal Victualling Yard at Deptford. The next point to be considered is the amount of obstruction afforded by the proposed Rotherhithe tunnel. This tunnel will pass diagonally across the river from a point a little above the upper entrance of the Surrey Commercial Docks to a point a little below the Shadwell entrance to the London Docks. The top of the tunnel, as sanctioned by Parliament is 49ft. 9in. below Trinity high water mark. Allowing for a 20ft tide and a cover of 1ft. 9in. over the top of the tunnel, a channel 28ft. deep at low water could be formed. As I believe that the depth of water at the Shadwell entrance of the London Docks is 28ft. below Trinity high water, such a channel, if made, would allow vessels requiring the full depth of 28ft. to pass up to the London Docks at all stages of the tide, but this, I think, would be the extreme limit, if on further investigation it should be found possible, when taking other reasons into account, to construct the same. A short distance above the proposed Rotherhithe tunnel and the entrances to the Surrey Commercial and London Docks, exists the Thames tunnel, now used by the East London Railway. I understand that the top of this tunnel is situated 47ft. below Trinity high water mark, but as it is composed of brick-work, and not of cast-iron, as are the tunnels above spoken of, it would require careful consideration to determine to what depth dredging could be carried on over it.

3064. Dealing with the channel above Albert Docks, I should like to ask you the same question relating to a possible 30ft. channel that I asked you with regard to the channel below the Albert Docks—whether you have studied the question of the cross sections of the river at what I may call critical points where important properties adjoin or matters of that kind, in order to satisfy yourself that what you say as a general statement is true in particular?—I cannot speak with the same confidence about a channel above the Albert Docks that I can speak with regard to the lower channel, because both myself and the engineer to the Thames Conservancy Board (we have taken this matter into consideration) think that some investigation is necessary before determining on the depth of dredging. But I have prepared a series of cross sections showing what might be done if the banks are considered sufficiently stable. These are cross sections of the river at various points showing in the first instance in red the channel 30ft. deep and 300ft. wide with slopes of 7 to 1, and showing in dotted lines what would be the result if the slopes were flattened out to a little above low water mark.

(*The Witness handed in Cross Sections of proposed dredging between the Albert Dock and the Greenland Entrance to the Surrey Commercial Docks, and between Albert Dock and Gravesend.*)

If it were carried to that depth and width it might require a channel with side slopes varying from 1 in 9 to 1 in 20.

3065. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Are these the cross sections on which your estimates are based?—They are.

3066. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do these cross sections indicate the walls—are these vertical lines on the cross section wharf walls?—They are the banks of the river. Of course they are on a distorted scale. It is all set out on the chart. *This* is the lower channel, going downwards. Take for instance No. 4 opposite Greenwich Hospital. There the channel with a 7 to 1 slope would be quite clear of the banks altogether. If you flattened the slope off *here* it would be 1 to 9 and 1 in 10, and the question which would have to be investigated no doubt is as to whether the material which now forms the bed of the river would stand at slopes like that.

3067. For the benefit of the lay members of the Commission you may perhaps explain that these sections are greatly distorted?—They are on a greatly distorted scale of course.

3068. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That is to say, the vertical and perpendicular scales are not the same?—No. The perpendicular scale is magnified for the purpose of seeing more readily what the depth would be.

3069. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose you admit that the question of the properties adjoining would have to be studied very carefully?—Very carefully indeed.

3070. They might have to be protected?—They might.

3071. Would the cover that you have indicated as possibly 3ft. over the Blackwall Tunnel and 1ft. 9in. over the Rotherhithe Tunnel, be in your judgment sufficient?—I think so.

3072. Would there be no risk of injury to the tunnel by the grounding of ships and no risk of undue leakage?—I do not think there is any leakage. In the case of the Blackwall Tunnel you will recollect we drove the tunnel with only a cover of 5ft. I do not think the tunnel would suffer. Supposing a ship were to ground upon it, it might be harmful to the bottom of the ship I am afraid.

3073. Giving it all your careful judgment, and speaking as the responsible adviser of the London County Council, you, as an engineer, would not object to that depth?—I should not object to 3ft. certainly.

3074. With regard to the Thames tunnel that is another question?—That is a very difficult question, because I really do not know all the facts, and the tunnel being built of brickwork it might be serious in that case.

3075. You do not know, I suppose, what is the depth now below the bottom of the river of the brickwork of the Thames tunnel?—I do not.

3076. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) I suppose the only possible danger to these tunnels would be a ship sinking, or possibly an anchor might injure it?—I think the outside of the tunnel is so smooth that it would not be injured by an anchor. The only damage likely to accrue would be a ship at very low water grounding on the top of the tunnel.

3077. If you had 3ft. over the top of the tunnel no ship could possibly touch it unless she sank?—Exactly.

3078. Would you advocate a depth of water of 30ft. from the Albert Docks right up to the Surrey Commercial Docks?—I should like to see it, but I could not advocate it at present, until, as I told Sir John, there has been very careful investigation of the river to see whether it is possible. I believe it to be possible, but without careful investigation I should not like to say for certain.

3079. You think it would be worth doing if it were possible?—If it were possible, certainly it would be worth doing.

3080. And the extra expense between 26ft. and 30ft. would be repaid?—I think it would.

3081. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now you have prepared a rough estimate of the cost of this work?—I have.

3082. We should like you to go through it with us?—The estimate is based on the chart which I have just placed on the table, and a series of cross sections. Those which we were referring to are between the Albert Dock and the Greenland entrance of the Surrey Commercial Dock. The worst are these three upper sections just below the Albert Dock—Nos. 14, 15, and 16. No. 14 is clearly out in the middle of the river. No. 15 is a little to the one side of the channel, but it could easily be moved if it is found requisite to make it more symmetrical with the present width of the river.

3083. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Perhaps I may interpose here just to ask you what curves you have taken for the middle line of your channel all the way down?—The curves are very large—half a mile radius.

3084. About half a mile radius?—Yes. The next point is obviously perfectly easy, because we have got steeper levels on the side than we are purposing to put on the channel itself. Then after you pass No. 16 it becomes obviously very easy to make such a channel, and the depths are gradually decreasing until we get down near to Gravesend, where they are comparatively straight, where we get the 600ft. width. You will notice also that I have placed upon the cross section "chalk probable" in different places.

I put in a plan showing a series of borings and wells and other things that have been sunk on the banks of the Thames or very near it. (*The witness handed in plan.*) This plan shows the positions, and these sections show the nature of the material that was found in the various borings. The principal thing to regard is, first of all, is it hard material in the shape of chalk, which would be a matter of expense? Those are mentioned on the sections where they occur. From Woolwich downwards there are one or two places where undoubtedly chalk would have to be dredged. The difficulty really, I think myself, does not exist in the chalk at all, but in the sands and clays of the Woolwich and Reading beds which immediately overlie the chalk. We met with them in the Blackwall Tunnel, for instance. Some of those sands when charged with water partake of the character of a quicksand, and that is where investigation would be required above the Albert Docks to see that we did not plunge into one of these quicksands and bring in the banks of the river. I do not think it is the banks of the river *qua* banks that would be injured, but the foundation might slip away owing to the dredging.

3085. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That is, if I may say so, the basis of your estimate?—That is the basis of my estimate. The basis of my estimate is the Conservancy chart which I have put in, which was the best information I could get. Of course, I had to do this, and it has been sent in at a later time because I was called upon by my committee to give them some idea of what such channels as those spoken of would cost.

3086. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Then will you proceed with your estimate of the cost?—The first is:—Cost of forming a channel from Gravesend to the Albert Dock, having a depth of 30ft. at low water spring tides, a bottom width of 600ft., and side slopes of 7 to 1. See 5461—2.

Net quantity of material to be dredged as derived from cross-sections 1,000 yards apart, say			9,300,000	cubic yards.
Add for possible inaccuracy (one-fourth)			2,325,000	„
Total excavation			11,625,000	„
Cost of dredging—	s.	d.		
Dredging		6½	pr. cub. yd.	
Average carriage		3½	„ „	
Repair, maintenance, contingencies, &c.		2	„ „	
Total cost	1		„ „	

		£.	£.
11,625,000 cubic yards at 1s. per cubic yard		581,250	
Contingencies, 10 per cent.		58,125	
Total of estimate No. 1, Gravesend to Albert Dock			639,375

That is the estimate to which I referred just now in speaking of the expense involved by other considerations. Then the second is what I might call the hypothetical channel above the Albert Dock:—Cost of forming a channel from the Albert Dock to the Greenland entrance of the Surrey Commercial Docks, having a depth of 30ft. at low water spring tides, a bottom width of 300ft., and side slopes of 7 to 1.

Net quantity of material to be dredged as derived from cross-sections 1,000 yards apart, say	8,800,000	cubic yards.
Add for possible inaccuracy (one-fourth)	2,200,000	„
Total excavation	11,000,000	„

I should say that were the slopes flattened out as in my reply to Sir John Wolfe-Barry's question just now I

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explained, to these various slopes that are dotted here, *it would add 50 per cent. to the total of that.*

Cost of dredging—	s.	d.		
Dredging - -	-	6½	pr. cub. yd.	
Average carriage	-	4	„	„
Repair, maintenance, contingencies, &c. -	-	2	„	„
Total cost -	1	-½	„	„

	£	£
11,000,000 cubic yards at 1s. -½d. per cubic yard	572,917	
Contingencies, 10 per cent. -	57,292	
Total of estimate No. 2, Albert Dock to Greenland entrance, Surrey Commercial Docks - - -		630,209

If you total both the estimates it works out at £1,269,584, and there would be required for working that a plant which would probably cost a quarter of a million. That is a very hypothetical question, but I put it down at a quarter of a million.

3087. Is any of that plant in your possession now?—None whatever. We should have to get the most modern plant if it is to be worked economically.

3088. Therefore that would be a new expense?—That would be a new expense.

3089. Why is your carriage ½d. dearer in No. 2 than in No. 1?—We should have to take it a longer distance down.

3090. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) How many tons a cubic yard would you roughly calculate?—I think it varies from 1⅓ to 1½. It differs with the different material that you dredge out.

3091. 1½ to 1⅓ tons to a cubic yard?—Yes.

3092. When you say dredging, that does not include any of the cost of the plant?—It does not include any of the cost of the plant at all. I have got below, "Repair and maintenance," 2d.

3093. But do you not consider that 6½d. a cubic yard is rather a high rate?—I purposely put it high because I did not want in advising my Committee at Spring Gardens to under-estimate for a moment the expense of the work.

3094. It struck me as very high. This channel that you propose in the first estimate is only from Gravesend to the Albert Docks?—Only from Gravesend to the Albert Docks.

3095. You have not taken into consideration below Gravesend to the Nore?—No, because part of the recommendations of the Board of Trade Committee has been already carried out by the Thames Conservancy, and I have not the data to say how much more will be required to form a 30ft. channel.

3096. (*Mr. Ellis.*) The chart to which you have referred is some years old?—It is. It is corrected up to 1895-96, I think.

3097. You do not think that anything in the River Thames with regard to the channel has occurred since those years to vitiate the chart as a foundation for your calculation, that is not provided for by your allowance of one fourth?—I think not. I do not think any material change has taken place. The only thing that might be of advantage would be a chart on a somewhat larger scale. That is why I have put on to that 25 per cent. increase.

3098. Still you are quite ready to commit yourself to the 11,625,000?—I think so. I do not think there is any doubt about that.

3099. We quite understand that this is an approximate rough estimate?—It is.

3100. But within those limits you are prepared as the engineer of the London County Council—I will not say to stake your reputation, but to accept the responsibility for this estimate of £1,269,000?—Yes. I have always done so at Spring Gardens, and I have no hesitation in doing it here. The only thing with regard to the second estimate is that it must always be covered by what I have already said—that it should not be carried out until full investigation has shown it to be feasible and possible.

3102. And we may take it further as your opinion that the outlay of 1½ millions would be an advantageous outlay for the Port of London?—If possible. If it were possible to make it, I am sure it would be.

3103. The money would be well spent?—The money would be well spent.

3104. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Your estimate does not touch the question of the shoals below Gravesend at all?—No, not at all. I tried to get the information, but I found I could get nothing reliable. Mr. More has told me that they have dredged part of it, if not the whole of it, to a depth of 26ft. However, I have got no plans showing what the channel is or where it is.

3105. Was not the question of what is to be done below Gravesend referred to at great length in the Board of Trade Committee's Report of 1894?—It was.

3106. I think I am right in saying that the general trend of that report was that whatever might be the case about the ability of the river to maintain a deep channel above the Leigh Middle Shoals, the question of a deep channel through the Leigh Middle Shoals was one requiring great attention?—That was the opinion expressed in that report.

3107. You will recollect, I daresay, enough of the enquiry to say that at that point the river widens out very suddenly as compared with the river above the Leigh Middle Shoals, and that there is a natural tendency for the deposit of material on those Leigh Middle Shoals?—Undoubtedly. The sudden opening out below Holehaven is very remarkable. Anyone acquainted with the river sees it as one goes up and down.

3108. The Board of Trade Committee at that time suggested the study of the question whether a training wall to narrow the river—to make it more gradually trumpet-mouthed—would not be at least as good a way of dealing with the question as embanking or dredging there?—They did.

3109. I do not know whether you have been able to make any study of that question?—I have not given any study to it, but if I were called upon to tackle the question that is one of the modes I should certainly adopt. Over those large flats, the Blythe Sands, and others, I should like to see tidal training walls carried out to direct the falling tide into the main channel.

3110. It would be, of course, comparatively useless to dredge a channel of 30ft. depth above Gravesend unless some means of dealing with the channel below Gravesend through the Leigh Middle Shoals were at the same time undertaken?—Of course.

3111. The limit—the natural depth—being 26ft. there?—26ft. at present.

3112. Therefore, whatever that would cost would have to be added naturally to the total estimate submitted by you when dealing with the subject of cost?—Undoubtedly.

3113. I suppose you would put the question of 30ft. depth of water up to the Albert Docks at a much higher value than the question of 30ft. up to the Surrey Commercial Dock—I mean as a matter of public necessity?—Yes, certainly.

3114. If merely the depth of water on the sills of the Surrey Commercial Dock was afforded in the channel, your estimate of £630,000 for the channel between the Albert Docks and the Surrey Commercial Docks would be largely decreased?—Very largely decreased.

3115. Therefore we need not necessarily consider the estimate as a whole, but it ought to be considered in parts?—It ought.

3116. Apart from the question of engineering difficulties?—Of course.

3117. Merely on the score of public utility the estimate ought to be taken in two parts?—In two parts, and I have so divided it, in fact, in the estimate.

3118. You would lay much greater stress on a depth of 30ft. up to the Albert Docks than you would to a depth of 30ft. up to the Surrey Commercial Docks?—Certainly.

3119. May I ask, have you considered the question of the ability of the river to maintain a channel of 30ft. if it is made?—I think there is very little doubt about that.

3120. Do you think there would necessarily or probably be any continuous dredging to maintain that depth if it were once afforded?—As in all tidal rivers you would always have to keep dredgers at work at different points.

3121. That I think you deal with later in your evidence?—Yes, I have dealt with that later on.

3122. I may take it generally that looking to the depth of water which is maintained at present in considerable lengths of the River Thames you would not anticipate that

there would be any difficulty from natural causes in the channel maintaining itself?—I think not. Of course, as at every other port you would have to do a little dredging every year at critical points, but as a whole, I think the channel would keep itself open.

3123. Does not the river, in fact, maintain a much greater depth in parts than 30ft. at present?—Yes, certainly.

3124. You allude to the difficulty of dredging chalk. I suppose with modern dredgers there is no difficulty in dredging chalk except as a matter of expense?—None whatever.

3125. Your cross-sections are plotted from the chart, and not from actual measurements since?—No—from the chart solely.

3126. I do not know whether you have considered this question. A great portion of the river bed is gravel, is it not?—A great portion.

3127. Any gravel dredged from the River Thames commands a ready sale, does it not?—A very ready sale.

3128. I do not mean to suggest for a moment that all the dredging or even a large portion of the dredging that you have estimated for would be gravel, but whatever gravel was found would more than pay its expenses?—It would.

3129. Is it not now sold at a profit by private dredgers?—Yes.

3130. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now, will you proceed with reference to the tidal action?—Apart from the question of depth of water for navigation, the deepening of the river would, by increasing the tidal capacity, tend to improve the scour in the estuary below. And it would be of great public advantage if, in the future, any public body charged with the welfare of the Port of London had its jurisdiction extended beyond the limits which at present bind the Thames Conservancy Board to such a distance seawards as would permit of full control over the tidal estuary below the Nore. I have here a small map showing the existing boundaries. (*The map was handed in.*) The Thames Conservancy limit is marked *there. This* is the limit of the dredging under the Act of 1894. *A* to *B* is the area over which the Board of Trade Inquiry of 1894 extended. Then the Port of London Tonnage Dues Boundary is shown on the same chart.

3131. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) What tonnage dues area is this?—It is under an Act—I forget the date of the Act—it is part of the London Lighterage and Tonnage area. The question of tidal action has, from the year 1855, engaged the careful attention of the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Council, and they have established automatic tide gauges at the following points—Hammersmith, Chelsea, and Blackfriars bridges, Deptford, North Woolwich, and Crossness, copies of the records of which can be furnished to the Commission should they require them. They are very voluminous; I have not brought them with me; they extend over many books, but if in the course of your inquiry you require those records they are at your service at any time. I carried out in 1890 a series of experiments between Shell Haven and the Nore to ascertain the velocity of the tide in the estuary of the Thames, as it would affect the discharge of sewage either at Shell Haven or on the Maplin Sands. These records will be found on pages 265-268 of the evidence taken on the Lower Thames Navigation Commission, 1894-1896. It would appear that considerable alterations must have taken place in the tidal flow of the Thames at London during the present century. It is a well-known fact that water was formerly pumped from the Thames at London Bridge and at Hungerford for the domestic supply of the Metropolis. Were the Thames as clean and clear as a mountain stream this would no longer be possible, because we know from our records that for months together the river above London Bridge contains so much sea water as to render it perceptibly brackish, and in dry weather this brackishness extends as far up as Kew. Among the contributing causes may be mentioned the removal of Old London and Blackfriars Bridges, the construction of the Thames Embankment, and the increased abstraction of water for domestic purposes above Teddington weir. I consider that any new body that may be constituted should have under its control all the tidal water above London Bridge, as there are many objectionable shoals in the river which could be moved with advantage to the general traffic. I have myself been aground when passing down the river in the Council's launch, "Beatrice," which draws 6½ft. to 7ft. of water, at points between the Charing Cross Railway and Waterloo Bridges, and also immediately below London Bridge. The general dredging of the channel is a comparatively easy matter, but in the neighbourhood of the older bridges, such as London and Waterloo, care would have to be exercised. Teddington weir may be said to be the upward limit of the tidal action, beyond which it may be said to have no effect, except on a few occasions when the weir at high water has been drowned out and the locks forced open.

3132. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Then it is your opinion that the river should be divided under two authorities, one tidal and the other non-tidal?—I think so.

3133. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) I presume in all these questions of dredging, if you had to superintend the work, you would supply yourself with the newest possible plant?—Undoubtedly.

3134. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Can you give us, as a matter of historical interest, the last time water was pumped at London Bridge for domestic purposes?—I can get that for you. I forget when it was.

3135. It is within the lifetime of persons now living?—I think so.

3136. With reference to what you said about tidal action, is there any lock this side of Teddington weir?—There is a half-tide lock at Richmond.

3137. When was that constructed?—About 1893 or 1894.

3138. By a private Bill?—By a private Bill for the purpose.

3139. In your opinion has that had any effect upon the tidal flow and scour up there?—I cannot very well say. My impression is that it has, but I should not like to give it in evidence that it has done so.

3140. You are probably aware that there is a controversy on the subject?—Of course there is a very strong controversy. I am in a state of suspended judgment. I believe it has, but I have no proof that it has.

3141. You do believe it has?—I do believe it has.

3142. That is the impression on your mind?—That is the impression on my mind.

3143. If that has had that effect, the construction of other locks this side would have a greater effect, I presume?—A very disastrous effect, I am sure.

3144. So far as it has had any effect it has been to the bad?—It has been to the bad as far as the river is concerned.

3145. I am speaking *qua* river?—I can quite understand the residents in the neighbourhood saying that it is an improvement. I regard it as a very important matter with regard to the whole Port of London that you should retain as much tidal capacity as possible, and if you take it off little by little at the upper end you decrease the up and down flow through London which is so necessary for keeping the river pure. I deal with that a little later on.

3146. So far as it has had any effect the construction of that half-tide lock has been detrimental to the river in the sense that we have been speaking of?—That is my opinion.

3147. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) And conversely, I suppose, you would say that the removal of obstructions in the Thames has very much improved the tidal flow?—Undoubtedly.

3148. So that as the water flows now at London Bridge the low water line is considerably deeper than it used to be, and the tidal wave comes in with greater rapidity than it did in former years?—Undoubtedly.

3149. Before the removal of Old London Bridge and the other obstructions to which you have alluded?—Yes. The Old London Bridge, judging by the sections that we have of it, must have formed a kind of sunk weir across the river; there was a large hole below the bridge, into which the water was continually falling.

3150. Nothing should be contemplated which would in any way obstruct the flow of the tidal wave in the Thames?—No; and everything should be done to increase it.

3151. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You want to preserve the natural scour?—The natural scour of the river itself.

3152. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) And history shows that it has very greatly improved within the memory of man?—It has.

3153. I only want to ask you one other question.

Sir A. R. Binnie.

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You indicated a wish that the new jurisdiction if it is constituted, should have its limits further below the Nore, seaward of the Nore?—Seaward of the Nore.

3154. Have you formed any view as to what distance below the Nore such a limit should go?—I think a better limit could not be suggested than the one at present for the Port of London dockage. It is a line from the Naze to the North Foreland. It is a very good line. It includes all the principal shoals at the mouth of the Thames.

3155. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Will you proceed with your evidence?—I have not gone into the question of future dock accommodation, because it has been put so fully before the Commission from previous witnesses, but I will just say this. Looking to the future dock accommodation, should it be considered necessary, it is obvious that there are many possible sites on both banks of the river above Gravesend; and the nearer to London that any future docks are situated the better. Then, as to the flow of upland water. During the past ten years, as is well known, the Council have been investigating the subject of the water supply of London, and consequently I have had to inquire in great detail as to the flow of upland water into the tidal estuary. Teddington Weir is the point where hitherto the gauging of upland flow has been recorded, and an attempt has been made by the Council, assisted by the records of the flow of upland water at Teddington furnished by the Thames Conservancy, to ascertain what amount of water passes month by month into the tidal portion of the river. These deductions are based on the rainfall recorded at 24 stations established by the late Mr. G. J. Symons, F.R.S., to the maintenance of which the Council contributes. I present for the information of the Commission a Table showing the average results for each month for the past 17 years, 1883 to 1899 inclusive.

(*The Witness handed in a Table showing or 17 years, 1883-1899 inclusive, the average natural flow of the Thames at Teddington Weir (including the quantity abstracted by the Water Companies), showing also the average rainfall and percentages of evaporation, flow from the ground, hours of sunshine, degrees of humidity, and temperature for the month. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 2.*)

The annual average flow, it will be noticed, is 1,271½ million gallons a day, varying from 2,327·8 million gallons in February to 472·9 million gallons in August, and averaging for the three months, July, August and September, 499 million gallons, say 500 million gallons per diem. It will be noticed that these variations in flow are intimately connected with the evaporation which takes place, for we may say that, on the average, during the months of July, August and September, of all the rain that falls 88 per cent. is lost by evaporation, and only 12 per cent. flows from the ground. This is the natural flow of the river at Teddington Weir, and includes not only the actual flow, but the water previously abstracted higher up the river by the water companies at Molesey, Hampton and Sunbury. As during the months of June, July and August, 1899, the various water companies pumped from the Thames an average of 146·9, say 147 million gallons, we may say that out of an average natural flow of 500 million gallons as above had it been present during those months they would have abstracted 29·4 per cent., or nearly one-third of the total flow. The above figures deal only with average results of 17 years, but in many years the natural flow of the Thames at Teddington is much lower, as will be seen from another Table which I will hand in.

(*The Witness handed in a Table showing the daily average natural flow of the Thames at Teddington Weir in certain periods during the years 1884-5-7, 1893-4-5-6-8-9. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 3.*)

At the time of the sitting of Lord Llandaff's Commission the authorised abstraction of water from the Thames by the water companies was 185½ million gallons per day, but, as suggested by that Commission, this abstraction may be increased, if proper storage be provided, up to 300 million gallons a day, and still afford a minimum flow over Teddington Weir of 200 million gallons a day. It is as well to look at what the result would be. With a storage of 28,000 million gallons and abstraction of 300 million gallons, and a minimum flow of 200 million gallons at Teddington, the question arises for how long this minimum would continue. I worked this out for the Royal Commission for the years 1885, 1887, 1893 and 1896, and I present a Table which I laid before them, showing that for those years the flow would be so reduced on an average for 149 days.

(*The Witness handed in a Table showing the effect produced on the natural and actual flow of the Thames at Teddington Weir due to the average abstraction of 300 million gallons a day by the Staines scheme with reservoir capacity of 28,000 million gallons, and a supply to London given in the mean proportion of the years 1896 and 1897, the minimum flow of the Thames at Teddington Weir being 200 million gallons a day. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 4.*)

If, however, we take the period from the 1st January, 1898, to the 31st October, 1899, with a reservoir capacity as large as 41,800 million gallons, and covering an area of 10 square miles, the actual flow of the Thames over Teddington Weir would be reduced to 200 million gallons a day for 350 days.

This, however, does not represent the whole evil of the case, because under their various Acts the Lambeth, the Southwark and Vauxhall, the Staines Reservoirs Joint Committee and the East London Company may draw collectively as much as 330 million gallons a day from the Thames when the minimum flow over Teddington Weir exceeds 200 million gallons a day. Consequently, not only is the general average reduced to 200 million gallons a day for long periods, but to fill the enormous reservoirs which are proposed, the smaller floods would be materially curtailed, and it will be noticed from Lord Llandaff's report, paragraph 103, page 41, that they recommend that, under certain circumstances, even the minimum flow of 200 million gallons a day may be further reduced; and some of the witnesses for the water companies before that Commission even went so far as to say that there would be no harm done if the total flow over Teddington Weir were entirely absorbed by the water companies. The effect of this continuous abstraction, if it be further permitted, may prove very detrimental, for the cutting-off of the flow of the upland water during the drier half of the year reduces that of the river between Woolwich and Teddington merely to the upward and downward passage of almost the same tidal water, and would tend to the shoaling up of the upper reaches and the diminution of the tidal capacity. What has occurred in Bow Creek, the estuary of the Lea, where practically all the flow of that river is in summer time absorbed by the water companies, is an instance of what may happen to the Thames within the County of London at no distant date.

3156-7. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Was this evidence laid before Lord Llandaff's Commission?—It was.

3158. Then the question of the minimum flow over Teddington Weir, as possibly affecting the interests of the Port of London, was not lost sight of?—I do not think the Commission went very much into that. I laid before them the fact that decreasing the flow (this is not a disputed point at all) would have the effect of rendering the portion of the river in the County of London from Woolwich upwards simply a backward and forward movement of the same quantity of water in the months of summer; but I do not think the Commission went very much into the question of its effect on the tidal capacity of the river, or anything of that kind.

3159. I mean its effect on the channels?—I do not think they went very much into that.

3160. I take it that your evidence is very much directed to this, that a large abstraction of the upland water would damage the Thames?—Yes. What I am rather pointing to is this. I do not wish to open the vexed water question before this Commission, but if any trust or public body is empowered to manage the Port of London I think their jurisdiction should extend to Teddington Weir, so that they may keep a watch upon the flow of upland water.

3161. You put it to us that the tendency of the further abstraction of upland water might be detrimental to the interests of the channels of the Port of London?—Certainly.

3162. (*Mr. Ellis.*) As I understand you, you put it to us that you want two elements to preserve the natural scour of the River Thames for the benefit of the port—in the first place, no abstraction, which you have dealt with; and, in the second place, volume of water?—Yes, the largest volume of water you can get from the upland sources.

3163. Do you consider this a serious matter?—I do.

3164. And you would point to what has occurred at Bow Creek as a danger signal?—Yes.

Mr. GEORGE LAURENCE-GOMME called and examined.

3165. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are Clerk of the London County Council, and you were appointed on the 30th October, 1900?—Yes.

3166. You were formerly statistical officer of the Council since 1891?—Yes.

3167. Will you proceed with your evidence. I see in your statement several historical quotations which you are good enough to give, the accuracy of which I suppose we may take for granted?—Quite so.

3168. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Of course we quite understand that you assure us that these are accurate quotations?—Yes, I do assure you of that. I have verified them in every case. I have prepared for the Rivers Committee of the Council returns to enable that Committee to report upon the following resolution of the Council (of the 24th March, 1896)—"That it being in the best interest of London to improve its shipping by improved and cheaper dock accommodation, it be referred to the Rivers Committee to report upon the whole subject."

3169. Can you assure us that that date, the 24th March, is the right one. A good deal will turn upon the proceedings of the County Council, and we must have the dates perfectly accurate from the beginning. You understand my point?—I do.

3170. It will all come up in Parliament, and we must have it accurate?—I will send for the original minutes, and see that that is quite accurate.

3171. And the same applies to every date all through?—Yes; I understand that. The returns which were presented to the Rivers Committee I think the Commission have before them, but for the purposes of this Commission I have prepared evidence on behalf of the Council, which, as the central local authority of London, it is desirous of submitting as bearing upon the importance of the port and the docks as matters of public concern. I have studied this subject for some years as a matter of vast public importance, and have, at the request of the Council, visited foreign and English ports, in order to understand the question from as many points of view as possible. The first important point which the Council desires to direct attention to in connection with the Port of London is that formerly it was under municipal control. The manner in which municipal control has in the past been exercised in the port, and the various events which have occurred by which that municipal control has almost entirely disappeared, are of importance in the present inquiry. For this purpose the following facts have been obtained from original authorities. Early in municipal history the condition and administration of the port was always considered a municipal service, and many instances occur of works being undertaken by the municipalities of the country in connection with their ports. In London, from the earliest times the control of the River Thames seems to have been generally regarded as the duty of the mayor, commonalty, and citizens of the City of London. Thus in a case of disputed jurisdiction over the Thames in 14 Edward II. (1321), judgment was given ("Liber Custumarum," Vol. ii., Part i., page 408) "quod aqua Thamisiæ pertinet ad civitatem Londoniarum a Londoniis usque ad mare" (that the water of the Thames belongs to the City of London, from London to the sea). Howel ("Londinopolis," 1657, pages 15 and 16) refers to this judgment, giving a slightly different text; and to another similar judgment in 1 Richard III. (1377), when, the sheriffs and citizens of London being called in question for their jurisdiction exercised on the Thames, it was found "quod nullus habeat aliquid juris in Thamisia usque ad novum gurgitem nisi cives Londonens" (that nobody has any jurisdiction on the Thames down to the new "wear" [gurges=a wear, "Liber Albus, Glossary," page 389] except the citizens of London). A great amount of information as to the complaints and disputes is to be found in the series of records known as the "Remembrancia," preserved among the archives of the City of London. An analytical index to these, for the period 1579—1664, was published by the City Corporation in 1878, and a few examples from this will illustrate the position. In 1580 we find, in a letter from the Lords of the Council to the Lord Mayor, the Government recognising the jurisdiction of the City over the Thames. The *précis* of the letter in "Remembrancia" runs, "The River Thames, by reason of the number of weirs between the bridge (London Bridge) and Windsor had become choked and almost unnavigable. They requested him, as conservator, of the river, to send the water bailiff or some officer to them with an account of the number of weirs existing from London Bridge to Staines, how many there had been in ancient times, and what number had increased within the past seven years; how many were fit to remain, and to take order for the removal of the others" (pages 499 and 500.) Another letter of the same year, from the Lord Mayor to the Lord Treasurer, complained, "That, contrary to the rights and charters of the City appointing the Lord Mayor conservator of the River Thames within certain bounds, which jurisdiction had been quietly enjoyed by the City for many years without interruption, during which time the river had been kept in a good state, of late years the Right Hon. Lord Seymour, Lord Admiral of England, supposing the jurisdiction to belong to his office, had entered into the same and interrupted the franchise and authority of the City. Upon his decease his successors had, by their officers, continued the interruption. The Mayor and citizens, considering the great estate of the said Lords, had not pursued them right, as in law and justice they might and ought to have done. Since the time of the said interruption the river eastwards from London Bridge had become so decayed that ships or vessels which within 20 or 40 years past might have come up to the pool against St. Katharine's, could not pass at low water without danger between London and Greenwich. The channel being choked, the lands adjoining were overflowed, to the danger of breaches, and the destruction of the fry and brood of fish, whereby the City lacked the good store of fish which used to be taken in the river. In consideration whereof, and because the City could not be kept out of utter decay and ruin without present amendment of the river, he requested his good offices and advice with Her Majesty and the Lord High Admiral that the City might be restored to their ancient rights. If any doubts existed as to the City's right, the judges, after hearing evidence, should determine to whom the right belonged, that steps might be taken for the conservation of the river" (pages 500 and 501). In the same year another letter from the Lord Mayor to the Lord Treasurer stated that "Ships which formerly came to St. Katharine's could not now come to Blackwall. Tiltboats and wherries were scarcely able to pass from London to Greenwich at low water. The princes and Parliament had in time past thought it best to commit the conservation of the river within certain bounds to the City. Fearing that in time to come the City might be charged with neglect, he requested that Her Majesty might be pleased to command her learned judges to declare the law in this case, and to whom the jurisdiction belonged" (pages 501 and 502). It will be noticed that in these two letters from the Lord Mayor to the Lord Treasurer, the Government is said to have granted the jurisdiction over the river "within certain bounds" to the City Corporation. If such definite control had been granted none of the authorities seem to mention it. Those letters from the Lord Mayor seem to bring out the fact that the City Corporation were considered as the conservators of the river, and claimed a considerable amount of jurisdiction in the river, but it was not until the Charter of James I. of 1605 that the position was made perfectly clear. That charter is dated 20th August, 1605, and a translation given in Birch's "Historical Charters," 1887, runs, in part, as follows (pages 132-138): "Whereas . . . the mayor and commonalty and Citizens of our City of London, time out of mind, have had, exercised, and ought, and have accustomed themselves to have and exercise the office of bailiff and conservation of the water of the Thames . . . from the bridge of the town of Staines . . . towards the east, unto London Bridge, and from thence to a certain place called Kendall, otherwise Yenland, otherwise Yenleet, towards the sea, and east, and in Medway, and in the Port of London aforesaid, and upon whatsoever bank, and upon every shore, and upon every wharf of the same water of Thames, within the limits and bounds aforesaid, and in, upon, and about all and every of them . . . we have granted, and . . . do grant to the said Mayor and Commonalty and citizens, and their successors, that they may exercise and execute the said office of bailiff for the conservation of the water of Thames. . ." Whatever the authority under which the City Corporation exercised jurisdiction over the river prior to this stage there would seem to be no doubt, in the first place, that that jurisdiction was not definitely theirs by statutory right, and, in the second place, that it was recognised as belonging to them, not only popularly, but by legal opinion. The powers and duties of the Lord

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Mayor as conservator of the Thames are concisely set out in Norton's Commentaries of the City of London (1829, pages 506 and 507). Mr. Norton was the Common Pleader of the City of London, an officer, and therefore I look upon him as a first-hand authority in giving this summary of the condition of things in 1829:—"The Lord Mayor has a general authority to remove wears, kiddles, obstructions, and nuisances, and to seize unlawful nets and fish caught unlawfully or out of season. For the preservation of the waters of the fishery and of the navigation various Acts of Parliament have from time to time passed, and various ordinances of the Common Council regulating what nets are to be used and how, and condemning, under penalties and forfeiture, any injurious traffic on the river, over which offences the Lord Mayor has jurisdiction, either by action of debt in his Mayor's court or by inquisitions taken in his Court of Conservancy. A number of the members of the Court of Common Council form an annual committee called the Navigation Committee, to superintend the general state of the navigation. The Court of Conservancy is a most ancient court of record, held before the Lord Mayor eight times every year, in the four counties of Middlesex, Kent, Essex, and Surrey successively, by prescription and by virtue of the King's commission, which is granted by the King on his accession to the Lord Mayor for the time being. A jury is summoned of the residents of those counties, and their jurisdiction may be said to be confined to the injury and redress of common nuisances in the river. The commissions which have from time to time been issued from the period of Henry III.'s reign direct the Mayor to inquire into and authorise him to hear and determine offences in unlawful fishing. In modern times the court has been held with great regularity and with very beneficial results; the jurisdiction has been chiefly exercised, like the wardmote leet courts, for purposes of inquisition and presentment; and the redress of nuisances, when pointed out by such presentment, has been of late years sought by indictment in a superior court. For the purpose of enforcing his authority as conservator of the Thames, the Lord Mayor appoints an officer called the Water Bailiff, who is called the Sub-Conservator, and whose office over the river is of the same nature as that of the chief constable appointed by the county sheriff over the hundred. His duties, which are ministerial and partly regulated by statute, are generally to watch over the river for the detection of and to inform against nuisances; to summon the inquest jury and attend them on their view in fulfilment of the charge given them at the Conservancy Court; to attend the Corporation on their aquatic processions; to receive the instructions of the Navigation Committee of the Common Council; to license and inspect fishing nets; to seize forfeitures for the purpose of condemnation; and to obey the instructions of the civic authorities in removing obstructions in the navigation of the river." To what extent the Lord Mayor, having the above-mentioned powers and duties, was able or willing, through his deputy and Conservancy Courts, to cope with the growing traffic in the port, is shown in several contemporary annals. In 1746 Roger Griffiths, water bailiff (*i.e.*, the Lord Mayor's deputy for conservancy purposes), wrote "An essay to prove that the jurisdiction and conservancy of the river of Thames, etc., is committed to the Lord Mayor, etc." I will give some quotations. The first quotation relates to dredging. "And so truly sensible has the City of London always been of the great importance of the navigation of this river that its chief magistrate and conservator thereof annually holds several courts of conservacy for its preservation, at a very considerable yearly expense to the city; and as a further proof thereof, it is not above four years since they laid out several hundred pounds in widening the channel, and taking away gravel from several shallow places of the river westwards, which at that time greatly obstructed its navigation, and this last without any other obligation on their parts than their zeal for the public good" (page 15). Then the second quotation deals with navigation. "But I am afraid even all this, or any other expense, how great soever, will little avail to the continuing and preserving this navigation open and free as it ought to be without a more uniform and regular method of navigating and loading the western great barges is more duly formed and established than what is practised at present or has been of late years especially" (pages 15-16). The third quotation relates to the mooring. "In order to explain which, and to act consistent with the duty I owe to my office as well as the publick, I shall here just point out some few of those disadvantages which either now attend, or are but too frequently practised, to the detriment of the navigation westwards. And the first that I shall mention, and which is but too frequently committed by those persons who are entrusted with the navigating of these barges, especially down the river, is this, that such persons, whether through vitiousness, negligence, or wilfulness (best known to themselves), turn their vessels and run aground so across the channel of the river as to obstruct all other barges passing or repassing the same; and this, if I have not been misinformed, has been, and is often done, through envy, ill-will, or other clandestine views, to others coming down the river at the same time, and so interrupt each other's passage that not only the owners of the loading often sustain inconveniences by such delays, but the navigation is thereby much impaired by so many vessels lying in the way, or foul of each other, and thereby stopping or diverting the due course of the river, and turning its current, which naturally removes large quantities of sand and gravel from off the shallows into the channel, to its prejudice, both in respect to its dimensions, as well as depth of water; which, the more it is expanded, must naturally be the less deep, and consequently the more incapable of bearing the greater burthens" (pages 15-16). With regard to the lower river, a very vivid account of the state of the navigation is given by James Sharp in a report he made to the City Corporation in 1773, on a proposed canal from Waltham Abbey to Moorfields. He says (page 2): "Our port, once the noblest, perhaps, in the whole world, is greatly injured by many causes. Tideway navigations, according to the nature of things, choak up in time and become shallow, by the perpetual washing down of floods from the rivers above; and from the City of London such a quantity of soil and rubbish is continually carried into it by the sewers as is, of itself, prodigious, and such as can never be prevented; but, above all, such is the great contraction of the port, from Westminster to Limehouse, by embankments, by encroachments, and the ill-judged manner of forming our causeways from the stairs to low water mark that the Port of London is much upon the decline, and the inconveniences of it multiply very fast, insomuch that it is thought not less than £30,000 worth of cables are consumed in the winter months by the rapidity of the tides and land floods, there being no eddy waters for ships and other vessels to lie in; it is no uncommon thing to see whole tiers of ships forced from their moorings one upon another, and seldom a tide passes without accidents by vessels running foul of others in their passage both upwards and downwards, tearing and breaking away everything before them; and almost every winter for many years past has afforded melancholy scenes of vessels being wrecked and entirely lost even in our very port. Thus we stand with regard to our port, and our river navigation is in as bad a condition; neither can it ever be made much better, for locks and dams are impediments, which like the tideway will in time accumulate and render it broad and shallow by reducing the natural fall or descent into flat ground, so as to form a step, as it were, at every lock. Now, though I am averse to embankments in the tideway, sure I am that embankments and contraction is the only method that can be taken to preserve a stream navigation, but even this will not make a river good for passage upwards. The labour of passing against the stream can never be taken away, nor the meandering length shortened. A river stream is the natural drain of a country and ill formed for navigation." The Corporation had, under the Act 22, Charles II., cap. 11, constructed the channel of Bridewell Dock from the Thames to Holborn Bridge, paid for it out of the coal dues, and were authorised to charge reasonable rates for the use of the navigation and quays. In 1732 this channel had become "a grievous and dangerous nuisance" (6 George II., cap. 22), and the Corporation were authorised to fill up the channel and appropriate the ground in fee simple. It will thus be seen that though its ancient powers extended to dredging, construction of docks and quays, and nearly all administrative matters, the Corporation did not meet the requirements of the case.

3172. That is an argumentative sentence?—It is based on the previous quotations.

3173. Yes; but it is an argumentative sentence, and it must be taken for what it is worth?—Quite so. The

report of the Committee of West India Merchants, December, 1793, in reference to schemes for dock improvements at various outports, says (Appendix to Report of Port of London Committee, 1796, page 406, of *Reports of Committees*, 1793-1802): "The metropolis of Great Britain alone had, in these material respects, remained torpid; its improvements checked or suspended, and its abuses gradually gaining head." Other references to the inefficiency of the port at this time are to be found on pages 270 and 271 of the same volume. "A great and general complaint is made of inattention to a proper conservation of the depth of the river." ". . . The river has lost from 4 to 5ft. depth of water at many of the stations or tiers of shipping and that shortly the channel of the river must be choked and rendered still less suitable to navigation, if measures of prevention are not adopted." ". . . The crowded state of the river, the want of room for mooring ships, and for the constant access to them by craft. . . . No remedy seems to have been applied to this evil, though so repeatedly urged, and so fully admitted." ". . . The quays are not of sufficient extent, from which delays and many extraordinary expenses occur, and obstructions to the due collection of the revenue." Although Parliamentary power was obtained in 1696 to construct a wet-dock at Rotherhithe, this dock was practically out of use until it was adopted for the Greenland trade. Practically in 1796 the Port of London had not a single wet dock, while Liverpool and Hull, obtaining statutory powers in 1709 and 1774 respectively "had improved navigation or constructed commodious docks, with warehouses and other commercial facilities." (Clifford, *Private Bill Legislation*, Vol II., page 630). In Hull the Corporation had assisted to form the dock company, and had subscribed thereto. In Glasgow, again, the municipality in 1758 had obtained an Act to improve the navigation of the Clyde, and had been conspicuous in their attempts to provide better facilities for shipping nearly a century before. So matters were drifting, the municipality of London letting go their hold upon this important service. In 1796 private enterprise began to be exerted. This is the first evidence of private enterprise. Early in that year a committee of merchants petitioned the House of Commons for permission to bring in a Bill for the making of wet docks at Wapping. Their proposal, as described by the Select Committee, appointed later in the same year "to enquire into the best mode of providing sufficient accommodation for the increased trade and shipping of the Port of London" was as follows (pages 276-277):—"To purchase 80 acres in Wapping . . . and there to excavate and form docks of 39 acres area of water, capable of containing 350 ships; and one other for the accommodation of lighters, of about two acres, with a course for the main docks into the river at Hermitage Dock."

3174. Is that an extract from the report of the Parliamentary Committee?—Yes, that is so—at pages 276 and 277. Two entrances were intended for shipping, one communicating directly with the Thames at Bell Dock, the other by a canal, navigable for ships of 350 tons, running eastward 2¾ miles, reaching the river at Blackwall. Their petition was referred to a Committee upon whose report the House ordered: "That leave be given to bring in a Bill for making wet docks, basins, cuts and other works," with "a navigable canal from Blackwall to the said docks in Wapping." On 18th February, 1796, the Bill was read a first time. Thereupon numerous petitions were entered against it. Among them was a petition from the City Corporation, in which they claimed that, "ever careful of the rights and welfare of their fellow-citizens," they had "formed a plan for giving increased accommodation to vessels, without creating a new corporation or expensive establishments, and without imposing burdens on trade" (51 *Commons Journal* 431, quoted in *Clifford's Private Bill Legislation*, ii., 632). I point out there that the municipal action is again coming to the front, and in an extremely important manner. In the City plan it was proposed to excavate a dock of 102 acres in the isthmus of the Isle of Dogs capable of containing above 400 ships, and another at Rotherhithe of the same size. Further, they proposed to accommodate such trade remaining in the river by extending the frontage of the existing legal quays for lighters to lie alongside; to construct thereon spacious warehouses, and to open avenues to facilitate conveyance to every part of the Metropolis. So great was the outcry against the making of the docks according to the merchants' plan that the second reading of the Bill was postponed till the second Committee of 1796 had reported. To this Committee were referred, in addition to all the petitions against the merchants' Bill, various plans for improving the accommodation in the Port of London, including among them those of the merchants and of the City Corporation. So important was the subject then considered that such 11 members as Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan were appointed to serve upon the Committee.

3175. It was a very large Committee, if I remember?—My recollection is that it was about 15 members.

3176. Have you referred to the journals?—Yes, I have looked up all these facts.

3177. There were members for a number of counties upon that Committee. You may take it that this is so?—My recollection is that there were only about 15 members, but I am quite liable to be wrong about that matter. With regard to the merchants' plan for docks at Wapping, the Committee reported favourably, relying on the favourable reports of the Commissioners of Customs and Trinity House, to whom the plans had been referred. The Commissioners of Customs reported (*Reports of Committees*, 1793-1802, page 349): "We submit . . . that the situation pointed out for the wet docks and canal, for the purpose proposed, is, as far as we are capable of judging, preferable to any other of which we have had cognizance." Trinity House reported (*Reports of Committees*, 1793-1802, page 349):—"The Committee are therefore decidedly of opinion that the vacant space of ground in Wapping . . . under all circumstances is the most fit situation for wet docks and legal quays, for the accommodation of trade and security of revenue in the Port of London. The Committee beg leave to report farther that it is their opinion a cut from Blackwall to the dock at Wapping would also be of great benefit to the trade of this port, as it would free shipping and merchandise from all risk (so far as it extends) from the tides or shipping, which all parts of the river are liable to, and facilitate the passage into the dock." The Committee's report on the City's scheme (*Reports of Committees*, 1793-1802, page 277) was not favourable:—"The plan appears worthy of the magnificent and commercial spirit of the City Corporation, but meets with objection on the part of the Corporation of the Trinity House in their report, because it is deficient in providing for the fundamental convenience to trade by contiguity to the metropolis and ready intercourse of those concerned, and from the extent of lighterage endangering property and revenue. The danger to both, whilst valuable articles of high duty are detained in lighters, has already been observed by the report of the Commissioners of Customs: 'How far close or decked lighters are an adequate or desirable remedy has, from the evidence on safety and on port charges, been before observed upon by your Committee. The Brethren of the Trinity House further object to the encroachments on the Thames, by projection of the quays, as highly detrimental to the conservation and navigation of the river.'" The Committee did not, however, definitely recommend one plan, merely submitting their observations on the various schemes, with the evidence and appendix, "in order that the House may be better and more fully enabled to decide on the premises." Their report was dated May 13th, 1796, and the closing of the session on May 19th left no time for legislation. In the course of the next three years the merchants continued unsuccessfully their efforts to obtain authority to build docks at Wapping. The City Corporation modified their scheme. They had made a friendly arrangement with some West India merchants, and were promoting a joint Bill by which the City should have power to make a canal across the Isle of Dogs and improve the legal quays, while a West India Dock company, to be created, should make docks in the Isle of Dogs. There is the first instance of municipal and private action combined. In 1799 these two plans, together with a third of "merchants, traders, and wholesale dealers of the City of London and Borough of Southwark, and others interested in the trade and commerce of the river Thames and the improvement of the Port of London, for newly constructing London Bridge and for enabling ships of 500 tons to lie between that and Blackfriars Bridge," were referred to a Select Committee. The Committee reported (*Reports of Committees* 1793-1802, page 444):—"Your Committee are desirous of stating, in the first place, their unanimous opinion that it is indispensably necessary for the accommodation of the trade of the Port of London that some plan should be forthwith adopted for the improvement of the port. The great increase of the trade for some years; the prospect of a still further increase; the inconvenience, and even danger, to which ships are exposed in navigating the river, and the delay in loading and unloading their cargoes, from the crowded state of

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the shipping; the advantages which several of the outports have obtained from the establishment of docks—cannot fail to impress on the House the truth of this opinion. Your Committee regret that though this subject has been now under consideration for several years, no measure should yet have been taken for remedying evils so universally felt and acknowledged by the commercial part of the metropolis; and they trust that a decision will take place, without further delay, in favour of some one of the plans that have been proposed." This passage interprets almost exactly the present state of things. I shall, in my evidence before this Commission, deal with the "great increase of trade," "the prospect of still further increase," "the inconvenience to shipping," "the delays at the port," "the advantages which several outports have obtained by the establishment of docks." With regard to the two plans for wet docks the Committee reported (page 445):—"Your Committee have no hesitation in delivering it as their opinion that it is desirable that docks should be established in both of these situations (Wapping and Isle of Dogs), and that they would be in no respect incompatible with each other. But considering how important it is that something should be done without further delay, your Committee have unanimously resolved . . . to recommend the immediate adoption of the plan of the Isle of Dogs." They preferred this plan "from the very great advantage of providing for large ships in a manner which would enable them to avoid the danger and delay of the circuitous passage." Following on this report the City Bill became law on 12th July, 1799. This is the first great Dock Bill. By this Act, the Common Council were empowered to make a navigable canal across the Isle of Dogs (Section 1); to build piers at Blackwall and Limehouse-hole, to facilitate the entrances into the canal (Section 2); to remove and alter the present mooring chains, and place others, under the inspection and approbation of Trinity House (Section 37). By Section 38, the West India Dock Company is incorporated, and ordered (by Section 42) to pay 5 per cent. as interest or dividends on moneys subscribed until the docks and works shall be completed, and afterwards interest or dividends, not exceeding 10 per cent. per annum. The whole of this Act is deserving of careful consideration as showing the position of the municipal authority at this date. It will be seen from these facts that the City Corporation, as the municipal authority of London at this date, took a prominent part in the construction of docks and improvements of the port. Although they allowed the West India merchants' scheme for docks to become part of their Act, and the company to be incorporated, yet many considerable powers connected with the administration of the port were conferred upon the Corporation, and even in connection with the docks themselves, it is noteworthy that by Section 48 of the Act, it was provided that, of 21 directors of the company, 4 should be Aldermen of the City, and 4 Common Councillors. That is a very important element in the case. Another feature of this Act is that the Government agreed to advance out of the consolidated fund on the credit of the rates and duties granted by the Act a sum of £72,000. Here, for the first time, the Government interested itself in the matter of docks. This grant led up to a series of later grants, which it is important to set forth. This information is obtained from the House of Commons Journal. On the 16th February, 1802, the City Corporation petitioned Parliament for a further sum of £50,000 to carry on the canal works, all the £72,000 originally advanced having been expended. The reason advanced for the inadequacy of the original grant was that in many cases it had been necessary to purchase the whole of properties of which only a part was required. By the subsequent sale of these superfluous parts it was hoped that it would be possible to repay much of the £50,000. The speedy grant of the money was important, as it would obviate much extra expense, the Isle of Dogs being at that time drained by two engines, one for the canal, and one for the docks in course of construction. The docks were to be opened in July, and the whole of the drainage (and the opening of the docks would probably increase it) would devolve on the canal—hence the necessity for expedition. The Act 42 Geo. III., cap. 49, was the outcome of this petition (7th May, 1802). On 7th February, 1803, the Corporation again petitioned Parliament for more money, suggesting that an additional toll should be laid on craft frequenting the port. No specific mention of the canal was made in the petition. It implies that the money was to be devoted to the general amelioration of the port, which would, of course, include the canal works. The Act 43 Geo. III., cap. 124 (13th July, 1803), advancing £100,000 for repair of mooring chains and general improvement of the port, and making additional rates on vessels, was the result of this petition. On 1st March, 1805, the Corporation again petitioned the House for more money, saying that the canal works were in a very forward state, but more capital was needed. The result was 45 Geo. III., cap 63 (27th June, 1805), advancing a further sum of £60,000. On 30th June, 1807, the Corporation again asked the House for more money, and 47 Geo. III., Sess. 2 cap. 31 (1st August, 1807), advancing £45,000 more, was the result. The total sum advanced by the Government under these several Acts was apparently £327,000, and it is important to note that a part of this was, under the 1803 Act, devoted to the repair of mooring chains, and the general improvement of the port. It was not devoted entirely to the improvement of the docks.

See 5589.

3178. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Was any part of that sum at any time repaid to the Government?—I am not able quite to state that. I know that the interest was not paid. At the time the East India Dock Company formed their dock they took in the canal that was made, and obtained the advantage of that, and were to have paid to the Government some portion of the cost, but whether they did so or not I am unable to say. Thus, at this date, the Government of the country, the municipal authority of the city, and private enterprise were conjointly concerned in a far-reaching scheme for the improvement and government of the port. After this important epoch in the history of dock administration of London, the active interest of the municipal authority gradually died out. So as not to use my own words, I have used Mr. Clifford's words in his well-known book, the "History of Private Bill Legislation" (*ii.*, 653-4):—"In 1829, as the canal was no longer required for navigation, the Government and Corporation agreed to sell it to the West India Dock Company, whose works it adjoined. At that time none of the advances made by the Treasury had been repaid; the tonnage rates on which these loans were secured had been found insufficient to do more than meet interest and expenses. To end as quickly as possible a bad business, Parliament allowed the Treasury to sacrifice, after 1829, all claim for interest; the tonnage rates, for a term of twenty-one years, were devoted to repayment of principal; and the canal was handed over to the Dock Company, freed from all obligation to maintain it as a channel for vessels. Here, therefore, after thirty years, the Corporation closed their statutory connection with the dock and kindred enterprises of the century." In 1836 the attention of Parliament was again directed to the condition of the Port, and a Select Committee was appointed to enquire into the state of the Port of London.

3179. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Was that a Select Committee of the House of Commons?—A Select Committee of the House of Commons. Then it is reported at Page iii. of their Report:—"That it appears to this Committee that the navigation of the River Thames in the Port of London has for a great length of time been subjected to serious and increasing obstructions, by which the maritime approach to the metropolis has been impeded, the shipping exposed to injury and needless detention, and that frequent accidents have occurred, several of which were attended with the loss of human life. That this Committee are of opinion that the various conflicting jurisdictions and claims of the Admiralty, the Trinity House, and the Corporation of the City of London over the River Thames below the bridges have had a most injurious effect upon the interests of navigation, and that it is desirable that they should be consolidated and vested in some one responsible body, and that means should be found to provide for the removal of shoals and obstructions in the bed of the river." Here, again, the present condition of things is interpreted. I shall give evidence upon "the conflicting jurisdictions," and as to the insufficiency of the means "provided for the removal of shoals and obstructions in the bed of the river." The recommendation that the conflicting jurisdictions and claims over the river should be vested in one responsible authority was never carried out. Differences between the Crown and the Corporation as to rights of the Crown over the bed and shore of the Thames were being fought out. The Crown contended that it had a property in the bed and shores, and a right to revenue accruing from leases of land between high and low water. All this benefit had accrued to the City, which claimed property in right of conservancy. The Crown did not dispute the right of the City to conservancy, but held that title to bed and shores was independent thereof. Lengthy

and costly litigation followed. In 1846 a conference between the Crown and the City arranged that a Bill should be promoted to constitute a conservancy board, consisting of fifteen members, ten to be nominated by the Corporation and five by the Crown. The Bill was introduced in 1847, but did not pass owing to the lateness of the session. At a second conference, held in 1856 the City recognised the hitherto disputed rights of the Crown, and an agreement was come to by which two-thirds of the revenue from the bed and soil was to go to a conservancy board to be constituted and one-third to the Crown; litigation was to cease; all necessary conservancy funds were to come from dues levied upon the port and other sources of revenue of the Corporation; to the new board the Corporation was to appoint seven members, the Admiralty two, the Board of Trade one, and Trinity House two. That was the first constitution of the Conservancy Board, on which the City Corporation had the majority of members. The preamble to the Thames Conservancy Act, 1857, recites that "the lastage and ballastage and the office of lastage and ballastage of all vessels coming into, lying in or going out of the River Thames . . . and the supplying of ballast to all such vessels . . . have been by certain ancient grants . . . vested in the master, wardens, and assistants of the Corporation of Trinity House of Deptford Strond"; that Trinity House "have, from time to time, as occasion required, dug, raised, and taken up such gravel, sand, soil, out of and from the River Thames as were fit and proper for the ballasting of vessels"; that "there are in the River Thames certain shoals, shelves, and banks which materially impede the navigation of the said river, but the materials whereof, not being fit and proper for the ballasting of vessels, the same have not been dug, raised and taken up by the said" Trinity House; that "it is expedient for the better and more safe navigation of vessels up and down the River Thames that such shoals, shelves, and banks as aforesaid, and others of the like nature, should be removed and taken away, and the said" Trinity House "are willing to undertake the removal of such shoals, shelves and banks in manner hereinafter mentioned and provided for"; that "the public enjoy certain rights and privileges in and over the River Thames for the navigation and use thereof"; that "many encroachments have been made on the shores and banks of the River Thames, and it is desirable and expedient that further powers should be given for their removal and prevention"; that "in consequence of the great increase of steam navigation it has become necessary to provide safe and convenient places for embarking and disembarking steamboat passengers, and that the same should be put under proper restrictions and regulations"; that "it is expedient for these beneficial objects that the whole regulation of the River Thames should be under one uniform management and supervision of a permanent body of conservators, having all powers necessary for that purpose." The constitution of the Board under the Act gave a majority to the City Corporation, consisting as it did of the Lord Mayor, two aldermen and four common councilmen of the City, the deputy master of Trinity House, two nominees of the Lord High Admiral, one each of the Privy Council and Trinity House. This majority was destroyed in 1864, when six additional conservators (two elected by shipowners, one by owners of passenger steamers, two by owners of lighters and steam tugs, one by dockowners and wharfingers) were ordered to be elected. In 1866, 1893, and 1894, the constitution of the Board was again altered, but the majority of the City Corporation was never restored. At this point it is important to recall the condition of affairs in 1893. The London County Council had decided to ask Parliament to reform the constitution of the Thames Conservancy Board so as to bring it more into conformity with existing circumstances. The City Corporation no longer represented London, but only one square mile of London. The Council did not succeed in its efforts beyond obtaining a provision for temporary representation and the instruction of the House that the Conservancy should itself bring in a Bill to reform its constitution. This was done in 1894. The Bill, as introduced, proposed that the representation of the County Council and the Corporation should be 8 members out of a total of 33; the Bill was amended to give a representation of 12 out of 38, and the constitution of the Thames Conservancy was based upon the representation of the county authorities administering the area of the Thames basin. This legislation introduces into the government of the port a new authority, partly municipal, partly commercial, and partly administrative; but its powers are limited and its finance is unsatisfactory. It is neither municipal nor private. In the meantime, in 1872, municipal administration in the Thames had again been introduced, thus interposing a new authority. Under the Public Health Act of that year the City Corporation became the sanitary authority for the Port of London, the expenses being defrayed out of the City estates.

3180. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) With regard to the next paragraph of the statement of your proposed evidence, we have considered it, and we do not feel inclined to take as part of your evidence anything which has to do with the powers granted to the dock companies. They will have an opportunity of telling us their powers themselves, and we do not think it comes within the scope of the evidence which you should give?—Of course I am in your hands. The point of view of the Council is that those are very important powers, and they have a municipal side as well as a private side.

3181. Still they are facts which do not directly concern you—the County Council?—Except in this way, that apart from the private interest they have to the dock companies they are of interest to the municipal authority of London, because they deal with such very large matters.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I should like to say here this. We are now hearing very valuable evidence from the clerk of the County Council of London as to facts and narrative. As I understand we are going to have the advantage of hearing the evidence of one or two members, or perhaps the Chairman, of the County Council as to policy.

(*Witness.*) That is so.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) If that be so it probably will be more convenient to leave them to express their opinion as to policy and not to mix it up with the narrative of facts that we are getting from this witness.

(*Lord Revelstoke.*) I quite agree.

(*Witness.*) If I may say so the policy of the County Council will be submitted by members of the Council.

3182. Perhaps we shall have the pleasure of hearing the Chairman?—The Chairman of the Rivers Committee and other members of the Committee.

3183-4. (*Mr. Ellis.*) In support of that policy whoever comes before us will be able to bring in his views as to the dock companies at that time, but it would confuse your narrative to take it now?—I am quite in your hands.

(*Lord Revelstoke.*) We take it for granted that we shall have before us the Chairman of the Rivers Committee of the County Council or some representative in connection with questions of policy which they may wish to bring to our notice.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) As this is a mere recital of facts, and not an expression of opinion, I do not wish to ask any question upon it.

3185. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I have one question to ask. Assuming that we see the Chairman of the Rivers Committee or some member of the County Council, will that gentleman come armed with authority to speak on behalf of the County Council after the Council have debated the question?—That is so.

3186. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now will you proceed to the question of dock accommodation?—I will in the first place hand in a Table showing the area of the docks of London from their inception to the present day.

(*The Witness handed in a Table, showing the Water Area (approximate) of the Docks of London in certain years from their inception to the present time. See Appendix, 9th Day, No. 5.*)

In 1802 there was created a dockage area of 62¼ acres; by 1811 it had grown to 113½ acres; by 1821 it had grown to 178¼ acres; by 1831 it had grown to 223¾ acres. From 1831 to 1851 there was practically no development, but between 1851 and 1861 considerable development took place. By 1861 it had grown to 390¾ acres; by 1871 it had grown to 471¼ acres; by 1881 it had grown to 557¾ acres; by 1891 it had grown to 629½ acres. Since 1886 there has been little or no development. Assuming that acreage roughly measures accommodation (and I think this would be so), there is a most significant deduction to be drawn from this table when considered with the expansion of the trade during the same period.

3187. Where have you got those figures from—the figures you have quoted as to the area?—They are compiled from the Admiralty Dock Book of 1900, Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping, and from miscellaneous sources. The value of the periodical increase in dockage can best be ascertained by comparison with the corresponding growth of shipping and the

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character of the shipping. The following figures supply the principal data for this comparison:—

Year.	Number of Ships entered.	Tonnage entered.	Acreage of docks.
1802 - -	14,577	2,085,351	62¼
1831 - -	24,235	3,388,430	223¾
1841 - -	29,367	4,347,580	225½
1851 - -	31,349	5,293,177	228¼
1861 - -	28,175	6,299,211	390¾
1871 - -	22,417	6,848,642	471¼
1881 - -	*46,568	*10,001,526	557¾
1891 - -	*45,555	*12,636,634	629½
1897 - -	*48,171	*15,187,261	631
1899 - -	23,711	14,682,971	631

* Altered basis adopted in returns.

3188. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Of course, this is subject to the observation that the tonnage has not been ascertained in the same way all through?—That is so. I have inserted a note indicating that for the three years 1881, 1891, and 1897, it is on a different basis to other years. The difficulty all through these figures is that altered basis.

3189. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Then is 1899 a different basis to 1897 again?—I am not quite sure as to that. I think 1899 is on the same basis as 1871. It is on a different basis to 1897, and I think it is on the same basis as 1871, but I am not certain.

3190. (*Mr. Ellis.*) If I may say so, you should not think about these figures; you should be quite sure?—Then I am unable to be sure.

3191. But you are a great statistician, and the representative of the County Council?—But I am unable to go behind the Government figures.

3192. That is the difficulty of taking the figures in this way?—No doubt.

3193. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Could it not be ascertained at the Government offices from which these figures are produced?—I am afraid not. I have done my best to ascertain it, and I have not been able to get any better information than this.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) The tables are really of very little good to us unless we know what they mean.

3194. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That applies to all these figures unless they come first hand?—Of course, I am only using the figures to show certain results, and I quite understand that some of those results may be called into question by reason of the figures upon which they are based not being absolutely what I suggest they are; but so far as I have been able to test the figures I think my conclusions are accurate even in spite of these differences.

3195. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) What do you suggest about the 1899 figures? Do you suggest that they are on the same basis as the 1871 figures?—I suggest that they are on the same basis as the 1871 figures.

3196. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) It makes a wonderful difference in studying these figures. If we compare 1871 with 1899 we see a small increase in the number of vessels entering and a very large increase in the tonnage, but if the figures for 1899 are on the same basis as 1897 we see a very largely decreasing number of ships—less than half?—But they are not on the same basis as 1897?

3197. They could not be, it is obvious?—They are not on the same basis as 1897, I am sure of that.

3198. Take the third column. We cannot tell whether the tonnage has increased from 6,840,000 to 14,682,000 or not. The figures really convey no impression to one's mind.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) It is not comparing like with like.

(*Witness.*) Upon that I suggest that the 1871 figures are on the same basis as the 1899 figures; but the intervening years 1881, 1891, and 1897 are on a different basis.

3199. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Then you mean to lead us to the conclusion that the tonnage has considerably more than doubled?—Yes.

3200. And that the number of ships has increased by about 5 per cent.?—That is so.

3201. That you think we may safely take as a conclusion from your inquiries?—I do, and a little later on I think I can show how that is so.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I think I may suggest that there is a partial explanation on these points in the Board of Trade figures which we have had.

3202. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now will you proceed with your evidence?—Between 1802 and 1831 the activity in supplying dock accommodation shows that the dock authorities were endeavouring (with success) to meet the requirements. It was nearly quadrupled during this period, whereas shipping had only increased by 62 per cent. in tonnage and 66 per cent. in number of ships. During the period of stagnation between 1831 and 1861 shipping had nearly doubled in tonnage (86 per cent.), the number of ships showing only an increase of 16 per cent. over the year 1831, and an actual decrease in numbers during the 10 years from 1851 to 1861. Dockage was then increased by 75 per cent., and again it seemed as if the dock authorities were determined to meet the requirements. Since 1861 the tonnage of shipping has gone on increasing in very considerable degrees, while the number of ships has proportionately decreased, showing unmistakably the tendency towards larger ships. The increase in the dockage has not been commensurate with the requirements during this period. Up to 1886 increase took place, the construction of the Millwall Docks and the Royal Albert Dock, additions to the West India Docks and the Surrey Commercial Docks, and the construction of the Tilbury Docks being the principal works. But shipping had again outstripped the dockage. It had grown from 6,299,211 in 1861 to 11,597,756 tonnage in 1886, an increase of 85 per cent. There I note the fact that we have the altered basis to contend with. Since 1886 it has grown from 11,597,756 to 15,187,261 in 1897—that is, over 30 per cent.; but nothing has been done during this period to increase the dock accommodation. In 1802, when the dock system was first instituted, the whole of the shipping was then accommodated in the river. It amounted to 14,577 ships, with a tonnage of 2,085,351.

3203. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You get those figures from the Committee's Report?—From the Committee's Report. That was considered so intolerable an impediment to navigation and so injurious to shipping as to induce Parliament to grant powers to private companies to construct docks. In 1899 the total shipping was 23,711 ships, with a tonnage of 14,682,971. The exact apportionment of this shipping between the docks and the river is not obtainable. It appears, however, from the particulars already handed in to the Commission by the chairman of the Board of Customs, that of the foreign trade alone there is accommodated in the river 5,670 vessels of a tonnage of 2,664,964, a considerably larger tonnage than the whole tonnage which entered the port in 1799. In addition to this the river has to accommodate the bulk of the coasting trade, which, on a basis that excludes a great number of vessels trading in the river, was, in 1899, 12,843 vessels and 5,438,378 tonnage. There is, at any rate, now accommodated in the river about four times as much tonnage as was held in 1802 to constitute a serious indictment against the authorities entrusted with the control of the port. I must qualify these conclusions by noting that the quayage of the river has no doubt extended for the smaller vessels, but I am not able to state to what extent. The information can probably be obtained from the Thames Conservancy, who have to grant licences for wharves, and I would suggest that the information would be useful to the Commission. Still, with this information to hand, I do not think that the general conclusion as to the failure of the dock authorities to meet requirements can be invalidated. It may be, of course, that the dock system is not the proper system to extend for the new developments in shipping. But even so, there is no authority considering, or having the power to consider, what other system, if any, should take the place of dockage, or should supplement dockage, and until the docks are placed under a properly constituted authority no such consideration can be given to the vital questions proved by the figures I have given to be now requiring the most serious and immediate consideration.

3204. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You say that the quayage of the river has no doubt extended for the smaller vessels. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—Yes, I do know that. A great number of the wharves have been increased on both sides of the river of late years, and even down below the London area, but to what extent that accommodates the smaller vessels I have

no information. Even up above, in the Brent at Brentwood, and in the Wandle at Wandsworth, and in the Hammersmith Creek, and places of that kind, there are a great number of inlets where comparatively small vessels go up at the present moment. To what extent that has taken away the vessels from the lower reaches of the river I am unable to say, because I do not know the extent of the wharfage.

3205. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose it is an open question whether in 1799 vessels did not lie much more in what is called the upper pool and whether the accommodation for vessels lying in the river itself—at buoys and moorings—has not been extended largely down the river since that date?—I think that is so.

3206. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now will you proceed with your evidence?—I next turn to another aspect of the matter. London's growth and condition must start from its trade. Its shipping has long been of the greatest importance in relation to the shipping of the United Kingdom and of the civilised world. If accommodation has been inadequate, it may affect the trade of the port to such an extent as to constitute a menace to the prosperity of London. It may even do more, for the trade lost to London may not be transferred to a British port, and if it is transferred to a foreign port, the matter becomes one of national importance. I propose, therefore, to ascertain, as far as possible, what are the facts to assist in solving this problem. The first point is to ascertain the course of the volume of trade in the Port of London. I begin with the period when the system of docks was first introduced into London, namely at the beginning of this century, when the river without docks was found totally inadequate to accommodate the trade of the port, and the merchants of London had raised so strong an outcry against the want of accommodation. The information is not easily available, as the early returns were not based upon the same principle as the modern ones. But much information can be given by reference to extraneous reports, and other sources. In all cases, in the tables I am now about to hand in, I have indicated the source from which the figures are obtained.

(*The Witness handed in two Tables showing the shipping entering and clearing the Port of London in each year from 1798 to 1899 inclusive. See Appendix, 9th day, Nos. 6 and 7*).

3207. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Where have you derived these figures from?—The sources in every case are put in the columns here—"The Port of London Committee of 1799" and so on. In the last column of the table the source of each set of figures is given.

3208. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) After 1850 all the figures are from the annual statement of Trade and Navigation?—After 1850 that is so.

3208A. That is from the same source all through?—Yes. It will be useful to summarise the figures for the years 1799 and 1899 in a comparative form. First, as regards the foreign and colonial shipping:—

	Foreign.					
	Number of Vessels.			Tonnage.		
	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.
In 1799 - - - - -	3,414	2,518	5,932	673,473	521,311	1,194,784
In 1899 - - - - -	10,868	6,831	17,699	9,244,593	6,042,050	15,286,643
Proportion of 1899 to 1799 -	More than 3 times.	More than 2½ times.	3 times.	Nearly 14 times.	Nearly 12 times.	Nearly 13 times.

3209. Can you explain for the information of the Commisison the cause of the great difference between the entries and the clearances?—A large number of vessels enter with goods and they go out in ballast. Or the goods are dispersed by the coasting trade.

3210. Is it not part of the explanation that vessels enter in the foreign trade, and then when they clear they go away as coasting trade, and do not appear in the foreign trade?—Yes, they go by the coasting trade. Then I will give the figures for the coasting trade in a similar table:—

	Coasting.					
	Number of Vessels.			Tonnage.		
	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.
In 1799 - - -	11,163	4,913	16,076	1,411,878	491,300	1,903,178
In 1899 - - - - -	12,843	9,818	22,661	5,438,378	2,208,683	7,647,061
Proportion of 1899 to 1799 -	Slightly increased.	Twice as many.	Nearly 1½ times.	Nearly 4 times.	4½ times.	More than 4 times.

Then I will add those two tables together to give the total foreign and coasting shipping trade:—

	Foreign and Coasting Shipping.					
	Number of Vessels.			Tonnage		
	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.
In 1799 - - - -	14,577	7,431	22,008	2,085,351	1,012,611	3,097,962
In 1899 - - - - -	23,711	16,649	40,360	14,682,971	8,250,733	22,933,704
Proportion of 1899 to 1799 -	More than 1½ times.	More than twice.	Nearly twice.	More than 7 times.	More than 8 times.	Nearly 7½ times.

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This increased magnitude of the problem as it is now presented for consideration is a measure of its importance from almost every point of view. Whatever is done in the future it cannot be left to the chance results of temporary measures of co-operation between private capitalists and public authority, as was the case in the past. It must be settled upon principles which shall give permanence and settlement in administration, and wide and comprehensive powers of development, not only for meeting actual conditions, but of anticipating the probable conditions of the near future. The steady and remarkable continuity in the growth of the trade of London is the most apparent feature disclosed by these tables. The increase in the tonnage has, on an average, been as follows :—

	Foreign.			Coasting.			Total.		
	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.
Average annual increase per cent. from 1799 to 1899	2·65	2·48	2·58	1·36	1·51	1·40	1·97	2·12	2·02

3211. Are those percentages a division of the total increase between 1799 and 1899 by the number of years? —That is so.

3212. You have not really the annual increases?—It is the geometrical progression annually. Then I will give those totals according to quinquennial periods, as that might be a convenient way of doing it.

Periods.	Increase in tonnage in each Quinquennial period on the preceding period.								
	Foreign.			Coasting.			Total.		
	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.	Entered.	Cleared.	Total.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
1825–29 on 1820–24	28·9	26·5	27·8	–	–	–	–	–	
1830–34 ,, 1825–29	— 6·2	2·4	— 2·4	–	–	–	–	–	–
1835–39 ,, 1830–34	20·3	19·9	20·2	–	–	–	–	–	–
1840–44 ,, 1835–39	18·6	10·3	14·8	2·6	–	–	7·1	–	–
1845–49 ,, 1840–44	32·1	23·7	28·3	8·2	–	–	15·6	–	–
1850–54 ,, 1845–49	(a)	(a)	(a)	·6	–	–	(a)	–	–
1855–59 ,, 1850–54	(a)	(a)	(a)	— 6·8	–	–	(a)	–	–
1860–64 ,, 1855–59	20·0	14·0	17·8	5·2	8·4	6·1	12·3	11·8	12·1
1865–69 ,, 1860–64	16·3	14·6	15·7	— 6·0	6·0	— 3·0	5·3	11·3	7·1
1870–74 ,, 1865–69	15·3	29·3	20·2	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
1875–79 ,, 1870–74	21·9	21·8	21·8	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
1880–84 ,, 1875–79	15·6	21·2	17·7	14·0	13·3	13·8	14·9	18·7	16·2
1885–89 ,, 1880–84	14·4	17·6	15·6	14·2	22·4	16·3	14·3	19·0	15·9
1890–94 ,, 1885–89	10·3	13·2	11·5	7·2	14·5	9·1	9·0	13·6	10·5
1895–99 ,, 1890–94	16·1	15·2	15·7	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)

(a) Comparable figures are not available for these periods.

For so long a period as 100 years this annual increase is very remarkable, and is not to be equalled by any other port in the world. It shows above all things the natural capabilities of the Port of London. No amount of artificial aid would create such results. But, on the other hand, their very magnitude suggests that these natural capabilities may be encroached upon insensibly, and so be gradually undermined and almost destroyed. Artificial aid in the shape of adequate dockage, wharfage, etc., is necessary to be able to put the natural capabilities to their utmost possible use, and the question therefore is, does the present system produce the utmost possible use. It is impossible to suggest as a mere matter of statistics when this increase is going to stop. If it continues, or, rather, if it tends to continue, then the position of the Port becomes one of the most pressing questions of the day. If it decreases or remains stationary, then the question will arise whether the natural volume of trade to London has been reached or whether the want of development of London facilities has not hindered trade, and, further, whether the nation or only the Port of London suffers from this. To answer some of these questions it is necessary to analyse the tables in various directions. I will first turn to the relative volume and growth of the import and export trade—of the shipping entered and the shipping cleared with cargoes. It will be seen that while the tonnage entered from foreign countries rises from 673,473 in 1799 to 9,244,593 in 1899, or nearly fourteen times as much, the tonnage cleared rises from 521,311 tons to 6,042,050 tons, or only nearly twelve times as much, the tonnage of shipping entered being now more than 50 per cent. in excess of the tonnage cleared. The question arises whether the inconveniences of the port help towards this result. All things being equal, shipping would clear from the port of entry as much as possible. In 1799 it largely did so in London. It had fallen back considerably in 1853, and has never recovered itself, though it is noticeable that after 1867 the growth has been continuous, though comparatively not very great. Next it is noticeable that the increase in the number of ships is not continuous with the increase in tonnage. This, of course, is due to the substitution of steam for sailing vessels, and the consequent increase in the size of the vessels.

(The Witness handed in a Table showing the average tonnage of the shipping entered at the Port of London from 1841 to 1899. See Appendix, 9th Day, No. 8.)

This table gives a complete history of this important change. It is difficult, owing to the different methods of reckoning adopted in the official returns, to make a certain comparison for the whole series of years. As far as the figures go, they show that from 1841 to 1872 the tonnage of the sailing vessels rose from an average of 142 to an average of 203. On the new basis adopted in 1873, the average fell from 122 in 1873 to 71 in 1897. As regards the steam vessels, the deduction can be made with more certainty. Both the number and the tonnage of these have gone steadily up. In 1841 it worked out at an average of 238; in 1897 at an average of 686; in 1899 (on a basis which excludes certain of the smaller steam vessels) at an average of 731. This figure has to be considered with reference to the figure of maximum tonnage of ships which are moored in the river, which has already been stated in evidence before the Commission, at question 15, as

600 tons. I turn now from these figures relating to London only, to the registered shipping of the United Kingdom, and I will hand in two tables. One is a table giving a classification according to tonnage of the steam vessels engaged in the foreign trade belonging to the United Kingdom in each year from 1860 to 1899; and the other is a table giving a classification according to tonnage of the sailing vessels engaged in the foreign trade belonging to the United Kingdom, in each year from 1860 to 1899.

(*The tables were handed in. See Appendices, 9th day, Nos. 9 and 10.*)

3213. (*Mr. Ellis.*) These are all official figures?—These are all official figures. The source of information is given at the top of the table. The table illustrates the alteration in the character of the ships that are being built in later years. It will first be seen that since 1890 the number of British steamers engaged in the foreign trade has not materially increased. As to the classification of the vessels, it will be seen that the number of steam vessels under 1,600 tons is steadily decreasing; vessels of 1,600 tons to 2,000 tons show a decrease in 1899 for the first time, whilst vessels of from 2,000 tons upwards have been steadily increasing since 1860. In 1860 there were only five steam vessels of 2,000 tons and upwards, whilst in 1899 there were 1,108 vessels of this class. It is further significant that the steam vessels above 4,000 tons, which in 1894 numbered 19, and in 1898 66, rose in 1899 to 98—a most significant increase in the number of the largest vessels. As regards sailing vessels in the foreign trade, the most striking fact is the gradual reduction of the number in all classes. Having seen the great increase in the number of the larger steam vessels, it will be useful to see, if possible, to which of the ports of the Kingdom these belong, as indicated by the port of registry. This is dealt with in another table, which I will hand in.

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(*The witness handed in a table showing the number and proportion of the whole Kingdom of the vessels of each class belonging to London and the Ports of Liverpool, Glasgow, and Greenock. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 11.*)

3214. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose you know why Greenock shows up as having a large number of very large vessels?—I understand that it is principally due to the owners living there.

3215. Is it not because the P. and O. Steamship Company register their vessels at Greenock?—I was not aware of that. Taking the vessels above 3,000 tons tonnage, the figures are most significant of London's inferiority. The figures are:—

Classification of Tonnage.	United Kingdom.	Number and Proportion Registered as belonging to							
		London.		Liverpool.		Glasgow.		Greenock.	
Tons. Tons.	No.	No.	Per cent.	No.	Per cent.	No.	Per cent.	No.	Per cent.
3,000 and under 3,500 -	149	27	18·12	60	40·30	43	28·86	5	3·36
3,500 ,, 4,000 - -	77	12	15·59	25	32·50	14	18·18	6	7·80
4,000 and over - - -	101	7	6·93	64	63·40	4	3·96	5	4·95
Total - - -	327	46	14·07	149	45·57	61	18·65	16	4·89

Of the 327 vessels above 3,000 tons it will be seen that while Liverpool has 149, or 45·57 per cent., and Glasgow 61 or 18·65 per cent., London has only 46, or 14·07 per cent. This classification is according to net tonnage. This question of the size of vessels may be further considered in view of what is the position of the ships of other nationalities.

(*The witness handed in a table of steam vessels above 7,000 tons gross of all nationalities. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 12.*)

In the Table of English vessels the first thing of importance is the large number that have been built in the last three years. Of the 85 British vessels in the list, the number built in each year is as follows:—

Year.	Number of vessels.
1881 - - - - -	3
1883 - - - - -	1
1884 - - - - -	2
1889 - - - - -	2
1891 - - - - -	1
1893 - - - - -	4
1894 - - - - -	4
1895 - - - - -	4
1896 - - - - -	5
1897 - - - - -	6
1898 - - - - -	16
1899 - - - - -	20
1900 - - - - -	17
	85

This shows to what extent the later development of vessels in the direction of the greater size is proceeding. The port of registry of these 85 vessels is as follows:—

Port of registry.	Number of vessels.
Barrow - - - - -	1
Belfast - - - - -	6
Glasgow - - - - -	3
Greenock - - - - -	7
Liverpool - - - - -	58
London - - - - -	4
Southampton - - - -	4
West Hartlepool - - - -	2
	85

Though the port of registry does not mean that the trading of a vessel is confined to, or even principally concerned with, that particular port, yet taken with all other facts it cannot but be regarded as of some significance that even as a port of registry London, with its great trade, holds such an inferior position in respect of the larger class of vessels, whereas in the smaller vessels its position as a port of registry is undoubted, as will be seen from Appendix 11. It will be further seen from the last Table that foreign countries show a considerable competition in the direction of larger vessels. The number of German ships over 7,000 tons gross is 34, and the number of French 7. I will hand in a further table showing the classification of steam vessels of all nationalities according to Lloyd's Register.

See 7843-51.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the classification of steam vessels of all nationalities according to Lloyd's Register. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 13.*)

It will be seen that the number of German vessels between 7,000 and 10,000 gross tonnage is 15, against 63 British, and over 10,000 tons, 19 against 22 British. Germany is thus building large vessels out of all proportion to its commercial fleet compared with what Great Britain is building in connection with its enormous fleet of merchant vessels. In view of these facts I suggest, at all events, that the incapacity of Britain's greatest port to accommodate the larger vessels may become a serious factor in deciding the national position. It must be remembered that the shipping of London is about one-fifth of the rest of all the ports of the country put together. Accommodation at Liverpool, Glasgow and other ports will not make up for want of accommodation at London. It will only partly do so. If London, therefore, cannot properly accommodate the largest ships, not only its own trade, but the trade of the kingdom is seriously menaced.

3216. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to ask you this with regard to your evidence that, all things being equal, shipping would clear from the port of entry as much as possible, and that the fact of the clearances being so much more in London than the entries is an indication of something that is not quite satisfactory. Have you investigated the causes why the clearances are not so great as the entries?—Yes. I have gone into that, and I find that in the first instance it is due to the ships coming in and

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clearing in ballast, and entering in and clearing coastwise.

3217. Is it not partly that in connection with the coal trade ships come in from foreign ports and then go to Cardiff and Newcastle for a supply of coal?—That is to some extent the answer, no doubt.

3218. And does not that apply to a great many ports besides London?—Yes, it applies to a great many ports besides London, but London has always been a port of general trade, and not particular trade, and it seems to me to be a significant change in its class of trade.

3219. I recollect a good many years ago when dealing with these subjects—I have not any figure to give you at present—observing that Continental ports were in much the same condition as our English ports. A larger number of ships arrived from foreign countries, exclusive of England, than went to them. You have not observed anything of that kind?—No, I have not observed anything of that kind. But my point rather is that the Port of London, up to the present, has been a port of general trade where entering and clearing has been more or less equal.

3220. But still the exports of goods from London are much less than the imports into London?—Yes.

3221. Therefore there is not so much work for ships to do going away owing to the nature of the trade?—No, not now. That is my point.

3222. Is not that a case where the trade commands the shipping, and there are causes for trade going in certain directions which the ships must follow?—Yes, no doubt that is so, and that seems to me to be one of the important things we must look at at the present moment, because there will be no longer any reason for ships to come to London unless they have every facility, if they have to go to other ports to clear. Unless there are greater attractions to import to London they will go to the nearest port where they want to clear from.

3223. But still there is no material prospect of the clearances of ships in London, from the foreign trade, increasing in the same proportion as the entries?—No; considering the drift of trade, I think not, but it makes it all the more important that the Port of London should be well equipped, otherwise the natural event will happen, and the import trade will follow the export. I next turn to the position of the trade of the port as far as an analysis of the Tables from a general statistical point of view can interpret the facts. I think the relation which the trade of the port bears to the trade of the whole kingdom is the most useful form of consideration of the subject. This I have taken from various points of view, as far as the information available in the official returns admits, and I will put in some Tables showing the results. One table shows London's proportion of the total shipping entered, the actual figures for London and the rest of the United Kingdom being given.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the Shipping entered with cargoes at the Port of London and at the Ports of the rest of the United Kingdom in each year from 1853 to 1899; and London's proportion of the whole Kingdom. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 14.*)

Taking first shipping of the country, both foreign and coastwise, it shows that London has failed to hold its own. London's proportion of the total tonnage of shipping entered has been in—

1856	- - - - -	23·4 per cent.
1860	- - - - -	22·6 „
1880	- - - - -	20·2 „
1897	- - - - -	22·8 „

When divided between foreign and coastwise shipping the figures are more significant. In the same years they have been—

	Foreign.	Coastwise.
1856	31·1 per cent.	19·2 per cent.
1860	29·4 „	18·6 „
1880	24·3 „	16·4 „
1897	25·9 „	19·4 „

So that while the coasting trade (that is, smaller vessels and for produce required principally for London home markets) has remained about the same during these forty years, the foreign trade has fallen 5 per cent.

3224. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is 5 per cent. quite the proper figure there. A fall from 31·1 per cent. to 25·9 is more than 5 per cent. It is a fall of five points, but upon 31 it is more than 5 per cent.?—Yes, it is clearly. The next table deals in the same way with the shipping cleared. See 3276-7.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the Shipping cleared with cargoes from the Port of London and from the rest of the United Kingdom in each year from 1853 to 1899; and London's proportion of the whole Kingdom. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 15.*)

It will be seen that in the number of vessels cleared there is an increase in London's proportion from 7·3 per cent. in 1856 to 9·4 per cent. in 1897, while in the tonnage there has been an increase from 10·1 to 11·6 per cent. An analysis of these figures, however, reveals an important fact, viz., that this increase in the total is entirely due to the coasting trade. The coasting trade of London has increased in number of vessels from 5·8 per cent. to 8·5 per cent., and in tonnage from 6·4 per cent. to 7·4 per cent., but in the foreign trade there is a decrease in the proportion, viz., in the number of vessels from 12·6 per cent. to 12·3 per cent., and in tonnage from 15·9 to 14·9 per cent.

3225. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I suppose these percentages are correct?—Yes. The two next tables take the consideration of the question of decrease in London's proportion of the foreign shipping of the country a step further.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the Tonnage of Shipping entered from each of the chief foreign countries and British Possessions at the Port of London, and at the ports of the rest of the United Kingdom; and London's proportion of the whole Kingdom. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 16.*)

This table shows London's proportion of the shipping entered from each of the chief foreign countries and British possessions in 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1899. That is London's proportion to the whole Kingdom. As regards the tonnage of shipping from foreign countries, it will be seen that the proportion is a steadily decreasing one, from 20·7 per cent. in 1861 to 16·2 in 1899. Examining into these figures further by dividing the countries into groups, the result is perhaps more significant. The groups and the corresponding figures are as follows:—

Groups.	Shipping entered from Foreign Countries and British Possessions. London's Proportion of the Total of the United Kingdom.				
	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1899.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
North Europe	21.3	19·0	18·2	17 2	14·7
South Europe	21·1	16·8	12·8	15·6	10·1
Total Europe	21·3	18·8	17·3	16·9	13·9
Asia	74·9	84·4	62·7	78·0	89·4
America	17·1	11·4	13·7	17·5	21·5
Foreign Possessions	20·2	20·0	12·2	14·2	15·8
British Possessions	36·4	40·5	43·1	43·2	44·3
Total Foreign Countries and British Possessions	24·0	21·1	20·4	20·7	19·3

It will be seen from this to what extent London is losing its share of the import trade from the Continent, that is to a large extent in materials for manufacture, and of export to the rest of the world. There is an increase in the shipping from British possessions in the course of the same period, trade that is for the most part required by the population of the United Kingdom. The total result, however, is a steadily decreasing figure for London's proportion from 24 per cent. in 1861 to 19·3 per cent. in 1899. The next table is a table showing the tonnage of shipping cleared to each of the chief foreign countries and British possessions from the Port of London and from the ports of the rest of the United Kingdom, and London's proportion of the whole Kingdom in 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1899.

(*The witness handed in table. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 17.*)

Considering London's proportion of the shipping cleared to foreign countries and British possessions in the same way as in the last table, it will be seen that as regards foreign countries, the figure for London's proportion is also a decreasing figure, from 15·9 per cent. in 1861, to 13·4 per cent. in 1899, the figure for 1899 being, however, slightly higher than the figure for 1891. Dividing the foreign countries into the same groups as in the case of the shipping entered, the result is as follows:—

Groups.	Shipping cleared to Foreign Countries and British Possessions. London's Proportion of the Total of the United Kingdom.				
	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1899.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent
North Europe	20·7	17·7	15·3	16·6	15·5
South Europe	7·1	7·4	6·3	5·5	5·1
Total Europe	17·3	16·0	13·5	14·2	13·3
Asia	38·0	56·0	6·0	·7	31·9
America	12·7	7·9	11·5	13·1	13·9
Foreign Possessions	9·3	6·8	4·9	4·4	15·5
British Possessions	25·7	25·8	27·3	26·3	22·4
Total Foreign Countries and British Possessions	18·1	15·8	15·2	15·2	14·5

London's proportion of the shipping cleared to the Continent shows a steady decrease from 17·3 per cent. in 1861 to 13·3 in 1899, and is principally responsible for the decrease in London's proportion of the total shipping cleared to foreign countries. London's proportion of the shipping cleared to British possessions does not follow the same course as the proportion of shipping entered. From 1861 to 1881 the figure increased from 25·7 per cent. to 27·3 per cent.; in 1891 it had fallen to 26·3 per cent., and in 1899 to only 22·4 per cent. The figure for London's proportion of the total shipping cleared to foreign countries and British possessions is a steadily decreasing figure, from 18·1 per cent. in 1861 to 14·5 in 1899. Turning next to London's proportion of the trade as indicated by value, the relative position of London is perhaps more decidedly illustrated. Two tables I will hand in illustrate this.

(*The witness handed in two tables showing the value of the Imports and Exports into the Port of London and the Ports of the rest of the United Kingdom; and London's proportion of the whole Kingdom, 1872 to 1899. See Appendix, 9th day, Nos. 18 and 19.*)

The tendency to decrease in the value of imports (for the shorter period for which the information is available) is undoubted. London's proportion, which, in 1872, was 35 per cent., and in 1886 had risen to 36·6 per cent., was for the last four years for the first time less than 34 per cent. It is, however, in the table of proportion of value of exports that the most significant decrease is shown. London's proportion of the export of both home and foreign produce has materially declined since 1882 (the first year for which the information is available) from 32·1 to 26·7 per cent., while London's proportion of foreign and colonial export trade in the same period has fallen from 61·2 per cent. to 53·0 per cent., the decrease being especially marked in the last five years, as follows:—

1894	59·8
1895	58·6
1896	56·7
1897	54·7
1898	53·7
1899	53·0

Thus the conclusions which have been drawn from the figures as to London's relative proportion of the shipping is confirmed by these figures as to values. In these figures the question of alteration in values does not, of course, affect the figures, because we are dealing with proportions only. A further section of the trade not included in either of the foregoing tables is that known as the transhipment trade. This is apart from the export of foreign and colonial merchandise which has been dealt with in the last table, and which has shown such a marked decrease in London's proportion. The figures for the transhipment trade are shown in another table.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the transhipment trade of London and of the United Kingdom. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 20.*)

These tables require some explanation as to the division into two sections, namely, "imported for transhipment," and "exported for transhipment," it being, of course, understood that the total "imported" and "exported," so far as the whole kingdom is concerned, must always be the same. The difference between these figures for London and the rest of the kingdom arises from the fact that these goods are sometimes imported at one port, say Southampton, and exported at another, say London. The difference in the percentages indicates to what extent this is done as far as London is concerned. Table (*a*) deals with the transhipment of wines and spirits. London's proportion, it will be seen, has gone down from 90·3 per cent. in 1853 to 38·5 in 1899; and though there has been a recovery in particular years, the total result is a certain tendency downwards. Table (*b*) deals with the transhipment of tea, and in this article London holds its own, the rest of the country taking only about 5 per cent. Table (*c*) deals with the transhipment of tobaccos and cigars, and the falling off in London's position is here most marked. From 91·8 per cent. in 1853 it has fallen to 35·6 per cent. in 1898, and to 17·6 in 1899. Table (*d*) gives the value of all other articles recorded in the official returns as being transhipped, and here it will be seen that though London's position was bettered from 1871 to 1886, namely, from 24·9 per cent. to 47·3 per cent., it has since fallen to 27·2 per cent. in 1899, the lowest proportion of all since 1886. The total value of the transhipment trade is only given for the years 1896, 1897, 1898, and 1899, as set out in Table (*e*), and it will be seen that in the year 1899 London has very much fallen off. As the trade of London has thus been shown to be decreasing in proportion to the trade of the United Kingdom, it is of importance to note what ports have been increasing during the same period. I accordingly hand in a table showing the proportion which the shipping

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of certain ports bears to the shipping of the United Kingdom.

(*The table was handed in. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 21.*)

From these tables it will be seen that the Channel ports of Southampton, Dover, Newhaven, and Harwich have secured a very considerable proportion of the kingdom's shipping for the last thirty years. It is almost certain that this has been to a great extent at the expense of London, and that the enterprise and expenditure on the docks of these places has enabled them to take away trade which, had the Port of London been brought up to its proper accommodation, would have come to London. This is not, however, the whole of this important matter. It is well known that these ports have all been equipped by the railway companies, and in this respect it is necessary to bear in mind the conclusion of the Joint Select Committee of 1872 on Railway Companies' Amalgamation, which dealt with this important subject:—"It is possible . . . that a railway company, by acquiring both a port and the railways leading to it, may obtain control over the whole of a certain description of traffic by sea as well as by land. It is possible, for instance, that if a great amalgamation were to take place between the North-Eastern, the Great Northern, and the Midland the united company might obtain possession of the Tyne, the Wear, and the Tees, as the North-Eastern have of Hartlepool, and in that case they could, and probably would, discourage the carriage of coals by sea to London and other ports of England. There is, therefore, a danger in this respect, which well deserves the attention of Parliament, and cannot be considered sufficiently guarded against by the Standing Order (151) of the House of Commons, which provides that no railway company shall acquire any harbour, steam vessel, etc., unless the Committee on the Bill report that such restriction ought not to be enforced with the reasons and facts upon which their opinion is founded" (Page xix.). "There is real and effective competition between railways and the traffic by sea, especially in the carriage of heavy goods, and this competition is likely to continue unless Parliament should give public harbours into the hands of railway companies." (Page xxix.). "Effectual competition by sea exists, and ought to be guarded, by preventing railway companies from obtaining control over public harbours." (Page l.) Therefore, it comes to this, that the railway companies of the south and east of England have been allowed to do in these Channel ports what has not been accomplished for London, owing to the want of properly constituted authority having control of the matter. It is quite true that the rise of these ports, if it is to some extent a loss to London, is not necessarily a loss to the kingdom. But there are important economical considerations which should be taken count of. The addition of the railway rates to the cost of shipment may affect the price of commodities compared with the price if they had been landed directly in the Port of London, which is the natural port for these commodities. Here is evidence, I think, of the way in which the natural advantages of London have been eaten into by the neglect of development in artificial dockage, etc. Even this is not all, for the railway companies, in order to attract trade to these ports, and therefore to their lines for carriage to its destination, have neglected the carriage of the home produce as witnessed by the voluminous evidence given before the Agricultural Commission, particularly by the farmers of Kent. I am aware that this touches upon a branch of economics not free from difficulties, but it is a matter not to be overlooked, I think, by this Commission. The suggestion that the Port of London uses these channel ports as feeders overlooks the fact that the money which has been spent there, and which must earn its dividends out of the charges imposed upon the goods shipped to these ports might have been spent upon the Port of London to the better advantage of the community. While London has been hesitating about connecting Tilbury more directly with London, and improving the dock system to the required extent, the necessities of the port have been met by railway companies creating extra docks at distances ranging from 50 to 80 miles of London. If London docks had been in the hands of the railway companies they would not have built the channel docks. It will, therefore, be seen that other ports have succeeded in obtaining large percentages of the shipping of the kingdom, and it is also a fact that at almost all these ports the dock accommodation and conveniences have been almost created, and at all events very considerably extended, during the past 20 or 30 years. The question of population in regard to trade is more important in the case of London than in other places. The enormous development of London as a population centre is quite abnormal. I will hand in a table showing this.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the population of Greater London and of the United Kingdom; and London's proportion of the Kingdom. See Appendix, 9th day, No. 22.*)

It will be seen that in 1801 London's proportion was 7 per cent., in 1856 it had risen to 10½ per cent., in 1886 to over 14 per cent., while in 1896 we find it is more than 15½ per cent. of the population of the whole kingdom. This enormous population needs larger imports than any other aggregate of population in the world. It compels a large amount of imports to come to London whatever may be the difficulties of that trade arising from lack of accommodation. When this fact is considered in connection with the growth of the import shipping, that growth, so far as it depends upon dock facilities, will be found not to have been so considerable as it appears. This increase in proportion of population has to be borne in mind in considering the position of the trade of London and the proportion which it bears to the trade of the whole country. The proportion of population is now more than half as much again what the proportion was in 1856, while the preceding tables show that as regards trade the proportion is in nearly all respects less, and in some cases considerably so.

3226. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is the rate of increase in the population of London maintained now?—The decennial rate of increase is not maintained—it is gradually decreasing—but I think the proportional increase to the rest of the country is maintained.

3227. Then the total decennial rate of increase of the country has gone down in the same proportion?—Yes, that is so—the rate of increase. The increase is still going on, but the rate of 1891 over 1881 is somewhat less than the rate of 1831 over 1871.

3228. That is over the whole kingdom?—Yes. It is on a larger basis, of course.

3229. And what about London?—It is the same in London.

3230. Therefore there is no apparent increase in the proportionate amount of the population of London relatively to the population of the United Kingdom?—Yes, but it is slight. In 1891 it was 14 per cent., and in 1896 it was 15½ per cent.

3231. Therefore it is not increasing at the same rate as it did between 1856 and 1886, is it?—No, but that is a period of 30 years, I would point out.

3232. What I rather wanted to ask your opinion about was whether the proportionate rate of increase of the population of London as compared with that of the whole kingdom is increasing or not, now?—I think it is slightly increasing.

3233. But not so greatly as it was before?—No, not so greatly as it was before.

3234. And the proportionate amount of trade to the whole volume of trade in the kingdom is also showing signs of decrease?—It is a decrease.

3235. An ascertained decrease?—Yes.

3236. And probably it is not very unreasonable to suppose that the population will follow the trade. If there is not enough work for them to do in London they will go somewhere else?—It depends upon whether the population of London is dependent upon the trade.

3237. I suppose most populations are more or less dependent on trade?—That is not so much the case with London. London is the capital.

3238. It is a great transhipping place, is it not?—Yes.

3239. Not only coastwise by vessels, but by railways and in other ways?—Yes.

3240. Therefore if it is the fact that there is less of that trade coming to London we may expect that the population will decrease: the means of livelihood of a certain number of people will diminish?—Yes, there is that, but London is also a manufacturing place—rather more so than some people think—and it would still employ a large number of people.

3241. That is assuming that the increase in manufactures makes up for the decrease of transhipping?—Yes.

3242. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) It is not the case that the imports into the Port of London are actually diminishing?—No. I understood the question to be as to the proportion.

3243. (*Sir John Woife-Barry.*) Yes, the question was as to the relative proportion?—I quite understood that.

3244. I suppose there are a great many other questions of a very interesting nature which may account for a relative diminution of increase of imports into London besides want of accommodation?—I quite agree that there are a great number of reasons which might be suggested, and as I venture to put it before the Commission, it is rather the result of cumulative evidence that I rely on. It is not the evidence at any particular stage, but it is the cumulative evidence which I think will show that if London has not already suffered from the want of accommodation it inevitably must do so in the very near future.

3245. I do not want to minimise the question of accommodation at all, but you will quite recognise that there are a great number of other possible explanations of the facts which have been ascertained?—Yes.

3246. Such, for instance, as the great competition of foreign ports?—Yes.

3247. The subsidised lines of steamers?—Yes.

3248. And, as you have pointed out, the enterprise of railway companies in developing dock properties elsewhere?—Yes; but particularly with regard to the competition of foreign ports, it is exactly in these foreign ports where they have seen the necessity for extending their docks so much. In the ports I have visited recently you get a considerable extension of docks in order to meet the increased volume of trade; and that competition will go on as soon as they get their accommodation there.

3249. Yes, but the competition of a foreign port may be entirely independent of the accommodation in London?—I am not suggesting that accommodation is everything, of course, but I do suggest that the increase of London is an undoubted fact, but its increase in proportion to the kingdom is not maintained; and so long as that is so, unless you are quite clear that it is not due to want of accommodation, it is an extremely dangerous thing to let accommodation go by the board.

3250. I am quite with you on that point. I only want to guard ourselves against supposing that the question of the want of accommodation is the only thing?—Of course, I have not given any other reason, because I did not understand that this Commission would be prepared to listen to it. Of course, the object is to show how it is affected, or how accommodation enters into the question; and I have rather concentrated my evidence upon that point. I quite understand that it is to be modified in various directions as you have stated.

3251. A fair proportion of weight should be given to other circumstances?—Certainly.

3252. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Before we leave this question as to whether the trade of London is diminishing even proportionately to the rest of the United Kingdom, I should like you to look at Appendix 18. Is not any decrease in the proportion of imports into London a very small one, such as might arise from variations which are not easily accounted for and which may imply no real diminution in the proportion of the trade of London, if we were able to go behind the figures and get at the real figures. A diminution in proportion from 35 per cent. in 1872 to a proportion of 33·8 per cent. in the last year is a very small diminution, is it not?—That is so, but it is a continuous diminution, or it is very nearly a continuous diminution. If I found that there were very many occasions where the line of decrease was altered into a line of increase, I should think that there was not very much in it, but if you will notice, with the exception of 1876, 1877, 1879, 1881, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, and 1888, and after that period, with one exception only, namely 1893, it never reaches 35.

3253. But still you have a good many exceptions in those years. I am merely suggesting that, in a case where we do not know everything about the trade, that is hardly sufficient to justify a general statement that the proportion of the trade of London, all things considered, is diminishing. At any rate it hardly justifies the statement that it is seriously diminishing?—I do not think I have used the word "seriously," but I would add to my previous observation by saying that up to the period of alternating increases and decreases there was a considerable increase in the dock accommodation of London and it is only since 1890 that no increase of accommodation has taken place.

3254. But we are talking of proportion now, and there has been an increase of accommodation everywhere throughout the United Kingdom, I suppose?—Yes, and that is followed by this continued decrease.

3255. A continued decrease in proportion, but to a very small amount?—Yes, to a comparatively small amount, I quite admit.

3256. And possibly the effect of that question of proportion might be modified in our minds if we were going into all the particulars of what constitutes the trade?—Yes, no doubt it would be modified.

3257. We cannot decide these things upon figures merely?—Quite so.

3258. We require to know something of the actual trade itself?—Yes.

3259. Then with regard to Appendix 16, which is a table as to shipping, is not the effect of that very much to show that the proportion of the trade of London with our Colonial possessions not merely maintains itself, but has increased a good deal?—It has increased in actual figures, but not in proportion.

3260. It has increased from 36·4 in 1861 to 44·3 per cent. in 1899.—Yes, that is so. I mistook your question. That is for the British possessions.

3261. Is it not the case that the British possessions, being so much in distant parts of the world, the proportion of shipping employed in doing the same amount of trade is larger, although the voyages are fewer than in the case of Continental trades?—Yes, that would no doubt be so.

3262. When you use these figures of shipping to give these entries and clearances it means the employment of a larger amount of shipping than the larger entries and clearances just above?—From the foreign countries, yes.

3263. So that, as a matter of fact, the increase of the trade of London which gives employment to shipping has been in an increasing proportion, and not in a less proportion?—No, I do not think that is so, because this figure, 36·4, is only the British possessions compared with the 44·3, whereas the total trade is 24 compared to 19.

3264. Yes, but I am pointing out that there are internal differences in trade, which are very material in questions of this kind. This is the table as to shipping, and I am pointing out that, as regards one large group of countries, the trade of the Port of London which increases is the trade which gives large employment to shipping?—Yes, that is so.

3265. I am not going into the details as to particular foreign countries, but would it not require some investigation of that before you draw inferences as to the diminishing proportion of the trade of London?—I have gone into that, and the 36·4 in 1861, which is the British possessions figure, compared with the 44·3 in 1899, which is the British possessions figure, includes a very large amount of such vessels as carry cattle, which are required almost entirely for the consumption of the population of London. The New Zealand trade, for instance, would come to London, because the population is there, whatever the difficulties may be.

3266. But still, whatever the cause is, it comes to London?—Yes, because the people are there who want the cattle.

3267. But is it not the fact that in the case of a great many of these increases of entries and clearances in trade with Continental ports—for instance, the increase of passenger steamers varies much: steamers, for instance, going between Dover and Calais, where the entries and clearances amount to a great deal in the course of the year—there is not the same employment for docks or for cargoes or for business of that kind?—That is so to a large extent at Dover and other places, but all these places are now developing their general trade to a very considerable extent.

3268. Has not the tendency been to an increase of entries and clearances at ports like Harwich, Dover, and Folkestone, where you have an increase of entries and clearances of shipping, but not a proportionate increase of goods traffic?—That would no doubt be so, but, on the other hand, there is also a great deal of development of actual goods traffic. For instance, at Dover the timber

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trade is being enormously developed, and it all used to come up to the Greenland Dock in London.

3269. I am merely putting the point. These are all questions which require to be considered before we are led up to a general conclusion of the kind that you are deducing. I am not disputing the figures, but I am disputing the inference a little?—I quite see the point.

3270. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Before adjourning, I think we should like to say that the next portion of the statement of your evidence seems to be controversial. I do not think we shall be prepared to listen to any of the arguments to which it refers?—May I say in what way?

3271. For instance, the dock companies, the Trinity House, and the Thames Conservancy Board can give us their own figures?—Might I say that it is not the question of the figures that I am submitting this to the Commission for. It is not on account of the figures, but it is on account of their importance from the point of view of the taxation of shipping and goods as they come into the Port of London. While I quite understand that any one of these figures might be more correctly given by the authorities themselves, it is with their total relationship to London that I am concerned.

3272. You will quite understand that we have not any objection to your giving the figures as long as they are matters of common knowledge—for instance, the figures of the dock companies are published in their own accounts—but we should not be prepared to listen to any argumentative representations on the subject?—I am only anxious to say that I quite understand that the figures might be corrected by the authorities themselves, but it is not in relation to the figures that I am desirous to place this evidence before the Commission.

Recalled 3273.

(Adjourned to Thursday next, the 13th instant, at 2 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TENTH DAY.

Thursday, 13th December, 1900.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (in the Chair).

Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D. | Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.

Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. GEORGE LAURENCE GOMME recalled and further examined.

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3273. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You remember at the conclusion of our last sitting we intimated that we should hold to ourselves the right to reserve some of the questions you propose to deal with?—Yes.

3274. Although we trink it would be a good thing for you to state the views of the County Council with respect to your relation with other public bodies, we should be glad if you would reserve all arguments in support of the County Council's views until you have the opportunity of appearing by counsel—I mean against any proposals which may be made by the dock companies or other public bodies. Therefore will you continue your evidence with that reservation?—Thank you, my lord. Before doing that may I refer to Questions 3180 to 3185? I want to ask whether I may put in the table which appears to have been excluded?

3275. That is with regard to the powers of the dock companies?—Yes. I did not quite understand whether you wanted to rule out my observations on the table, or whether you wished to rule out the table itself.

3276. The decision we came to, if I remember rightly, was that we did not wish to have the table?—I am obliged to your lordship. Then I quite understand. Then with reference to Question 3224, Sir Robert Giffen asked me a question with reference to a fall of five points in London's proportion of trade. I should just like to explain that the 5 I am dealing with there is not 5 per cent. upon the original figure of 31·1, but the difference between the two proportions with which I was dealing, namely 31·1 in 1856 and 25·9 in 1897, and the 5 was simply the difference between those two, and therefore accurately expresses what I intended to convey. As Sir Robert Giffen put it, it is not 5 per cent. on the 31; it is the difference between those two figures.

3277. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That is the point I wished to make quite clear to prevent any misunderstanding?—So long as that is understood I am quite content.

3278. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Will you proceed with your evidence under the head of Expenditure and Revenue?—It is very important to get from the various authorities a statement of the condition of their finances in connection with the Port of London at the present moment. The revenue accounts of all the authorities having control over the Port and Docks of London are not available. Those I have been able to analyse are the dock companies, Trinity House (as to pilotage), Thames Conservancy, and the City of London Corporation (as port sanitary authority), and I will hand in a table showing the results.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the Expenditure and Revenue of the Dock Companies, Trinity House, Thames Conservancy, and the City Corporation as Port Sanitary Authority. See Appendix, 10th Day, No 1.*)

Beyond these there are various administrative expenses in the departments which have control in the Thames, and in connection with docks held by railway companies, the wharfingers, barge-owners, and other charging authorities which cannot be particularised. The Board of Trade and other Government Departments do not specify the expenditure under administrative heads, but only in general totals, from which it is impossible to determine what expenditure relating to the Port of London is incurred by these bodies, or how such expenditure is met. The total expenditure upon the Docks and Port of London (maintenance, works, and services) reached, according to the available data, in the year 1899, the very considerable total of £1,888,875. It is obvious that this total must be increased by the expenditure of other bodies, which I have not been able to ascertain, but it is not possible with present information to give even an approximate estimate of the remaining expenditure. The ascertained total expenditure in 1899 was incurred by the following authorities and bodies:—

	£
Dock companies	1,644,999
Trinity House and pilotage	145,716
Thames Conservancy Board	90,768
Port sanitary authority	7,392
	£1,888,875

The purposes of this expenditure are not ascertainable to the extent which is necessary for a complete survey of the subject, as the accounts of the dock companies and of other bodies are not drawn up with this purpose in view. With the information available, the expenditure on works and services may be divided in the following manner:—

	£
Dock, warehouse, and service expenses	1,236,063
General expenses of the dock companies (management, rents, rates, taxes, etc.)	408,936
Pilotage	143,326
Pilot cutters	2,390
Locks, weirs, tow-paths, and foreshores	6,798
Piers	10,599
Dredging	27,238
Mooring	8,926
Wreckage	5,263
Harbour expenses	7,605
River purification	2,113
General expenses of Thames Conservancy (management and working)	22,226
Port sanitary expenses	7,392
	£1,888,875

As to how far this expenditure is properly divided among the several branches of service it is not possible to speak with certainty, but it is abundantly clear that it does not meet all the requirements of the port.

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The Thames Conservancy has many times, before Parliament and before this Commission, explained that its expenditure is not controlled by the necessities of the services it administers, but by the amount of yearly revenue it receives, and I am not sure that the services administered by the Trinity House Corporation are not similarly controlled. The total revenue of the limited number of authorities for which information is obtainable was in the year 1899 as follows:—

	£
Dock companies	2,311,302
Trinity House and pilotage	146,096
Thames Conservancy	100,568
Port sanitary authority	351
	£2,558,317

This revenue has nearly all been raised by means of charges upon shipping and goods, charges which, of course, ultimately fall upon the consumers of goods. The significance of this fact cannot be exaggerated, as upon it depends to a great extent the prosperity of the port. In the first place, the sum of £793,562 is levied as tonnage dues and other charges upon shipping entering the port and docks.

	£
Thames Conservancy	55,729
*Dock companies	591,930
Pilotage	145,903
	£793,562

* Estimated in the case of the Millwall Company.

3279. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You have not included lighthouse dues?—No; I have explained already that I have not been able to pick those out of the accounts. Secondly, there are charges on goods made by the dock companies for landing, warehousing, etc., which amounted to £1,578,949, and there is also a small amount charged on shipping by the port sanitary authority for disinfection, etc., amounting to £89. Putting all the figures for 1899 together, it appears that the following is the total amount of the charges upon shipping and goods in the Port of London which ultimately fall upon the consumer as taxation of the goods brought to the port:—

	£
Dock companies	2,170,879
Pilotage	145,903
Thames Conservancy	55,729
Port Sanitary Authority	89
	£2,372,600

These charges are in excess of the expenditure on works and services by £483,725, which is the amount reserved for payment of interest on capital. Interest on capital was paid to the following extent:—

	£
Dock companies	648,770
Thames Conservancy	3,000
	£651,770

Besides the charges on goods and shipping there was revenue derived from other sources, as follows:—

	£
Charges by dock companies for various services, and rents	140,423
Various charges and other revenue of Thames Conservancy not affecting shipping	44,839
Interest on investments by Trinity House	193
Charges, fees, etc., of the Port Sanitary Authority	252
	£185,177

If we take the total value of the goods entering the port in the year 1899 (£164,105,695), this taxation and charge represents 1·45 per cent. upon the value—a not inconsiderable tax.

3280. The value which you give here, 164 millions, is the value of foreign goods, and it does not include transhipment goods, it does not include bullion, and it does not include goods coming in the coasting trade?—Yes. That I understand. I have taken that figure here as being a reasonably approximate figure upon which the taxation falls.

3281. But that will not be so. It does not include the value of coals coming into the Port of London?—But then on the other hand there are a great number of charges which fall on the goods which are not included in the above figures.

3282. I do not wish to argue the point. I merely wish to make quite clear that this 164 millions is the import goods so classified in the foreign trade, and it does not include certain other things which I have mentioned?—That is so, and I have fixed upon that sum, so far as my judgment will allow me to go, as being the figure that is likely to give a fairly approximate result. I quite admit that it may be open to many criticisms, but it is the best approximate figure I can put forward from the means at my command.

3283. Have you any note about the value of goods in the coasting trade?—No, I have not.

3284. It would be a large amount?—Yes, it would be a large amount. When it is considered that the charges fall upon different classes of goods at different ratios, the position may be very serious. Tonnage dues are paid upon the registered tonnage of the ships whatever may be the cargo. Thus valuable cargoes escape with a light tax, while cargoes of great bulk and less value may be considerably burdened. Moreover, the dock charges included in this total fall upon less than one-half of the total tonnage entering the port, the remaining portion having to incur charges of lighterage, &c., the total of which is not obtainable. Further examination of the system of charge for services of the Dock Companies leads me to suppose that it is not altogether in proportion to the services rendered, but is calculated to some extent *ad volorem*. I will put in two tables to illustrate this point.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the Dock Charges:—"Landing Rate" on Goods Imported See Appendix, 10th Day, No. 2. Also a table showing the Dock Charges:—"Landing and Delivery Rate" on Goods Imported. See Appendix, 10th Day, No. 3.*)

To the extent that this system operates the dock companies are imposing taxation upon goods entering the port.

3285. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now, will you give us your opinion as to the practice prevailing in the Port of London and other ports of Britain?—In contradistinction to the practice prevailing in the Port of London must be considered that prevailing in some ports of Britain and in most foreign ports, namely, that expenditure upon the upkeep of the port is looked upon as a public service which must be maintained at the necessary level, even if the cost is not entirely met out of taxation and charges upon shipping. In England Bristol is a specially noticeable case. The docks were long controlled by the Corporation, but its rights were sold to joint stock companies, who so injured the trade of the port that the Corporation had to buy them out. This involved the levying of a municipal rate, in addition to the dock charges, for the purpose of maintaining and improving the port, and a harbour rate of from £10,000 to £20,000 a year has been levied. In the case of Manchester the Corporation was financially associated with the Ship Canal Company in raising money for the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal, the Corporation having advanced £5,000,000 to the company, this money being raised on the security of the city funds and rates. This loan involves a heavy charge on the rates at present, the amount transferred from the city fund in the year 1899-1900 to meet the charges for interest and sinking fund not met by the instalment of interest received from the Canal Company being £160,163. At Hamburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp, much of the recent extension of the port accommodation is met out of municipal rates or imperial funds, and I have already pointed out that at the beginning of the century the Government advanced considerable sums (without in-

terest) for the improvement of the Port of London. Another point to be considered is the expense of the present multiplied management of the port. The figures are as follows:—

	Salaries and Management Expenses in 1899.				
	Salaries.	Superannuation.	Directors' Fees, &c.	Other Management Expenses (Office Expenses, Stamps, Stationery and Incidentals).	Total.
London and India Docks—	£	£	£	£	£
Joint Committee	122,442	38,053	3 600	8,807	172,902
London and St. Katharine Company	968	4,319	(Included in "other.")	3,633	8,920
East and West India Company	3,885	3,541	(Included in "salaries.")	858	8,284
	127,295	45,913	3,600	13,298	190,106
Millwall Docks	8,231	—	1,900	2,909	13,040
Surrey Commercial Docks	34,341 ("management and salaries").	(Apparently included under "salaries.")			34,341
Total Docks	169,867	45,913	5,500	16,207	237,487
Thames Conservancy (lower navigation)	8,789	2,642	2,400 (allowance to conservators).	4,543	18,374
Port Sanitary Authority	2,621	113	150 (allowance to sanitary committee).	774	3,658
Total	181,277	48,668	8,050	21,524	259,519
Trinity House (common to London and outports).	2,361	416	—	343	3,120
Total	183,638	49,084	8,050	21,867	262,639

Next, turning to questions relating to capital expenditure and requirements, it would appear from the figures that the principal dock companies are not in a position to provide more money for capital purposes unless they have new sources of revenue. Some of the capital which is now employed has been spent upon purposes which are no longer productive, and for various financial operations in connection with the amalgamation of the companies, which cannot be said to benefit the port. There is undoubtedly a large amount of capital lost in carrying out the many improvements and alterations of the dock premises from time to time. Of the amount of this it is not possible, with the information available, to give an accurate estimate. I have examined the subject in detail, as far as it is shown by the powers as to works given to the companies in their various Acts, and there is in these alone some evidence of duplication of expenditure. In connection with the financial operations which have taken place from time to time, I have estimated that about £1,700,000, now included in the nominal amount raised by the dock companies, has never been employed for direct capital services in the docks and Port of London; and I venture to think this fact should be considered in estimating the claims of the companies to have paid for capital charges out of revenue.

3286. That is a serious statement. You make it on your own authority, and it is your own opinion?—Yes.

3287. And it is, of course, subject to any reply which may be made by the dock companies or by the chairman of the joint committee?—I quite understand that. There is no sinking fund for the companies' capital, as there is for all municipal capital, and the dead capital goes on year after year sharing in the dividends, and thus sapping the vital energies of the undertaking. If all the *bona-fide* dead capital were surrendered, and employed for the purpose of improvement, it can be understood that a great deal could be done for the improvement of the port, but so long as the administration remains in the present hands such a step is not possible.

3288. How would the administration being taken out of the present hands affect the point of the sinking fund?—If it were put into municipal hands, there would be immediately a sinking fund.

3289. But the question of the sinking fund is not one for which the present directorates are responsible?—I understand that.

3290. You suggest an alteration in the whole financial status of the Trust or concern, or whatever it may be?—I was rather pointing to this—that after a hundred years of control by the dock companies the capital still remains at its original figure.

3291. Your point is the sinking fund?—Yes.

3292. The sinking fund, of course, has nothing to do with the administration?—Not administration by private undertakings, but in contradistinction to administration by a Trust or a municipal authority.

3293. But the sinking fund has nothing to do with the administration of the dock companies?—I am not making a charge against the companies for not doing it. I do not pretend to do that. I am merely drawing attention to the two systems of administration.

3294. Perhaps what you intend to convey is that it would be better if it were in municipal hands?—Yes; I am not suggesting that the companies could have introduced a sinking fund, or that from their point of view it would be a wise thing.

3295. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) It is a question also of the general policy of the Government, not merely with reference to dock companies, but to railway companies, gas companies, and other undertakings?—Quite so; that is my point.

3296. The dock companies are not different from other private undertakings which Government has sanctioned?—Certainly not; and water companies are all in the same category. I should like to repeat that I am not making this as a charge against the companies. I am merely calling attention to the difference. These are a few considerations which I submit should be borne in mind in considering the financial position of the dock companies. This consideration of the finances of the port shows (1) that private authorities, like the dock companies, and

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non-representative bodies, like the Thames Conservancy and Trinity House, have powers of taxation of shipping and goods, which may affect the interests of commerce from the national point of view, as well as from the local point of view; (2) that the necessary limitations which Parliament has imposed upon the revenue to be levied by these authorities has resulted in such revenue not being found sufficient to meet all the requirements of the port; (3) that capital requirements of the near future are not likely to be met by the existing bodies. This is in such marked contrast with the policy which is adopted in some of the principal ports abroad as to be of considerable importance.

3297. You state that as far as you can estimate about £1,700,000 of dead capital is included in the nominal amount raised by the dock companies?—Yes.

3298. Have you considered how far such an amount of dead capital is incidental to the existence of an undertaking which has been carried on for so many generations as the dock companies have been carried on; and that unless there is a statutory provision for a sinking fund a certain amount of dead capital very likely will come into existence?—I think it is absolutely certain that dead capital would come into existence under the circumstances.

3299. If you were treating the railway companies in the same manner you would probably say that out of the £900,000,000 sterling of capital of the English railway companies, a certain amount is dead capital in that sense?—Quite so.

3300. And there is no particular charge against the dock companies of mismanagement in that connection?—None whatever.

3301. Admitting it to be true—which, of course, is a matter to be discussed afterwards—that there is a certain amount of dead capital which the dock companies are not entitled to treat as living capital—?—It is entirely due to the fact that they are private companies, and not to any bad administration or anything of that kind.

3302. And it would not alter the fact if it should be afterwards ascertained that the real value of the dock companies' property, when a proper valuation is taken, may be much more than the nominal capital represented in their accounts?—Quite so.

3303. It would be quite fair when an account is taken that you should take it both ways; that there is a certain amount of capital which is not productive, and that there is also a certain other amount of capital expenditure which at the present valuation would be more than appears in the accounts?—Certainly.

3304. What you say now is not opposed to that view if we should afterwards investigate the matter?—Not at all—an independent view to be taken on a different issue.

3305. Have you ascertained further whether any part of the sums that were advanced by the Government in the early part of the century has been repaid to the Government or not?—I have not been able to ascertain that as a fact. As a matter of impression only, I think
5583. the whole of it has not been repaid, but I am not able to state that.

3306. Perhaps the companies, when we come to enquire of them further, will be able to give us that information?—They will be better able to give it than I am.

3307. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Referring to what you said about the charges being in excess of the expenditure on works and services by £483,725, you said the interest on capital was paid to the extent of £651,770. Where did the balance come from?—From previous years' accumulation.

3308. Accumulations of revenue?—Accumulations of revenue; and also from the other sources of revenue which I set out in the next table. There is over £185,000 there.

3309. And that approximately makes the difference?—Yes.

3310. Then with regard to what you said about Bristol, you say Bristol is a specially noticeable case. You said, "The docks were long controlled by the Corporation, but its rights were sold to joint stock companies, who so injured the trade of the port that the Corporation had to buy them out." Have you quite verified that?—I have not verified it beyond this, that I have seen the statement made several times. As a matter of fact, only this morning I was endeavouring to go to a more exact source than that from which I evidently obtained the particular statement.

3311. The statement is not in accordance with the knowledge which I happen to possess about it, and I enter a caveat against its being quite correct. The real state of the case was that Parliament authorised a dock in competition with the Corporation Dock, and the Corporation bought out the private dock?—Yes, I understand that.

3312. But the Corporation never sold their rights to joint stock companies as far as ever I heard. The competition of the private dock was found to be so objectionable to the Corporation that they elected to buy out the private dock?—What I mean by that expression is that the Corporation, having the control of the docks in their city, any intrusion by a private company is a parting by the Corporation with its rights as the dock authority.

3313. That is not quite what you said. You said: "But its rights were sold to joint stock companies, who so injured the trade of the port that the Corporation had to buy them out"?—The Corporation did, I understand, buy out this private company eventually.

3314. Not because it injured the trade of the port, but because it injured the revenue of the Corporation?—I see your distinction. My point was that the competition itself rather produced injury to the trade.

3315. On the contrary, I think the competition produced good to the trade. Competition generally is rather favourable to trade?—I am quite willing to be corrected on that point.

3316. Then with regard to Bristol, can you tell us what the burden on the rates is at the present time?—I think I can ascertain for you exactly. I will send a note to the Commission on that point.

3317. I mean the rate on the municipality to make good the deficiency of working the docks. I am not sure I am right about the figure I have heard mentioned, but it is a considerable amount, is it not?—Yes, it is a considerable amount. I know I have it somewhere.

3318. Then perhaps you can also tell us how much it is in the £ in the case of Manchester?—I am afraid I have not that information, but I can also supply that.

3319. I suppose it is impossible for you to give us how much the rate in the £ is which is borne by Hamburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp?—I am afraid it is, but still, I have a great many papers on those ports, and if it is possible to obtain the information I will do so. I think, perhaps, I could obtain it directly from the authorities. They were very good to me, and promised to give me any information.

3320. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) And will you be good enough to separate what is provided by the municipal authorities of Antwerp and the other places from what is provided by the Government?—Yes.

3321. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you know the history of the Liverpool Trust?—Not in detail. I know that originally the Liverpool Corporation had the docks in their own hands.

3322. You know that originally the Corporation were more or less the owners of the docks at Liverpool?—Yes.

3323. And that was not found satisfactory, and a Trust was substituted for the Corporation?—Yes.

3324. The Bristol Docks at the present time are in the hands of the Corporation?—Yes.

3325. I do not know whether you happen to know that there has been a considerable agitation there for the formation of a Trust instead of retaining the Corporation as owners?—Yes; I do know that. I have heard of that fact.

3326. I do not know whether you lay stress upon the advantages of a corporation managing docks or not?—No; I am simply drawing attention to the facts. I have not made any suggestion.

3327. But the facts are these: That the Liverpool Corporation gave up the docks to a Trust, and that there is a certain amount of agitation at Bristol that a similar course should be adopted there?—I should like to qualify the statement with regard to Liverpool giving up its control to a Trust by this remark—that during that period municipal activity was at an extremely low ebb, and the Government was putting all special matters into the hands of special bodies. It was during the period when every new public power was not put into the hands of the old local authority, but

into the hands of some new body created *ad hoc*. I have always considered these Trusts as coming under that category of the settled policy of the Government and the stagnation of municipal affairs which existed certainly until within 40 years ago.

3328. There is no burden on the rates at Liverpool in consequence of the Trust at Liverpool?—No.

3329. And at Bristol there is?—Yes; at Bristol there is; but then I believe it is the settled policy of the Corporation rather to impose a burden upon the rates than to increase the charge on shipping.

3330. Is there a sinking fund at Liverpool for all new works undertaken?—I cannot say offhand. I could get that information.

3331. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Apart from the case of Liverpool, can you mention to us an instance where the management of the port by a Trust is a success?—I have not gone into the relative success or failure of Trusts and municipal management; but I was very greatly impressed by the fact, and also by the evidence supplied to me when I was abroad, of what seemed to me to be the remarkable advantage to be gained by the municipal authorities having entire control.

3332. You are looking at it now entirely from the shipowners' point of view?—Yes; I was looking at it from that point of view; and at Hamburg and the other places the shipowners seem to be perfectly content to leave it in the hands of the municipal authorities, the municipal authorities, of course, paying attention to the needs of the shipping as a part of their public duty.

3333. But apart from public duty, can you tell us of an instance where the management of a port by a Trust has been a financial success?—It depends upon what you mean by a financial success. It does not always follow that because you levy a heavy tax on shipping, and get a surplus, that would be a financial success. On the other hand, it might be that you might levy a charge upon the rates, and the charge upon the shipping would be less. By having a very low rate on shipping they might attract a large amount of trade to the port, and so benefit their port in innumerable ways. They might introduce manufactures and various other things, and it might be that manufacturers would be content to pay a heavy tax for that. All I want to point out is that financial success is not always to be interpreted by the fact that they have a surplus.

3334. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) In the case of Liverpool do they not raise enough revenue to pay their debt, and then the charges are reduced accordingly?—I rather fancy that of late years the revenue has been employed in extending the docks a great deal. Liverpool has extended the docks of late years very extensively.

3335. No doubt, but if after that they raise enough revenue to pay their debt the charges are reduced?—Yes, I think that would be the principle in Liverpool.

3336. With regard to the dead capital, or capital lost in the docks of London, I suppose it is common knowledge that this must apply more to docks than in any other public works, on account of the rapid alteration in the size of shipping?—I do not think I would say that it is more so than to other great undertakings like the gas companies and water companies.

3337. But surely in the case of water companies it is not altered in the same way?—I gave rather extended evidence before the late Water Commission on that very point, showing what a very large amount of dead capital existed in the water companies' undertakings.

3338. It is an arguable point, no doubt?—Quite so.

3339. Could you separate at all in your table showing the cost of Trinity House and pilotage (*Appendix 1 (b)*) how much is pilotage, and how much is for lighting the river?—I think the whole of that is for pilotage. I have not been able to get the information as to lighting.

3340. It is obvious that the shipping has to bear other costs besides those you give here, such as for lighting?—Yes.

3341. And for the general expenses of the Trinity House?—Yes.

3342. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now will you tell us some particulars as to the extent of the Port of London?—The limit of the tidal action in the port is Teddington Lock, 19 miles above London Bridge.

3343. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is Teddington Lock 19 miles by the river above London Bridge?—Yes. With reference to this portion of my evidence the matter is very complicated, and I think I should serve the Commission best if I give the evidence in the form of a summary of the areas of jurisdiction in the Port of London. (1) The Customs Port. The Port Sanitary Authority Port, and the Thames Conservancy Port for port dues are the same. They extend from Teddington Lock to an imaginary straight line drawn from the pilot mark at the entrance of Havengore Creek in Essex to the land's end at Warden Point in Sheppey, Kent, and including part of the estuary of the Medway. [As appointed for Customs purposes by Treasury Minute of 1st August, 1883, under the authority of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876; the Port Sanitary Port to be the same area as enacted by Section 3 of the Public Health (London) Act, 1891, and the Thames Conservancy Port for port dues to be the same area as enacted by Section 3 and Section 155 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894. The Port Sanitary Port is always to have the same limits as the Customs Port. The Thames Conservancy Port for port dues is also to have the same area as the Customs Port, within the limits mentioned in the second schedule to the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894. These limits are now considerably beyond the actual limits of the Customs Port.] Then (2) The Thames Conservancy—for general purposes. An imaginary straight line drawn from the entrance to Yantlet Creek in Kent to the City Stone in Essex (and so much of the River Lea and Bow Creek respectively as are below the south boundary stones mentioned in the Lee Conservancy Act, 1868). [As defined by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, Section 3.] Then (3) The Thames Conservancy—for dredging and ballasting. An imaginary straight line drawn from Shoeburyness water tower in Essex to Eastchurch Church in Kent (outside the jurisdiction of the Conservators of the Medway.) [As defined by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, Section 3, Sub-Section 1.] Then (4) The Thames Conservancy—for pollution. The same as Thames Conservancy for general purposes, but including the whole of the tributaries down to the western boundary of the County of London, and three miles from the Thames of all tributaries eastward of the western boundary of the County of London, except the Lea, where the limit is the south boundary stones mentioned in the Lee Conservancy Act, 1868. [As defined by the Thames Conservancy Act 1894, section 90.] For the duty of preserving the flow and purity of the water of the river and carrying out the necessary scavenging, the eastern limit of the Thames Conservancy is the western boundary of the County of London. [As defined by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, section 91.] Then (5) The Trinity House—for pilotage. For licensing pilots the limits of the London district are from London Bridge and Rochester Bridge respectively to Orfordness to the north and Dungeness to the south. [The Trinity House shall not license a pilot to conduct ships both above and below Gravesend.]. [As defined by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, section 618.] Then (6) The Trinity House—for lighting and buoying. The Trinity House has (subject to the rights of local lighthouse and buoy authorities) the superintendence and management of all lighthouses and buoys throughout England and Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar. [According to the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, section 634.] Then (7) Watermen's and Lightermen's Company. From Teddington Lock to Lower Hope Point, near Gravesend in Kent, and all docks, canals, creeks, and harbours of the Thames, so far as the tide flows. [As defined by the Thames Watermen's and Lightermen's Act, 1893, section 3.]

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3344. Do you suggest that it would be expedient to have the port defined in the same way and with the same limits for all purposes?—I am not making any suggestion at the present moment as to policy. I am simply putting in these as facts, and I should be glad if you would allow me to reserve that point for the members of the Council. It will be seen that the areas of several authorities differ considerably, and that for most of the chief public services—lighting, buoying, pilotage, dredging, pollution—the area of administration is a differing one. The area of administration of the Thames Conservancy has, for instance, several limits according to the service performed. The government of the port and the administration of the services are made difficult of consideration through being in the hands of so many authorities administering similar or differing services over coterminous or differing areas. The chief authorities are:—The Thames Conservancy, for the conservancy of the whole of the Thames, including the port, the area of its jurisdiction in the port differing in limits for various purposes; the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, for pilotage, lighting,

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and buoying from London Bridge seawards; the City Corporation for port sanitary purposes, from Teddington Lock seawards; the Watermen's and Lightermen's Company. In addition to these there are many other authorities with statutory powers which have to be taken into account, such as the dock companies and other companies having statutory powers in the port, and the several local authorities.

(*The Witness handed in a table setting out the Administration of the Government and Public Services of the Port of London. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 4.*)

The heads of government and of service are as follows:—Regulation of navigation; removal and prevention of obstructions; prevention of pollution; port sanitary; police; levy of dues on shipping; lighting; buoying; beacons; pilotage; moorings; dredging; ballasting; landing accommodation. In respect of each of these heads I have set out in the table the authorities administering the duty or service, and the enactment regulating such administration.

3345. You have given us a table of the authorities with respect to the moorings?—Yes.

3346. You are not aware of any authority by which a merchant or shipowner having vessels moored to these moorings is charged £1 or some such sum for the use of the moorings, quite independently of the Trinity House or any other body?—I have heard that that is so, but I have no knowledge of how it is done, or under what powers.

3347. And you can give us no information as to what authority, or presumed authority, these people may have?—No, I cannot give you any information upon that.

3348. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now will you give us your evidence as to the system of government of the ports of the United Kingdom?—Before I commence with this, I should like to observe that the Chairman of the London and India Docks Joint Committee, in Questions 654 to 661, and Appendix, 2nd day, No. 10, criticises the Council's return upon which this part of my evidence is based, as not giving information about the docks. I should just like to observe upon that that I did not pretend to do that. It is the system of government of the ports of the United Kingdom, and has nothing necessarily to do with the docks. It is a distinct thing, and therefore the chairman's criticism is not really applicable.

3349. With reference to the evidence which you propose giving now, with reference to the system of government of the ports of the United Kingdom, will you tell us the sources from which you got the information?—The Government returns and the Acts of Parliament in every case. I have consulted the Acts of Parliament, and the third column of my table of the system of government of the ports of the United Kingdom gives the reference to the Acts from which the information is obtained.

3350. Then will you be kind enough to give us this evidence, which we shall not discuss?—In connection with my evidence as to the present administration of the port, the constitution of other port authorities in the Kingdom will be useful.

The Witness handed in a table showing the system of government of the Ports of the United Kingdom. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 5.)

In this table dealing with the system of government of the ports of the United Kingdom, I set out the authority as created by Parliament in 113 of the ports of the United Kingdom, the Act creating such constitution being stated in each case. These are the constituted port authorities, without reference to the duties they may perform, or the extent to which the services of the port are in their hands. The authorities may be divided into five groups: (1) municipal; (2) municipal in part; (3) public (non-municipal); (4) private owners; (5) special. (1) Municipal:—There are 22 ports where the municipal authority has complete control, as follows: Aberdeen, Aberystwith, Arbroath, Barnstaple, Beaumaris, Boston, Bridgwater, Bristol, Campbeltown, Cardigan, Chester, Colchester, Drogheda, Exeter, Galway, Lynn, Penzance, Preston, Stranraer, Weymouth, Wigtown, Wisbech. Of these, 17 are governed by the Corporations or Town Councils, 4 by the municipal authority acting as harbour commissioners or trustees; and 1 by the municipal authority acting as a conservancy board. With regard to Bristol, I need not repeat what I have already said.

3351. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to Bristol it is possible that you are referring to something in the remote past with which I am not acquainted. I am talking about what has taken place within the last 20 or 30 years?—I rather fancy that is the reason. I know I have read what I have stated here.

3352. I will not say there never was a time when the docks were sold by the Corporation to joint stock companies, but I have never heard of it—certainly not since the Avonmouth Docks were authorised by Parliament, which is something like 30 years ago?—I will take an opportunity of looking it up.

3353. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) In any case we may take it that you state as a fact that the Corporation did buy them out, without making criticisms?—Then with regard to the second group, "Municipal in Part," this group consists of 67 ports, which I have mentioned in the table. The municipal authority shares its control in some cases with public, in some cases with private, and in other cases with both public and private authorities. They are as follows:—Alloa, Ayr, Banff, Belfast, Berwick-on-Tweed, Blyth, Carnarvon, Coleraine, Cork, Cowes (Isle of Wight), Dartmouth, Dover, Dublin, Dumfries, Dundalk, Dundee, Falmouth, Faversham, Fowey, Fraserburgh, Glasgow, Gloucester, Greenock, Hartlepool, Harwich, Hull, Inverness, Ipswich, Irvine, Kirkcaldy, Kirkwall, Lancaster, Leith, Lerwick, Limerick, Littlehampton, Llanelly, Londonderry, Maryport, Middlesbrough, Montrose, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Newport, Padstow, Peterhead, Plymouth (Cattewater), Poole, Portsmouth, Rochester, Scarborough, Shields (North and South), Shoreham, Skibbereen, Sligo, Southampton, Stockton-on-Tees, Stornoway, Sunderland, Swansea, Tralee, Waterford, Westport, Wexford, Whitby, Whitehaven, Wick, Yarmouth. Of these, 33 are governed by Harbour Commissioners, 13 by Harbour Trustees, 7 by Conservancy or River Commissioners, 1 by the Board of Trade and a Harbour Board, 1 by the Admiralty and Corporation, and the remainder by sundry bodies of commissioners, etc., in all of which the Corporation or the ratepayers are represented. The most important ports in the United Kingdom, with the exception of Cardiff and Liverpool, are to be found in this group, and are under the control of authorities, partly municipal and partly representative of public and private interests or both. At Hull the Corporation had a recognised statutory right of acquiring for a public trust, to be defined by Parliament, the property of the old Hull Dock Company. It invested instead £100,000 in the Hull and Barnsley Railway Company's dock, when the Hull Dock Company was empowered by Parliament to require the Corporation to exercise its right of purchase within two years, or lose it for ever. The right was allowed to lapse. Glasgow was originally in the hands of the magistrates and the City Council, but is now managed by a harbour trust. With reference to the Tyne Ports, the Corporation had been the Conservators from time immemorial, but was replaced by Commissioners in 1850. The Tees, Wear, and Tay Ports and Belfast are similar cases to the Tyne Ports. Then the third group, "Public authority (non-municipal)": Under this heading are included those ports where neither the municipal body nor the ratepayer has any share in the government of the port, but at the same time the authority controls the port for public purposes and not for commercial profit. They are as follows:—Channel Islands (Alderney, Guernsey, Jersey), Liverpool, Ramsgate, Runcorn, Teignmouth. Two of these are under the control of the Board of Trade, two of the local government of the island they are situated upon, and the remainder of harbour commissioners, etc., representing the various interests in the port. In Liverpool the Corporation formerly administered this port, but have given way to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. Then group 4, "Private owners": This group consists of 16 ports, which are controlled by companies or individual owners. They are as follows:—Ardrossan, Barrow, Cardiff, Carlisle, Fleetwood, Folkestone, Goole, Grangemouth, Granton, Grimsby, Lowestoft, Milford (Milford Haven, New Milford), Newhaven, Newry, Scilly, Troon. Of these, six are under the control of railway companies, two of harbour companies, three of private owners, two of dock companies, one of a canal and a railway company jointly, and two of canal and navigation companies. At Cardiff there has been a movement in favour of the Corporation acquiring the entire property in the Bute Docks. In 1892 a modified form of this proposal was suggested to the effect that corporate influence over and part ownership of the docks should be acquired by the Corporation investing money for their extension. Then there is the special case of Manchester. In the case of Manchester the Corporation are at present represented on the company to the extent of 11 members out of a total of 21, but this representation is subject to reduction as the Corporation loan is paid off, as I have shown in the table.

Under the powers of the Manchester Ship Canal Acts, the Corporation has lent to the Ship Canal Company £5,000,000, resulting at present in a considerable charge on the rates, a policy deliberately considered in the interests of the city as a whole.

3354. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) It may be partly true, but is it true as a general statement, that the Southampton Docks are controlled by the municipal authority. Do they not belong to the London and South-Western Railway Company?—The docks may. I am alluding to the harbour. This relates to the port and harbour authority, and not necessarily to the docks. I believe in that case the largest or the principal docks belong to the London and South-Western Railway Company.

3355. How do you distinguish between the harbour and the docks? Take the case of Grangemouth; that is a railway company's dock?—Yes; that is so.

3356. They do not control anything but their dock?—They do really. That is the information that I have. They control the approaches and whatever harbour is outside their dock. They control the whole thing.

3357. Until it reaches the River Forth, perhaps?—That would be so.

3358. I see your distinction. You are not talking of the control of the docks, but of the control of the port?—Yes.

3359. Sometimes that appertains to the ownership of the dock, and sometimes it does not?—Yes; that is so.

3360. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Now, will you tell us what you have to say with regard to foreign ports?—I have reserved for the last a few points in connection with the foreign ports which bear upon the previous evidence. The consular reports issued annually from the Foreign Office have for the past seven or eight years been continually reminding the country of the great attention which was being paid to the development of certain ports, and particularly with reference to Hamburg, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Havre. I have at hand such of the reports as bear upon this question, and if the Commission desires, I could prepare a memorandum giving such points as are pertinent. I have not done so up to now. Without at the present dealing with these reports, I am able to place before the Commission certain facts which I have investigated myself. The Rivers Committee of the Council deemed this subject of sufficient importance for me to visit certain of the foreign ports for the purposes of this evidence, and during last summer I went to Hamburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp. In the evidence relating to London, already placed before the Commission, I have ventured to suggest that the statistics relating to shipping pointed in the direction, if they did not absolutely prove, that the trade of London was suffering from the condition of its port, and I pointed out that other ports of the Kingdom which have developed their docks and harbours, have secured an increased proportion of the trade of the Kingdom. I also suggested that this relative falling back of London might also mean a loss to the nation at large, by reason of trade going to foreign ports. I now propose to place some figures before the Commission relating to some of the above-named ports. I think the conclusion is irresistible, that those ports have been enabled to develop their trade because of the extension and development of their dock and harbour facilities. If this is so, I think it would be hard to resist the correlative conclusion that the proportional falling back of London is due to the want of corresponding development and attention in the docks and port. I will hand in two tables showing the shipping and trade of the Port of Hamburg.

See 7387.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the shipping entered at the Port of Hamburg from 1791 to 1899. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 6. Also a table showing the weight and value of imports into the Port of Hamburg, 1850 to 1899. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 7.*)

One table gives the number and tonnage of the shipping entered at the port during the century. It will be seen how enormous the growth has been. The other table shows the weight and value of imports, and the figures are correspondingly striking. Two very large docks are now being constructed, in addition to those opened in recent years, and every improvement in machinery, warehouses and facilities for unloading and storage is made from time to time. I have maps of these docks and ports if the Commission would like to have them.

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3361. I think we should like them?—This shows the position of the port about 18 miles up the river.

(*The Witness handed in a map of the Port of Hamburg.*)

3362. We should like your memorandum to which you have referred with reference to Hamburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp?—I will prepare it, and send it to the Commission. This is a map showing the particular docks, and it is the map that I had in my hand when I was going round and examining them in detail. It shows the three docks that are now being constructed. They took a huge piece of land there and practically converted it into a dock. At Amsterdam I also found considerable extension of docks and harbour works in order to introduce the latest improvements. I will put in a table showing the shipping entered at the port in the years 1884-99.

See 7771.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the shipping entered at Amsterdam from 1884 to 1899. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 8.*)

The increase in the last four years is especially noticeable.

(*The Witness handed in a map of the docks and harbour at Amsterdam.*)

Then at Rotterdam great extensions were going on.

(*The Witness handed in a map of the docks at Rotterdam.*)

An entirely new waterway was constructed in 1872. I put in a table showing the shipping entered at this port for a series of years.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the shipping entered at the Port of Rotterdam and the weight of merchandise imported. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 9. Also a table showing the growth of population at Rotterdam from 1830 to 1900. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 10.*)

As in Amsterdam, the increase in the last four years is the most marked feature. At Antwerp, again, considerable works are in progress, and I put in two tables showing the increase of trade at this port.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the shipping entered at the Port of Antwerp. See Appendix, 10th day, No. 11.*)

The figures are equally striking with those for Hamburg, the increase since 1890 being over 50 per cent.

(*The Witness handed in a map of the docks at Antwerp.*)

There is nothing in the United Kingdom to equal the increase in shipping in recent years that has taken place at these four ports. In all these places the docks and harbour are under the control of the municipality, and it is a universal policy with the authorities to undertake all that is needed by way of improvement without reference to any limits of revenue which arise from charges on shipping. By this means the service is kept at its full height, in all branches, whether it be dredging, buoying, lighting, construction of cranes and other machinery, provision of warehouse accommodation suitable to different classes of goods, connection of all parts of the port together by means of railways or steam tramways and vessels of various kinds, and the provision of a competent and expert staff to deal with all branches of the service.

3363. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I am not disputing your figures, but I should like to ask you if you have at all entered into the question as to how some of these figures are made up. I will begin with the Port of Hamburg. Can you tell me whether the entries of shipping include vessels coming down the river as well as vessels coming from the sea?—These are sea vessels only.

3364. It is not so stated in the table. I think we ought to have it specifically stated?—They are sea vessels only.

3365. And in the corresponding table as to goods, the imports, I presume, are imports by sea exclusively in the foreign trade?—Yes, that is so.

3366. Is there not a certain amount of importation of goods which are really to a very large extent transhipment goods, and do not compare with the imports as they appear in the imports of London, for instance, exclusive of transhipment?—I am afraid I am not able to say that.

3367. But that would be a point of some interest in connection with the matter?—Certainly.

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3368. Hamburg is to some extent in these days a free port, and there are goods admitted which are not part of the imports of the Empire in the ordinary sense?—As a free port it is particularly able to deal with transhipment.

3369. Have you looked into the matter from the same point of view with reference to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp?—I am not able to say what transhipments are included in these totals.

3370. And with regard to the entries of shipping, have you looked at all into the question whether some of the entries are in the same nature as the shipping entries between Dover and Calais, the result of the large interest of the local shipping?—I understand that all these are the foreign trade and not the local shipping.

3371. But to some extent the foreign trade of ports like Amsterdam and Rotterdam is a ferry trade chiefly with London and other ports in the United Kingdom?—It would include those of course.

3372. You have not any separate information as to how much this increase of trade at these ports is an increase of trade very largely with London, and certainly very largely with ports of the United Kingdom?—No.

3373. So that if we see an increase at Antwerp, to a large extent it corresponds to an increase which we see in the ports of the United Kingdom?—Yes, that would be so.

3374. The percentage of increase is larger in their case because they start from a smaller total, but the amount of the increase is equally great in the case of the ports of the United Kingdom?—That is so, no doubt.

3375. That is a point that ought to be considered in studying these figures?—Certainly.

3376. Then with regard to the table, with reference to the Port of Antwerp in particular, there are some apparent discrepancies between the table at the top and the table at the bottom, are there not?—I have explained those discrepancies in Note c. I discovered them for myself. The figures there include the number and tonnage of steamers from the interior. Those were taken out afterwards.

3377. Your attention has been given to that point?—Yes.

3378. If we use the tables, which of them ought we to use?—The bottom table.

3379. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You visited Antwerp yourself?—Yes.

3380. The plan you have given us here shows the docks, but does not show the wharves. Is not a very large proportion of the big ship trade done from wharves, and not from docks?—Yes, that is so; but the wharves and the warehouses all belong to the municipality at Antwerp.

3381. What I wanted to arrive at is that the wharves in the river are used by the larger ships as well as the docks?—Yes, that is so.

3382. Can you give us any idea of the proportion?—No. I am not able to give any proportion.

3383. And does the same thing apply to Hamburg as regards wharves?—Yes, that is so, but in Hamburg I understand there is a great deal more lighterage done from the big ships in the docks. It is sent up to the wharves by lighters just in the same way as it may be in London.

3384. But the larger ships do use the wharves both at Antwerp and Hamburg?—Not so much at Hamburg. I think the large ships principally use the docks at Hamburg, and the wharves are approached by lighters.

3385. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You are going to prepare a memorandum, as the Chairman has invited you, with regard to Hamburg, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Antwerp, and, say, Havre. Could you extend your memorandum to Calais and Dunkirk?—Yes, and to Marseilles. See 7771.

3386. Marseilles is scarcely in point, but Calais and Dunkirk are *vis-à-vis* with this country, and also Cherbourg?—Yes.

3387. And in the memorandum will you be able to give us the expenditure and increase of accommodation?—I think so. In almost all the reports a great deal of information is given as to the expenditure.

3388. And could you also give us information as to the basis of charge for the shipping?—That I am not sure of, but I know there has been a return lately prepared for the Government by the English Consul at Paris, where he gives very elaborate details of the charges on shipping.

3389. The provision of accommodation at Calais has not attracted much trade, has it?—My recollections of Calais are not very pleasing, and it does not seem to me that they do much there.

3390. It would be instructive to see what has been done at these ports, and what has been the result from a financial point of view, and also to study the mode in which shipping is charged by the different ports. You will be able to give us that, I daresay, in your memorandum?—I will endeavour to do so as far as I possibly can.

3391. I have particularly in my mind a statement made by Sir Thomas Sutherland as to the charges on the shipowner at the various places—not the total charges on the goods, but the charges on the shipowner?—The proportion charged upon the shipowner as compared with what is charged on the consignees?

3392. Yes. Sir Thomas Sutherland told us that the ships like to go to a port that is cheap to the shipowner. The shipowner does not care very much what happens to anyone else?—I quite understand that point.

3393. And there may be quite different modes of charging shipowners at different places?—I might say that I did make very strenuous efforts to be able to put before this Commission a table of comparative charges, but I find there is so much difference in the methods of charge that it is almost impossible to compare things with the limited amount of knowledge that I have, unless one visited each port and dug out all the details so as to be sure that one is comparing like with like.

3394. But you are going to take it from the consular reports?—Yes.

Recalled 7769.

Mr. Richard Cattarns called and examined.

Mr. R. Cattarns

3395. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) You are chairman of the Short Sea Traders' Association?—I am.

3396. You are giving evidence on their behalf?—I am.

3397. And also at the request of the General Steam Navigation Company, whose secretary and manager you were until the year 1894?—Yes.

3398. Will you be good enough to tell us the facts in connection with the General Steam Navigation Company?—The General Steam Navigation Company was formed in 1825, and is a very large user of the Thames, entering and clearing through the Customs in connection with London about 1½ million tons of shipping per annum.

3399. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) These are the entrances and clearances together, I suppose?—Yes. The company do not insure their vessels except against fire. The company, in addition to their fleet of 49 ships, own Irongate and St. Katharine Wharf, and some 50 barges, and a factory at Deptford. During the period of my management, the company spent about a million and a half in reconstituting their fleet. I may observe that about the time that I became commercially interested in the company, the screw propeller was found to be coming to the front very much in connection with these shallow-water ports, and therefore we had to change our paddle-wheel steamers, which, up to that time, had been almost entirely in vogue, for screw steamers. We had another object in view in the same way. At that time the Franco-German War had come to an end, and commerce had very largely developed and quantities very largely increased. Therefore we required very much larger ships in order to carry the amount of cargo. The company are not only their own repairers, but their own insurers and their own salvors in the event of difficulty, and, in addition, when cattle are carried, they take the risk of that cargo. The cattle trade at the present moment, from the Continent, has ended, owing to the British Government interfering in consequence of disease; but up to 1887 or 1888, we used to bring up the Thames something like a million or a million and a-half of sheep or horned cattle, the whole of which we were able to carry practically at the company's own risk. The company have reason to be grateful to the

Thames Conservators for the admirable way in which they deal with the salvage operations in the Thames. It is important that, in any readjustment of the administration of the port, the salvage operations connected with wrecks should be in the hands of the new central authority, and extend beyond the existing limits of the Thames Conservancy. If I may be allowed to say so, that is rather an important point. At the present moment the Thames Conservancy have done remarkable service. I know of no port where such services have been rendered in connection with salvage. The moment you get outside their limits, there are no facilities except by the courtesy of the Conservancy, and of course they can only grant them when their apparatus is free from the demands of their own port. We are then left at the mercy of the lighting authority, and the lighting authority is the Trinity House. They have no apparatus for lifting, and consequently we are placed in the difficulty, that is serious where you are your own insurers, of sometimes finding our property blown up instead of being lifted up—coming up in pieces instead of as a floating ship.

3400. How far down does the Thames Conservancy's power extend?—Only as far as Yantlet Creek. Section 530 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 deals with the question of the authority as to lifting sunken wrecks outside the port authority. About 1880 I formed the Short Sea Traders' Association, there being at that time no association which represented solely the interests of coasting and short trade steamers. I was then elected chairman, and I have been annually re-elected. The Short Sea Traders' Association have had considerable difficulties to deal with with their great competitors, the railway companies, who have obtained steamboat powers at various places on the coast; and this was one reason why the Short Sea Traders' Association was formed. The Association was formed also to deal with public questions, such as the present enquiry, and those relating to the Shipping Acts, Pilotage, and Board of Trade, Railway Bills in Parliament, and trade competition by foreign states and bills of lading, and, of course, the question of bills of lading is a very important point, and it has been touched upon in the evidence of various witnesses here. The association, as a trade association, have adopted what has been accepted by London as a whole—what is called the authorised form of Continental steam bill of lading, that is accepted and generally used by everybody. Perhaps the Commission might find it useful if I handed that bill of lading in.

(*The witness handed in a form of Continental steam bill of lading, authorised by the London Direct Short Sea Traders' Association. See Appendix, 10th Day, No.* 12.)

In order to secure it from any risk of forgery, and as an assistance to shipowners generally, the association, in 1899, registered a trade mark. That trade mark is affixed to the bill of lading, which is revised from time to time, and certain authorised printers are allowed to print it. The merchants buy it, and the shipowners accept it upon examination simply of the trade mark. there is one rather important clause which affects this inquiry, and that is the right that the shipowner takes under his contract for immediately discharging his ship on arrival at the port. That is a power that the river trader has taken almost immediately after the passing of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1862, which has now become Part VII. of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, and which deals with the right of the merchant importer to have his goods delivered to him on his passing entry and making application and being ready to receive. The association, of course, took a very active part in regard to the erecting of the bridges below London Bridge, and, I think, were mainly instrumental in resisting the applications of the Metropolitan Board of Works of that day to build a bridge, which subsequently resulted in the successful bridge—the Tower Bridge—which has been erected by the Corporation. We have also assisted at many Inquiries and Royal Commissions on questions of trade and shipping construction, and so on. But our particular effort was in connection with the Merchandise Marks Act. The Merchandise Marks Act has had the gravest effect upon the trade of the Port of London. I think that whatever difficulties may be shown in the Port of London of a physical character, and so on, there is no difficulty which has had so great an effect as the Merchandise Marks Act has had in connection with the trade of the Port of London. The trade of the Port of London is, of course, a transhipment trade, except in so far as it is a trade directly applicable to the port. My company developed this trade, which I myself had to create very largely, and were enormous carriers of the transhipment cargo from the continent. The effect of the passing of the Merchandise Marks Act was, within a year or two, to destroy the trade by many thousands of tons. In point of fact, it practically destroyed the whole of the German trade which used to come over for Australia and elsewhere. The result of that was that the German shipping, particularly the German lines, was largely increased. That was owing to no cause of expense in the port or any difficulty in the port, but wholly and solely because the Legislature decided that, assuming the goods were foreign and could be in any way thought to be attached to Great Britain, they should be stopped and possibly confiscated under certain circumstances, or possibly sent back. But in any circumstance the risk to the merchant was grave in the extreme, and upon many occasions the goods lay in the port, causing the merchant enormous expense, with the result that the trade was completely lost to British shipping, except only when British shipping went to the continent and loaded the cargo directly into its own bottom, in which case it escaped the Merchandise Marks Act altogether, because the ship was able to come into the British port and fill up with British cargo, and so the ship went on to its destination with any marks they pleased. That was taken advantage of by the German ships enormously, because they loaded their cargo freely and then dropped in at Southampton for mails and so on, and then went on their journey. The membership of the association is limited to vessels trading regularly to and from London coastwise or to the European ports. The interests of a consultative association like this have to be necessarily on all fours. Therefore it involved the regular lines trading coastwise or to the European ports. There are 29 members of the association, and they may be divided into shipowners owning steamers for the coastwise, passenger, and goods trade. Then there are passenger steamers trading to the continent. These are less numerous; and, lastly, a large number of cargo steamers that trade to the continent without passengers. I thought perhaps the Commission would like to see a list of members of the association.

(*The witness handed in a list of members of the London Direct Short Sea Traders' Association, showing the number of ships and the tonnage belonging to each member. See Appendix, 10th day, No.* 13).

The short sea trader oversea has to undergo all the requirements of an ocean trader in connection with manifests, bills of lading and such like technicalities. The Association's form of bill of lading is universally accepted as the "authorised form."

3401. That is what you have already told us?—Yes. I need not repeat it. The Committee revise the bills of lading constantly, and then the bills of lading are sealed, and half-a-dozen or so printers are allowed to print them on signing an agreement regulating the correct use of the die and so on. It is unfortunate that the Association in 1894 overlooked the inquiry before Parliament in connection with the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894. The result was the short sea interest was not represented before the Committee on that Bill, and they now complain that under the A and B Clauses of the 12th Section the short sea element is not represented on the board, notwithstanding the fact that the short sea trader has of necessity a closer knowledge of the practical working of the Thames, and a greater interest in the whole river, and pays about 50 per cent. of the tonnage dues. It is the 12th Section of the Conservancy Act, 1894, Clauses A and B. The section is a little complicated to read, but in short it comes to this that there is to be a registered owner of at least 250 tons of shipping who shall be resident at the port, and then the registered owner can either reside in the Port of London or in any other port of the United Kingdom, but his vessels must come at least twice in the case of steamships, and once in the case of sailing ships. In that case he is allowed to have his name registered as a voter, and he gets one vote for every 250 tons of shipping owned by him, the whole of the votes not exceeding 10. The collector of Customs has to keep a register which has to be handed in to the Conservators. The effect of that is that the short sea traders, whose business necessitates the embarkation of an enormous amount of capital, for their ships are very expensive to build, and make frequent voyages, but the traders are few in number, and the consequence is that they are practically outvoted by the larger shipowners who may or may not be resident in London, but whose tonnage for

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and away exceeds the ship tonnage of the short sea traders. The consequence is that—unintentionally of course—the Act has been so worded that the short sea trader has no share in the voting. Of course, supposing there was any alteration in the system of the port authority, or the election of the port authority, I anticipate that this Commission would probably recommend that the voting should be on the basis, to a certain extent at all events, of payment, and that the man who pays the halfpenny rate should be entitled to have a certain number of votes, and the man who pays the three-farthings rate should be entitled to have a certain number of votes. The three-farthings ratepayer only comes up as far as, we will say, the Victoria Dock. It is a very long way down from the upper part of the river. Of course I do not suggest that they are entirely limited to the Victoria Dock, but the majority only come up as far. The short trader comes into the upper part of the river. His interests are above Woolwich, and not so much below Woolwich. The Dredging Inquiry was held under Section 189 of that Act, and good has resulted from that Inquiry. The short sea trade complain that the Inquiry was limited by the Act to considering what was a "convenience" as distinguished from a "necessity" to the trade of the port. The port itself was suffering, and still is suffering, from want of dredging in the river. What is meant by that is that whilst no doubt there was a very important question to be considered by the Dredging Commission—and it is quite right that the Board of Trade should have dealt with it when the Act was before Parliament; just as Sir Thomas Sutherland and other gentlemen who gave evidence before that Commission said, no doubt it is a very great advantage that shipowners should not be delayed one two, three, or four hours. But in the port itself the short trader, and the long trader too for the matter of that, was delayed for days, or at all events for a tide, in consequence of having missed his tide, and having shallow water to get over above Long Reach or elsewhere. And while it is very important that the big vessel should get up to time it is still more important that the short trader should get up to his time because the vessel that is delayed is a vessel trading say from Dundee, Aberdeen or Grangemouth or elsewhere, and these vessels are running in direct competition with the railway companies, the Great Northern and the London and North Western and others. They have to catch their markets. If they catch their markets they keep their trade, but if they miss their markets the trade goes to the railway companies. My own experience is that in consequence of our vessels which are built at great expense to catch the markets having been delayed, merchants have taken their business away, and it has shifted to the railway companies, who do their business with so much more regularity. Not only do we build our ships at this great expense, but in addition to that we own our wharves which have to be considered as part of our working expenditure. The wharves themselves so far as the ships are concerned earn very little indeed. Wharfage or quayage without warehousing has very little profit indeed attached to it. The General Steam Company bought the wharves from the dock company for the purpose of dealing with this very traffic, and similar classes of traffic, but unfortunately we were spoilt in consequence of the shallow water, and to that extent we were very much hurt. By the courtesy of the Commissioners the Association was allowed through me to intimate partially some of the points which were occupying their minds, but they were not heard by witnesses, and to some extent their views were misunderstood. They desire that the port shall be improved as a whole, and so long as money is well spent they do not shirk bearing their share of the cost. So far as we are concerned, probably, we are more eager than anybody to spend money on the port in order that the port may be made the most perfect and practicable port that the world has. It is more important to us perhaps than to anybody. The "coaster" is a vessel most costly to build and equip, and works under difficult conditions at an enormous expense. The coaster such as I have been describing costs roughly speaking, £20 to £22 per ton.

3402. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Per ton gross?—Yes; not per ton deadweight.

3403. And not per ton of register?—No; per ton gross. Of course, that compares very well with other vessels of a very much larger type. I had a curious case of that in a vessel that I built some years ago, where she was to travel at 17 knots, and she does. She cost a certain sum of money, and I was told by the builders the other day that her engines had just been duplicated for a ship of 4,500 tons capacity to travel 12 knots. This little vessel could only carry 1,700 tons, but she had to go at a big speed in order to run this traffic that I have been describing. Of course the effect of that is that a big vessel is able to take a longer journey with a big freight and at a comparatively smaller expenditure. The coaster carries about with her a full equipment of loading and discharging gear, and in many cases the owners have to own or hire wharves, which are used as auxiliaries to enable them to load and discharge promptly, and to efficiently compete with the railway companies for London traffic. I have explained that. The least depth of water at the following points in the river is as follows:—

Erith Reach	14 feet	to 17½ feet.
Halfway Reach	16 ,,	
Barking Reach	14 ,,	
Woolwich Reach	12 ,,	
Limehouse Reach	12 ,,	
Tunnel Pier	14 ,,	
Tower Bridge Fairway	10—11 ,,	

I do not commit myself to those figures. They are the pilots' reports.

3404. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) They are accurate, to the best of your knowledge?—Yes. Between the 3rd and 4th December instant I caused the water to be sounded at the following Tiers, and found the lead water to be as follows:—

Upper Tower Tier	11 feet.
Lower Tower Tier	15¼ ,,
Irongate Tier	14 ,,
Dublin Tier	13 ,,
Upper Hermitage Tier	16½ ,,
Lower Hermitage Tier	11 ,,
Norwood's Tier	14 ,,
Mill Stairs Tier	18 ,,
Upper East Lane Tier	17 ,,
Lower East Lane Tier	16 ,,
Fountain Tier	13 ,,
Church Hole Lower Tier	17 ,,

We do complain that we ought to have our tiers at such a depth of water that at low water vessels are held upright.

3405. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What water do the vessels that you refer to draw?—18ft. to 20ft. The limit of a vessel trading in the European trade, from the Baltic down to the Sea of Azov, will be about 18ft. to 20ft. All round, a 20ft. depth is a maximum depth.

3406. Are you upon depth of water, or upon what the ship draws?—Of course, there must be a margin of safety below the ship itself. I am speaking of what the ship draws.

3407. Would not the pilots demand some depth of water under the keel for safety?—Certainly—two feet, I should think, quite. We think that money ought to be spent on these things. Of course, the vessels come to the quays and wharves, which some people own, and then they discharge the rest of their cargoes in the tiers. That is particularly the case at Fresh Wharf, immediately contiguous to London Bridge, where they do an enormous trade, and where the size of the vessels has increased very largely. The General Steam Company's ships have grown from an average of 700 tons gross to 1,092 tons gross. Going all over their fleet, big and little, they have vessels now of 2,697 tons gross, 1,714 net, and 4,100 dead weight, and 21ft. draught. These vessels are arranged to go to Fresh Wharf at London Bridge, and their draught of water is 20ft., or possibly a few inches over. We like to keep it to 20ft. In the case of this particular class of vessel she is 21ft. Of course, with regard to all these ships, they are arranged for working their cargo. They have to have an immense number of holds, as Sir Thomas Sutherland described his own ships; all the liners have the same thing. They have many decks, and those decks are divided by many bulkheads, and thus the cargo is assorted at loading, and is prepared for assorting on discharging. The effect of that is that the working in the stream is very rapid. Whilst manager of the General Steam Company, I found it necessary to develop the transhipment trade. It was not an entirely new trade, but what was new was the issue to the Con-

tinental public of a through bill of lading and inclusive rate which covered the short sea freight and the ocean freight, together with the intermediate charges in London, and further gave the Continental shipper a through bill of lading upon which the financial and other requirements of his trade could be worked. In effect, the larger ports, like Antwerp and Hamburg, have a daily service of these Continental steamers. A through bill of lading from Antwerp to Calcutta, without any clause for transhipment in London, or what not, places the Continental shipper in the position of shipping direct and enables him to fulfil all his financial obligations so far as the bill of lading is concerned. Thus the London ocean trader is put in a very advantageous position. But that trade has very materially altered; it has gone away very considerably, partly because it is worth the while of the ocean trader himself to send it over. The ocean ship owner sends his steamers over to Antwerp partly owing to the improved port at Antwerp and partly owing to the effects of the Merchandise Marks Act, to which I have referred. A similar system was developed by the ocean shipowner in the ocean ports, and so there is an exchange of traffic. Of course that can only be done by the regular lines. The number of ships "calling" at the Port of London has of late years increased. Taking the twelve months ending last month there were some 800 vessels entered the Port of London, and they were reported at the Customs House as having "cargo remaining on board for exportation." This is a development of modern trade. Goods which formerly came in small parcels now come in sufficiently large ones to justify the ocean ship herself going on to the Continental or coast port. So far as I know there is no record kept by Government of the tonnage and value of the cargo so remaining on board for exportation; the figures must be large. I have brought up samples of Bill A. It is an official document issued by the London Customs. I have picked out three showing what particular ships had cargoes on board.

(*The Witness handed in samples of the Customs Bill of Entry.—Bill A.*)

I have made all the enquiries I can and I find that the Customs take no note of that cargo.

3408. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) The official returns of trade take no notice of these things?—No, I do not think they do. I am speaking from information derived from Customs.

3409. And as far as the ships going to other ports of the United Kingdom are concerned, that would hardly be necessary?—No.

3410. But as far as ships going to the Continent are concerned, there is no record of the ships coming with goods and taking away goods?—No, and I particularly mention that because it makes it appear as though our transhipment cargoes had very largely fallen off, and so on; but it is not quite so. That would have been transhipment cargo except that it has got so large that it is worth the ocean man's while to go and fetch it for himself. Take, for instance, the cargo coming in on a Peninsular Company's ship, probably taken on board for Calcutta. She brings 2,000 or 3,000 tons in the bottom of the ship, and that remains on board.

3411. Do these goods appear in Bill A?—No. There is a note of the fact that she has cargo on board, but not otherwise. There are 802 ships, I think. Of course, that applies very largely under certain circumstances. For instance, take the wool trade, which has been said to have left London. The wool trade has altered to a certain extent; there have been wool sales in the colony as well as London, and the result is that the buyer has been purchasing in the colony, and the wool has come over to the consignee direct. It has constantly come to London in large quantities and been taken on by the ocean-ship; she has discharged a part of her cargo in London, and then it is taken on by the ocean-ship to the Continental or Coast port. The trade of London is a berth trade, and there are few, if any, chance cargoes. The supply of cargo, particularly weight cargo, from London is not great, and it has to be collected from all directions, and this remark emphatically applies to the transhipment trade, seeing that such trade has to be secured from the Continental port or coast port, which is its natural port of shipment, and can only be obtained with difficulty, and for some inducement to the shipper. The transhipment trade varies constantly in volume. I will not repeat what I have said with regard to the Merchandise Marks Act. The difficulties in London have been exaggerated, and it is to be regretted that harm must result from the publication on the Continent of the so-called drawbacks to London. Every port has a drawback of some kind, but London is well suited for the trade it has to do. It is not so well suited for the new trades which the development of commerce has introduced, and it is certain that advantage could be secured by some outlay in the docks which would expedite their working. There is no sufficient justification for complaint against the practical management of the docks, but, as Sir Thomas Sutherland said, much improvement would follow from a considerable outlay on appliances, and possibly a re-arrangement of quays and sheds. In 1899, of the 14,937,565 over-sea ship tons of vessels entered and cleared through the Port of London, 6,193,716 tons came from ports north of Bordeaux, to which must be added 6,913,914 coasting tons, making 13,107,630 tons short sea ship tons. The amount or tonnage dues paid to the Thames Conservancy in 1899 was £55,000, and of this, £27,000 was paid on the ½d. basis. It is not possible to do more than give an approximate estimate of the vessels that worked in the stream and those that worked in the docks, because whilst a large number of over-sea vessels worked in the stream—such as the General Steam Company's larger vessels, and similar ships trading between the Mediterranean and Smyrna and London—some of the coasting and foreign owned short trade boats worked in the docks, but it may be taken that about 10,000,000 tons of shipping load and discharge in the stream. The quantities handled by the short sea traders are very large. It was my practice to check these quantities occasionally, not every year, for the General Steam Company, and they varied from 700,000 to 1,000,000 tons of goods per annum, and were divided in the proportion of about one-third or rather more "out," and two-thirds or rather less "home." Last year the company worked through London 857,000 tons, being 280,000 tons "out," and 580,000 tons "home." The short trade ships are rarely full from London to the Continent, indeed, often practically empty, as they cannot wait for cargo, and sail at fixed dates. Eleven members of the association have sent me in returns showing that they carried last year 1,357,500 tons of goods, of which 590,200 tons was "transhipment." It might be useful if I handed in these tonnage returns, which I have obtained from the Customs.

(*The Witness handed in the Customs Returns of Ships.*)

With regard to that 857,000 tons carried by the General Steam Navigation Company, it is interesting to observe. Taking their accounts for the year 1899, I find that they earned a net profit of £17,500. They carried, in addition to that, 857,000 tons of goods, 137,000 tons of goods to outports, and in addition to that, earned a large sum of money by passengers. But appropriating the whole of their profits, the £17,500 to that 857,000 tons, I think you will find it gives about a net profit of 5d. per ton. Of course, some goods were carried at a loss and some at a large profit, but it works out at that. This is a company of great age, and they are doing their business properly, and if there is any tax put upon goods it becomes a very serious item, having regard to this transhipment trade. I do not suppose my figures will be doubted, but I have the accounts of the company, if they are worth checking. With regard to the tendency to increase the size of ships, I should like to say this: While the ocean ship owner is able to increase the size of his ships, and carry two cargoes in one ship, the short trader has also increased the size of his ship, but only sufficiently to meet the quantity offering for a single cargo. The short trader is bound, owing to the circumstances of his trade, to maintain his regular departure; therefore, while the tonnages are larger, they are only large in proportion to the trade offering for that cargo. Mr. Scott in his evidence, Questions 632-642, suggested that the difficulties of navigation in the upper part of the river were such that they would lessen the ships coming up. That is a mistake. As a matter of fact, the ships have greatly increased in size, and, I think, in numbers, but the vessels go to Fresh Wharf, where there are wonderful facilities. They do not go into dock at all, and so probably they escaped Mr. Scott's notice. The tonnage of the vessels of the company entered and cleared through the Customs averages 1,600,000 per annum, including coastwise ships.

3412. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I asked you this question before. Do you mean the entries alone would come

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to that?—Entries and clearances. The entrances are half that amount. The entries and clearances aggregate about 1,500,000 tons per annum. Ships working in the stream apparently work at less cost than the ships working in the dock, but this fact must not be too readily assumed, because to enable them to work in the stream the vessels have to be provided with the necessary crane power, as do the wharves, etc. All the General Steam Company's vessels are provided with cranes, four or five in number, lifting from three tons, five tons, seven tons, and in a few cases up to ten tons weight. Our crane power is wonderful. The ships leave Rotterdam on Wednesday, arrive here on Thursday, and have to discharge 1,000 tons of cargo and load cargo and get away again on Saturday, and the whole of that is done, by means of these cranes, into barges. The absence of public facilities for craneage in the Port of London is very marked. Port authorities certainly ought to provide the port with a public crane of maximum lifting power. During the year the company paid £706 for Customs' overtime. So far as the company are concerned, they do not begrudge that, for the Customs in London do everything they possibly can to assist trade, and we think that is money well earned. Compulsory pilotage is an important factor in the port expenses. Sections 603, and 622 to 625 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, deal with it. Comparing the cost of Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Hamburg against London, the determining factor is whether or not the ship is under compulsory pilotage. I have brought up brokers' accounts for each of those ports, but I cannot hand them in, because they contain the company's earnings and disbursements, and so on, and therefore they are private figures; but, taking the port expenses, practically the port expenses are the same. The Port of Antwerp, in particular, is deliberately attacking London. London took its trade away years ago, and it wants to get it back again. Fortunately for us they maintain their compulsory pilotage. We do not; if we did the cost of compulsory pilotage would make the trade so frightfully expensive that we could not do it. England has this exemption from compulsory pilotage, and the consequence is—I am now taking the stream work against Antwerp quays—that the charges are rather less in London than they are in Antwerp. Rotterdam is a cheap port, and the most remarkable port for its improvements; the new waterway is a most remarkable work. Hamburg is a little less than any of them, and the explanation of that is that the labour in Hamburg is particularly well done; it is well organised; the Germans work remarkably well, and probably give you more work for your money than any other port with which we trade, and the result is that to a certain limited extent they make Hamburg a better port than London.

3413. Do you say that London is cheaper than Antwerp all expenses put together, or merely as regards compulsory pilotage?—If you added compulsory pilotage London would be slightly dearer than Antwerp for us who work in the stream; but seeing that we escape—and everybody else escapes—British compulsory pilotage through that part of the Trinity House district, Antwerp is really and truly slightly dearer than London.

3414. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you mean dearer to a shipowner or dearer when you take the total charges on the goods?—Dearer to a shipowner. Assuming a ship going in from Calcutta to Antwerp and a ship coming in from Calcutta to London, then, of course, there is compulsory pilotage into Antwerp and compulsory pilotage into London; but assuming a ship going from London to Antwerp the short traders find that Antwerp is a slightly more expensive port than London.

3415. To the ship herself?—Yes, to the shipowner.

3416. (*Lord Revelstoke.*) Will you hand those figures in?—I will send in extracts to the secretary. See 3423—9.

3417. I am afraid we shall not be able to finish your evidence to-day, and as it seems rather important you would probably not like to be hurried?—We think this evidence is important, and I should be glad if you would allow me to come before you again.

3418. I might say this now. You will remember that Sir Thomas Sutherland gave us evidence which is at variance with your suggestions as to foreign ports?—It is not in my mind that I am differing from Sir Thomas at all.

3419. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) It is Question 2009?—I remember carefully reading Sir Thomas Sutherland's evidence, and the impression formed on my mind was that my evidence and his would be very much in agreement. (*After referring.*) I daresay that may be so, but I carefully guarded myself in dealing with the port expenses by saying that I was dealing with the short traders and not with the ocean traders.

3420. You put the case of a ship coming from Calcutta?—She would have to incur compulsory pilotage.

3421. But with the exception of compulsory pilotage, I thought you said you had compared them and the charges would be rather more into Antwerp?—I did not mean to convey that, at all events. Assuming that the shipowner had to incur dock dues, although I have tried, and the company have tried, to work it out, we find great difficulty in giving a fair estimate of comparative dues, for the reason that a strange ship going into the docks would have to pay the full tariff dues, but regular traders like Sir Thomas Sutherland's vessels, would hire the quay, and would probably save considerable expenses, doing their own labour. Therefore, I intended to say that I avoided making any estimate for a dock vessel. My figures relate entirely to the stream.

3422. You will send in the extracts you have promised us during the adjournment?—Yes.

Recalled 3423.

(Adjourned *sine die.*)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

ELEVENTH DAY.

Tuesday, 19th March, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

(*Chairman.*) It is the intention of the Commission now to resume the taking of the evidence of those witnesses who have been appointed to appear before them in order to give evidence upon matters of fact, and evidence which is of an uncontroversial nature. This evidence it is anticipated will occupy four or five days' sittings, after which the Commission will be prepared to hear the proposals of the dock companies, the London County Council, and the City Corporation.

All persons and public bodies whose applications to appear by counsel have been granted may then be so represented. The presence of counsel will, however, at all times be governed by the conditions publicly stated at the opening of the sitting held upon the 15th day of November last.

Mr. RICHARD CATTARNS recalled and further examined.

Mr. R. Cattarns.

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3423. (*Chairman.*) The last time we had the pleasure of seeing you, you were about to touch on the question of the Merchant Shipping Act?—Yes. Sir John Wolfe-Barry asked me to look into that matter, which is dealt with by Sir Thomas Sutherland at Question 2020. Where I was comparing the cost at the Continental ports with the cost at the Port of London, apparently my evidence did not quite agree with the evidence of Sir Thomas Sutherland, and I promised to bring four ships' accounts of four voyages to Antwerp, Rotterdam, Hamburg, and Havre, respectively. That I have done, and with your Lordship's permission I will hand them in directly. Then in order to identify as far as I can my evidence with that of Sir Thomas Sutherland I have looked at Question 2009 and I will just call attention to one or two points that occurred to me with regard to that matter. I think you will find that my evidence is not very far out when compared with that of Sir Thomas Sutherland. Sir Thomas Sutherland calls attention to the fact that the expenses of a voyage to London is £316 13s. 4d. as against the cost of £53 3s. for a voyage to Antwerp. He gives the details of how he arrives at the £316 13s. 4d. Your Lordship will see that he deals with light dues as being part of the cost of the port. That no doubt is a slip, or it may be looked at either way as the Royal Commissioners think well. Light dues are hardly a port charge, and of course they vary whether a ship is coming from foreign ports or whether she is engaged coastwise. The Board of Trade Act, 1898, gives the particulars of how that is arrived at, but for my purposes I should propose to eliminate that £91 altogether from part of the port charge. It is not a municipal charge or a port charge; it is an imperial charge really and truly. Then, of course, dock dues, as I explained before, the river steamers do not incur. Sir Thomas Sutherland necessarily takes his dock dues at £200. Therefore to the extent of the dock dues obviously London is dearer than Antwerp, because Antwerp deliberately avoids charging dock dues. Sir Thomas Sutherland's ships do not go into the docks at Antwerp; they go alongside the wharves, the same as the ordinary river steamers, and they avoid the dock dues altogether. Therefore, to that extent, the Peninsular and Oriental Company's ships and all other ships that go into the docks in London are hampered by the charges that have to be borne. Then the only other charge to which Sir Thomas Sutherland referred is the Conservancy charge of £25, and that £25 has to go consequently against the Antwerp charge of £54 3s. Therefore, in effect, leaving out the exceptional charges which may be said to apply to exceptional accommodation, that is to say, accommodation that is provided in the one case and not in the other, really and truly the London charge is less than the Antwerp charge. Then Sir Thomas refers to the fact that he leaves out pilotage altogether. So far as the steamers about which I was giving evidence are concerned, they carefully bring themselves within the Merchant Shipping Act, which allows them, being registered in the Port of London, to avoid compulsory pilotage, and, consequently, they do not incur compulsory pilotage in London; but directly they go to Antwerp they do incur compulsory pilotage, and in all continental ports the pilotage is compulsory, while in England it is not so in all circumstances. The consequence is that, as far as London is concerned, we save a considerable amount of pilotage when the vessels are registered in London, but if they are registered in the outports they become liable to compulsory pilotage, and have to pay. Of course, that is the difference between the Peninsular and Oriental steamers and the river steamers on whose behalf I am speaking. The Peninsular steamers register at Dundee or Greenock, or possibly other ports in Scotland, and are, therefore, liable to compulsory pilotage in London. They become liable to compulsory pilotage in London, but they avoid the liability for collisions and other things in consequence. The river steamers being smaller, the owners find it better worth their while to register their steamers in London, and so avoid compulsory pilotage, which otherwise would be a very heavy tax indeed. The consequence is that taking a river steamer in the instance I give, the "Benbow," on an Antwerp voyage she incurs at Antwerp a cost of £27 15s. 10d., as against a cost of £9 2s. in London.

(*The Witness handed in a Table of the Comparative Official Port Charges incurred by the General Steam Navigation Company's steamer 'Benbow,'* 515 *tons net register, on a voyage in January,* 1900, *out from London to Antwerp, with* 758 *tons general cargo, and home with* 776 *tons cargo, Antwerp to London (River), See Appendix, 11th Day, No.* 1.

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In Hamburg it is the same thing; the cost of pilotage is very high, all of which is compulsory, and which is saved in the Port of London. In the case of the voyage of a river steamer called the "Auk," of 642 tons net register, to Hamburg, she expended at Hamburg £40 14s. 10d., and for the same charges she expended in London £8 2s. 6d.

(*The Witness handed in a Table of the Comparative Official Port Charges incurred by the General Steam Navigation Company's steamer "Auk," 642 tons net register, on a voyage in May, 1900, out from London to Hamburg, with 1,042 tons general cargo, and home with 985 tons cargo, Hamburg to London (River). See Appendix, 11th Day, No. 2.*)

Then, in the case of the "Falcon," 366 tons net register, on a voyage to Rotterdam she expended at Rotterdam £14 1s. 6d., always bearing in mind this pilotage, and at London £5 6s. 10d.

(*The Witness handed in a Table of the Comparative Official Port Charges incurred by the General Steam Navigation Company's steamer "Falcon," 366 tons net register, on a voyage in May, 1900, out from London to Rotterdam, with 103 tons general cargo, and home with 256 tons general cargo, Rotterdam to London (River). See Appendix 11th Day, No. 3.*)

I have had the labour eliminated from those accounts, because it has only been necessary to give the Commission just the official charges, as to which there can be one charge set against the other.

3424. (*Mr. Ellis.*) In all these cases you assure us that you are comparing like with like?—Yes.

3425. Everything is eliminated in one case that is not in the other case?—Yes, that is so. These are actual accounts of actual voyages of ships with actual cargoes, and they are as far as it is possible, comparing like with like.

3426. You appreciate the point?—Quite. I should regret extremely if I did not do so, because otherwise it would upset the whole of the evidence altogether. My remark only applies to port charges and port charges.

3427. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) And they include light dues?—Yes, they do. Of course, as you are aware, light dues are also charged abroad, but they are charged under a different heading. They are not charged in the name of light dues, but I think, if I recollect rightly, in the name of sanitary dues. On the question of light dues, as you know, a peculiar question arises. Under the Act of 1898 a foreign ship like Sir Thomas Sutherland's, for instance, has a certain hardship, in that, being a foreign-going ship, she has to pay her full light dues, but only the light dues for six voyages in one year. Therefore, it is practically impossible for a Peninsular and Oriental ship on an Australian voyage to get any reduction in her dues, because she hardly makes six voyages in the course of a year, or certainly not many more than six voyages in the course of a year. With regard to the home trade ships, our vessels get a reduction when they have made ten voyages, and of course these ships make many voyages, say, between London and Antwerp. Therefore, in giving the Commissioners our voyage accounts we have allowed for the light dues being charged on the lower scale. I have had a note made at the bottom of the account calling attention to it. We have allowed for the fact that the ship would make her maximum number of voyages and consequently get the benefit of her reduced light dues.

3428. And you have made similar allowances where they ought to be made in the case of the foreign ports?—I have not given any account for foreign ships.

3429. But you have made a similar allowance where it ought to be made in the cases of Rotterdam and Hamburg, and so on?—Yes, quite so. The Antwerp accounts are the official accounts sent in actually from the broker of that particular ship, and, of course, the same reduction is made in the same way. Then I will hand in an account in the case of a French port, Havre, together with a copy of the sworn broker's official statement. It is the case of a vessel called the "Condor," of 434 tons net register. The Havre charges came to £25 14s. 2d. and the London charges came to £5 18s. 2d. There are dock charges included in the Havre voyage.

(*The Witness handed in a Table of the Comparative Official Port Charges incurred by the General Steam Navigation Company's steamer "Condor," 434 tons net register, on a voyage in September, 1900, out from London to Havre, with 246 tons of general cargo, and home with 448 tons of general cargo, Havre to London (River). See Appendix, 11th Day, No. 4.*)

3430. Have you a similar account for London, including dock charges?—No, I have avoided bringing you up any account that would not give you what I consider to be a fair basis to work upon. The traders that work to the upper docks have, we some of us think, very fair and liberal arrangements with the Dock Companies which enable us to go and work in the upper docks—the St. Katharine's Dock and the London Dock—on a satisfactory basis; but the charges that are made to the smaller ships that come to the upper docks are less than the charges made for the larger ships that go into the lower docks. Under the Dock Companies Act, of course, there is not allowed to be any favouritism; but then the circumstances have to be identical. Taking the identical ship with the identical ship, of course the charges are the same, but no charge made to a small ship in the upper docks would be any guide to the Royal Commissioners as to any charges made to the larger ships in the lower docks, and therefore I have not given you that. If a chance ship goes into the upper docks, with a chance cargo, the charges are one thing—they are higher—but if, on the other hand, she comes into the upper docks as a regular trader, paying a certain sum per annum for a berth in the upper docks, the charges are considerably less, and then there is, as we most of us think, a fair and just arrangement made by the dock companies to meet the requirements of these smaller vessels. In point of fact, the upper docks are brought by the dock companies into competition more or less with the wharves in the upper part of the river, for the purpose of getting smaller vessels into those docks.

3431. (*Chairman.*) You told us that the maintenance of Part VII. of the Act of 1894 is a serious question for the river trader?—Yes. That Part VII. of the Act of 1894 is the part of the Act which gives to the merchant the right of obtaining free delivery of his goods when he has lodged on board the steamer the order to receive the goods from the ship, and is prepared to take delivery.

3432. It is a point which does not refer exclusively to the Port of London?—No.

3433. It is of general application?—It is general. It refers to the whole of the United Kingdom. It applies to every port in the kingdom. We venture to think that it would be a very dangerous thing if any step were taken to interfere with the liberty of the merchant to obtain delivery of his goods so long as he complies with the law and is ready to take delivery. Of course, as ship owners, we all like to have the privilege of discharging our cargoes on the quays and sorting them there and delivering them to cart or craft or railway truck, as the case may be. Under the Merchant Shipping Act that is provided for; we are at liberty to do that, but we have to do it at our own expense. On the whole, we think that that is just to the merchant and equally just to the shipowner. If he wants to land his cargo for the purpose of assortment, he ought to bear the expense of it. It has not worked badly up to the present time, and so far as we are concerned in the river we have to do it constantly. When we go into docks, as we very often do to discharge our cargoes for them to be sorted there, it all works remarkably well. In the case of one of the new large vessels with general cargo coming in it becomes a serious matter, though not so serious to the regular trader as it is to the stranger. The regular trader assorts his cargo in his ship, as Sir Thomas Sutherland explained. We do it on a smaller scale. They do it on a larger and better scale. A stranger, no doubt, if he loads a cargo more or less mixed, has great difficulty in delivering his cargo; but I am afraid that is one of the misfortunes of being a stranger; if he got a ship fitted to the trade, and men and officers accustomed to the trade, he would have no greater difficulty than the regular trader has.

3434. Now, with regard to the moorings?—That is a very peculiar point which, no doubt, the Royal Commissioners will have to consider sooner or later. We have moorings spread over the river. There are tiers on the north side of the river and on the south side of the river extending as far down the river as the harbour master thinks well. Some of these moorings are private and some are public. We ask that the Commissioners will be kind enough to look into that matter, or, if they think it is not large enough, probably the new authority, if there is a new authority appointed, would take the question up with a view to these moorings, which are really a public facility, being dealt with as they should be as a public facility. Private persons ought not to be allowed to have the control of the moorings and to make charges more or less regular.

See 7544—5

3435. Is there always a charge made for moorings?—Yes, there is.

3436. By whom?—That is not very clear. There is no charge made by the Conservators, but there is a charge made by the proprietor of the moorings, and who the proprietor of the moorings is, is not very clear. He is a most mysterious creature. Sometimes the proprietor is the widow of an individual whose father or grandfather may have held these moorings for many years, but what the right or title is I do not know.

3437. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) The title of a squatter, I suppose?—Probably only the title of a squatter. There is a section in the Conservancy Act which authorises the Conservators to turn them out, but they have to pay compensation for turning them out.

3438. (*Chairman.*) The Conservancy make no charge to you?—For their particular moorings I understand they make no charge, but for the moorings which are held by private individuals there is a charge: whether it be for lifting the chains, or whether it be for the use of the moorings, or why it is made, or the amount charged, is a very doubtful thing. I am afraid traders would tell a very peculiar tale about that.

3439. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Is anybody responsible for the efficiency of the moorings?—I should say not. No doubt in a general sense the Thames Conservancy would be, but I should imagine they do not take any responsibility in the way of supervising them and so on. For their own moorings they do, but for these private moorings I should doubt if they do.

3440. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are these private moorings renewed from time to time by anybody?—I have enever heard of them being renewed. I have heard of them being removed occasionally, but not renewed.

3441. If anybody breaks one who repairs it?—I presume it would be the proprietor, but it is altogether a very mysterious subject. When I was manager of the General Steam Company we controlled our moorings to a large extent. We owned some and rented others, and being very regular traders, we had every possible facility provided for us, and we had no difficulties. But now I am speaking on behalf of a great number of other persons who are strangers, and they undoubtedly do have difficulties, and it is not a satisfactory system as it stands.

3442. (*Chairman.*) As far as you are concerned it is satisfactory?—As far as the General Steam Company is concerned it is, but in ship-owning it is just as necessary for us that our competitors should find things satisfactory as it is for ourselves. We want to consider the trade as a whole; we cannot look upon ourselves by ourselves. Then with regard to lighterage, I presume that will come before the Commission. It is hardly necessary for me to delay you with that.

3443. No?—We think it is necessary that there should be an inclusive authority—an authority of practical persons, who should control the whole of these smaller details of the administration of the port. There is the Waterman's Company; there are the moorings; there is the Thames Conservancy; there is the dredging duty; and there are all those innumerable duties connected with the public highway of the river, which we think it is of the highest importance should be handled as a general subject and in a very efficient way. We think that the authority should be an authority which should command the confidence of the public so that there would be no difficulty in raising sufficient revenue (and we think there ought to be none) for the purpose of dealing efficiently with all these various duties. We suggest that as regards the estuary of the Thames, which undoubtedly does require to be kept in good order and deepened and have the channels properly buoyed and so on, if the port authority was entrusted with that duty the funds for carrying out the work ought to be provided from Imperial sources. I refer to the estuary of the Thames, as distinguished from the port. We do not think it reasonable that the traders should out of their trade earnings, be called upon to provide for a general highway, and, above all, to provide for maintaining a general highway beyond the condition that nature has itself provided. But for the port itself, having regard to the economies of the port, which are really very great, perhaps too great—the port has perhaps been too economically worked up to the present time—we think that the trade is quite good enough to bear its own taxation, and that the shipowners are a sufficiently wealthy body, and the merchants, too, to bear their own expenses. As a matter of public policy, seeing that we have to deal with a competition which is deliberate, so far as the foreigners are concerned, in their determination to do away with all expense possible, we think it is important that the traders themselves should bear their own taxation; that that is really the only effectual way to keep the expenditure down to its proper limits—to get outside mere fads and fancies, and to provide only what is really necessary for the work; and the work really necessary and of a very important character. Then, as to dredging. We strongly urge that the river should be dredged to the utmost depth, within reason, that science will allow. Although we are river traders, dealing with a smaller class of vessels, we consider our livings largely depend upon the big ships; therefore, we are very anxious about the welfare of the big ships, and we do know that big ships are desiring to come into and use the port as a port of call. Therefore, we urge very strongly that, for those particular vessels, the river should be so deepened that they could come up, and if necessary go down at all states of the tide. For that purpose there ought to be a depth of not less than 30 or 31 feet at low water, where it can be given. Then we urge that the port authority ought to provide London with the facilities that we find elsewhere. We have them at Hamburg, we have them at Antwerp, and elsewhere, in the shape of these quays along the banks of the river. At Hamburg there are so-called docks, but there are no dock gates, they are open docks. Probably, in London, docks always will be a necessity for some part of the trade; but in the case of the calling ships, and the new class of trade that is coming up, namely, the ship that comes to-day and discharges 5,000 or 6,000 tons of cargo and then goes on to Liverpool or elsewhere and discharges the balance of her cargo, and loads nothing in the port of London; that class of vessel ought to be encouraged, and provided with accommodation, so that it can come in and go out again and discharge its cargo, and not have to go into the docks at all. We urge that there should be free quays on the river.

3444. Where do you suggest that the embankments and the piers to which you have referred should be placed?—In Long Reach. Long Reach is a reach that has been made by nature almost specially fitted for this very work. It is just above Fiddler's Reach. You have the deepest water, you have the straightest reach, you have a wide waterway, and if that reach were dredged, as it could be, down to a depth of 31 or 32 feet at low water, there is land on either side unoccupied by buildings, and there would be no difficulty, we think, in providing piers where these vessels could come and discharge their cargoes, and where barges could lie on the other side of the piers, protected by the piers, and where there would be no mudding required as in the docks, for there would be no silting; it is a very straight reach, there would be a run of tide which would, generally speaking, keep the channel clear, and you would get good accommodation with the railways on the one side and what is still more valuable, and what we have not got at present, you would get a means of access to London along the south side of the river. At the present moment all our docks, with the exception of the Surrey Docks, which are timber docks, are on the north side of the river. There would be an advantage in getting on to the south side of the river in this way, and we think that by building these piers if they were kept in the hands of the new authority they would be able to work at a very small price, and they would not interfere with a single vested interest. We do not think they would interfere with the docks, except that they would take this new class of shipping; but the docks to provide for the new class of shipping must expend a considerable amount of capital; this outlay would be saved, we hope, and it would not interfere with the wharves above, because the warehousing must always remain in the neighbourhood of the merchants' offices. We think the expenditure would not be extreme.

3445. We take it that your principal complaint is the sub-division of authority?—That is our great complaint. Our main complaint is the want of dredging.

3446. The suggestion you make is as to abolishing the sub-division of authority?—Distinctly, so far as the river is concerned. We do not in any way support

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this suggestion of a public trust or anything of that sort; we are strongly opposed to it.

3447. You suggest there would be no serious difficulty in the Government or a public authority being authorised to advance to the port authority a moderate amount for capital purposes. I should like you to tell us on what security you suggest such advances would be made?—I suggest that the money in question should be advanced upon the security of the taxation which the public authority would have power to raise, the taxation in question being tonnage dues on the vessels, and no doubt there would be further taxes upon the wharves, the riparian owners, and the docks and lighters, and all traders in effect using the docks, other than the merchants dealing with the goods. Then we ask that the goods which form the cargoes of vessels, both inwards and outwards, should be kept free of taxation.

3448. You are referring, I presume, to the transhipment goods?—I am referring to all goods, whether the goods are landed at the docks for the purpose of warehousing or for any purpose whatever. There is at the present moment no tax upon goods, and we urge that they should remain free. I am, of course, well aware that there is a tax on goods at very many ports; but London has been kept free of this taxation up to the present time, and the trade has been worked on that basis, and it would be a very serious upset in principle if there were now to be any suggestion of a tax upon goods. That applies very strongly, no doubt, to the class of goods to which your lordship referred, the transhipment goods. That we should feel most seriously. Then we urge that the expenditure on the port should be limited to what is necessary, subject to the remark that we urge it should be as full and as liberal as could possibly be required. We ask that the taxation should be borne by the traders, and the paramount control of the port should be in the hands of practical commercial people, and not any municipal authority.

3449. Would you suggest that municipal authorities should not be represented?—Clearly they would have to be represented, but it would be a very serious thing we think, if, in a competitive business such as that of the Port of London, there were anybody but the persons who had to deal with and control this competitive business introduced as a paramount authority. There is not a single branch of the business of the Port of London that can be said to be worked on a hard and fast line. Every regular trader has a different system of paying his men, for instance. Labour is a very important item necessarily, and if we had any system whereby strangers came in to control our business, taking labour as a case in point, it would throw the whole thing into really very serious confusion, and possibly something worse. Then we suggest that a large part of the London trade is competitive with the Continent, and consequently a public loan could not possibly be raised, having regard to the nature of the security. We venture very respectfully to press that upon the Commissioners.

3450. What do you mean by a public loan, and why should it not be raised?—Because of the security. Supposing there was a public trust, and a very large sum of money—some millions—was to be raised for the purchase of the docks or the purchase of the wharves, or the purchase of the docks and wharves, or whatever it might be, there would be a question of the security apart from the ordinary rating. The revenue of the port itself is of a very uncertain character, if one may so express it. It is entirely competitive. We cannot lose sight of the fact that Antwerp and Hamburg are at the rail head of the great trunk lines of railway on the Continent; and as far as London is concerned we have to fight for every part of that trade, and to bring it here after the expenditure of great energy. It is possible that in the course of competition the trade might leave London or its competitive business might be shifted to some other centre, perhaps Liverpool or Newcastle or elsewhere, and that being so it would be a very serious thing if the taxation of the port had to be pledged to the public for any advance of funds for the purpose of creating a trust.

3451 Do you suggest that the new authority should have the power of taxing the ships?—Yes, they have that power now, and we suggest that that power should be increased. We think there would be no difficulty if it was a good substantial authority.

3452. We have already gone, I think, into the question of the embankments and piers?—Yes.

3453. Have you anything else you would like to say upon that point?—I think not.

3454. Do you say that the tide is not a great objection?—We speak rather feelingly upon that point because so many of our ships are loaded and discharged in the river. The suggestion has been made that it would be a very serious difficulty to discharge these large vessels into craft in a tide-way; but in practice we do not find that is so. We have to work in the tide-way in the Upper Pool, where our barges are right out in the strength of a three-knot tide, and we have not the least difficulty; on the contrary, it is rather an assistance to us than otherwise, because the tide enables us to work the barges easily.

3455. Your opinion is that the course you suggest would do away with the evil of the crowd of barges?—It would relieve everything all round. It would do away with the crowd of barges in the docks; it would avoid what is now a serious congestion in the way of the dock entrance. We have to deal with these large vessels—it is a problem we have to face in London—required rapid and economical handling, and if we have to deal with large quantities of goods, it is essential that the ships should be discharged, not on to quays at all, if it can be helped, but into craft at once, so as to economise quay space for the work.

3456. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With regard to what you were saying just now as to there being no tax on goods, do you consider that warehousing charges are not in the nature of taxes on goods, such as dock charges would be?—Clearly, they are an expense upon goods, but I do not think you can put warehousing charges on a level with taxation, because the warehousing charges depend upon matters of contract between the warehouse keepers and the merchants.

3457. Do you consider that the charges on goods now made in the Port of London are all in the nature of warehousing charges and not taxation such as you have described?—I should not call them taxation such as I have described. I do not regard warehousing charges as taxation. They are an expense of course.

3458. Are they clearly distinguished in their nature as warehousing charges?—Perhaps I do not make myself quite clear. The only practical suggestion appears to be that there should be taxation on goods in the docks, and not at the wharves. It would not be possible to levy taxes at the wharves without a very large addition to the administrative powers of somebody.

3459. I am asking the question now because some statements which have been made to us as to the great expense of the Port of London are based upon the amount of certain charges upon goods. I wish to know whether you consider that these charges now made are in the nature of taxation or not?—Certainly not. They are not taxation, they are a question of contract. If the warehousing charges are too high in London I apprehend if there are other ports where lower warehousing charges are incurred, then London must come down.

3460. I think they are not called warehousing charges, they are called dock charges; that is to say, when a ship enters the dock it has to pay so much upon the goods which are landed on the quay. The contention is that they do not get the warehouse accommodation, that they are not exactly warehouse charges, because they are made the moment the goods are landed on the quay, or, at least, the dock companies have power to make the charges then?—Yes, it is perfectly reasonable. They are quay charges. The dock charges that are levied upon the ships are charges for the ships to go into the dock or basin. They get the use of the cut that has been made by the dock authority, which holds the water.

3461. When you speak of the port authority making charges upon the ship, it has nothing whatever to do with ships going into the docks?—No; I simply mean that it should be like the tonnage dues which are now levied by the Thams Conservancy on all ships entering the Port of London; but which, no doubt, would have to be considerably increased.

3462. And you think the trade can bear the increase?—Certainly.

3463. In spite of all these statements which are made about the expense of the Port of London?—Speaking of shipowners at the present time, a shipowner, I venture to think, has not to pay excessive charges in the Port of London. Those charges of the Thames Conservators might very well bear addition if we are to derive additional facilities and accommodation. There is plenty of room in the Thames to give us both better water and better moorings.

3464. The statement has been made to us, I think, that it is practically impossible for shipowners to avoid giving their goods into lighters, instead of landing them on the quay. I should like, with reference to that, to refer you to your bill of lading, and ask if the shipowner has the option to put goods into lighters, or land them on the quay?—Certainly, we have that power; it is only a question of expense.

3465. Certain charges would be made upon the landing?—Clearly. The quay charges, to which you have just been referring, as distinguished from the warehouse charges, would then be incurred by the shipowner when the goods are put upon the quay. Someone has to pay the quay charge, which is probably about 1s. 6d. a ton. That quay charge, if the goods are put there at the shipowner's request, is borne by the shipowner. If, on the other hand, they are put there at the request of the merchant, or through any failure on the part of the merchant, or by reason of his not applying for his goods at the particular time under the terms of the Act, the charge is borne by the merchant.

3466. So that if the shipowner chooses to exercise his option, and land his goods, he could easily make a charge for freight to recoup himself?—You say "easily"; it is a little difficult to agree to that; it becomes a question of competition.

3467. Is not that what is done at other ports where the goods, as a matter of course, are almost always landed. The shipowner, in that case, knowing that that expense has to be incurred, must necessarily recoup himself in the freight, so as to equalise the conditions with any other port where that is not done?—Yes, that is so; but on the Continent you have some extraordinary customs. Although the goods are landed, particularly in the French ports, they remain at the responsibility of the shipowner for days after they are landed, and he incurs those charges. For instance, at Havre and many French ports we used to have to erect tents, and discharge our goods into those tents, and to leave them there for three or four or five days, until the merchant took them away from the ship's side. During the whole of that time they were at our responsibility and our expense.

3468. In your opinion the question as between putting the goods into lighters and landing them on the quay in London is very much a matter of arrangement in the trade?—Certainly; it is a question of contract.

3469. And hardly a question for legislation or for regulation?—We respectfully submit not. We do not think it is. We think it is purely a question of contract.

3470. Then with regard to the comparison between London and Hamburg, Antwerp, and other ports, I understand that it relates mainly to short voyages, and it would not apply to ships like those of the P. and O. Company and other large ships?—Quite so. It does not apply to any ship that has to trade to and from the London Docks.

3471. And the difference arises very much from the means you have of escaping the pilotage charge which the big ship has to pay?—It does, and one other thing, too. We have, to avoid docking, built for ourselves these wharves, and we have fitted our ships with this crane power and so on, which are facilities which small vessels carry about with them, but which the large vessels find in the docks, and consequently could not very well work without. But in testing the expenses it is fair that I should point out that we have all this capital outlay for these cranes and these wharves, as to which no charge appears in these accounts, so that a certain sum has to be considered with regard to that.

3472. But still there are no official port charges in connection with that?—No.

3473. (*Rear-Admiral Hext*). Would you exempt all goods from paying any taxation in London when in almost every other port in the Empire such dues are charged?—They never have been charged in the Port of London, and it would be a very serious thing to do it now, largely for the reason that London is a place where we land cargo more than take cargo away. It is a receiving port; and the goods are of exceptional value. There is no port in the world where cargo of such freight-paying value and such intrinsic value is delivered in such quantities and so regularly, and we think it would be a very serious thing indeed, having regard to that cargo and the transhipment cargo outward, and the competitive nature of the trade as a rule, if anything were done which would so seriously alter the working of the port.

3474. (*Mr. Peel.*) You used an expression just now: "The upper docks." What do you include under that?—The St. Katharine's Dock and the London Dock.

3475. You do not go down further than that?—No.

3476. Now, one question about these moorings. Do the Conservancy put in any special conditions when it gives a grant for fresh moorings as regards supervision or otherwise?—There has been no grant, I think you will find, of late years for fresh moorings at all. The Conservancy lay down their own. These moorings that we have been talking about are ancient possessions going back a very long time ago, before the Conservancy was brought into operation at all.

3477. And they have no restriction on them whatever as regards being looked after or any kind of restriction on their use?—The Conservancy really does not deal with them; or, at any rate, I think not. I should prefer the Conservancy to answer that question for themselves, but our experience is that as the ships come up they are told off by a waterman who is looking after these moorings, and he makes the most money he can.

3478. Then you were telling us about what this public trust ought to do if it were formed, and you said you thought it ought to be confined to the dredging of the river, and making channels?—I think that it should be confined to a public authority with the public duties relating to a public highway.

3479. But at the same time you advocated free quays along a particular reach?—Yes.

3480. Do you suggest that they should be built by this public authority?—I do. I should like to see it myself. I think it is a great pity that it was not done years ago when the Port of London was made.

3481. Have you considered what the effect of these free quays would be on the wharves and on the docks of London?—Very carefully, and that is one reason why I should like to see it in the hands of a public authority. Assuming that there is no warehousing—and of course there would be no warehousing there—it would not interfere with the wharves up above, and I am perfectly sure that the dock companies would provide accommodation which will always be demanded by a large class of the vessels that could not go to these free quays at all. What I have sought to point out is that the real competition between London and the Continent is the cost of dock dues to these foreign going vessels. The rest of the ships must come to the Port of London. The Port of London is good enough to keep the trade here, and always will keep it here, but there is a large trade now growing up which demands accommodation; this the Barry Commission inquired into carefully and proved up to the hilt. It is growing every day; it is to that trade that we have to look; and it is for that trade that the new authority ought to cater.

3482. You told us that the business was a competitive business, so that if a large sum of money was raised on the security of the charges of the Port of London, which would be necessary, it might be necessary to have some further security?—Yes.

3483. And that further security could only be the rates?—It could only be the rates.

3484. In that case the municipal authorities would have to be largely represented on any such trust?—Undoubtedly, and that is why we say that there should be no trust at all; that it should be an authority dealing with the public highway only, and the expenditure in connection with that authority could be met by the existing taxation and such additions to that taxation as the traders could bear.

3485. But you suggested the formation of these free quays?—That would be a small matter comparatively. We believe that an expenditure of £1,000,000 or thereabouts would be amply sufficient to provide both sides of Long Reach with as much quay accommodation as would be required.

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3486. (*Mr. Ellis.*) How does the Port of London compare with other ports as regards its natural facilities or difficulties?—It has many advantages. If you take the Scheldt you have a tortuous, fast-flowing river with plenty of water, but in the winter time much heavy ice. At Hamburg in the Elbe you have a river very long, with severe shallows, and in the winter time, for months sometimes, ice so heavy that it frequently happens—in my experience it has often happened—that the whole of the lightships have been swept away, and we have had to navigate the Elbe for a month or six weeks at a time, 70 miles of it, with ice blocks 6ft. thick, and without a lightship throughout the whole of it. In London we have nothing of that sort. We have, of course, some ice, but no ice of a character such as that. We never have our lightships swept away. With the exception of this serious difficulty of fog that I have referred to——

3487. I do not think you have referred to it; is that increasing?—No. It did increase until the last few years. In view of my evidence I have made careful inquiry about it, and the answer I have got is that the smoke itself has increased, but the wind has not prevailed in the same direction during the last two or three years, strange to say; and while up to within four or five years ago sometimes the ships have been delayed four or five days in getting up the river, that has not occurred within the last two or three years.

3488. Although the smoke has increased?—Yes, and it is simply owing to the direction of the wind.

3489. That is natural?—Yes, it is natural clearly, but the smoke is there, and it is a very cruel thing that it should be allowed to be.

3490. Why do you use those words "cruel" and "allowed"?—Because we think that through the county authority or some authority, or if there was a sufficiently strong river authority, pressure should be brought to bear to compel the cement manufacturers to keep their smoke within limits.

3491. You think that in the interests of the port, and the trade of London through its port, there should be some controlling authority as regards the volume of smoke emitted from factories and other works on the banks of the river?—Certainly.

3492. You think it impedes navigation to a certain extent?—Yes; the losses are most serious. The company of which I was manager have lost certainly half a dozen steamers within my experience of 20 years.

3493. You mean the steamers have been wrecked?—Yes, run down or been in collisions. The white vapour has a most curious effect, and other people will tell you the same thing. It is as dense as a fog. You have a perfectly clear atmospher, and suddenly you come into a perfect curtain of fog before you know where you are.

3494. Has your association made any representation to any authority about it?—Yes, and personally I have made many.

3495. To whom?—Verbally, to the Thames Conservancy, and also to the Trinity House.

3496. Have you ever written?—I cannot tax my memory.

3497. Then, although you have lost a number of ships, you have not thought it worth while to write a letter?—I do not think you ought to put it as high as that. We are not alone, and it has been accepted there is no authority.

3498. I am asking you about yourselves. Has your association ever made any written communication to any authority about this smoke?—I should hardly think so, because the answer has been, "We have no authority, and can do nothing." That is the verbal answer that we have always received.

3499. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you use Welsh coal in all your steamers?—No, north country.

3500. With regard to Sir Thomas Sutherland's evidence, you do not, I suppose, traverse his figures at all?—Certainly not.

3501. Therefore, so far as his evidence goes, which is directed to ships like the P. and O. ships, going to discharge part of their cargoes, or take in part of their cargoes, at Antwerp, the figures would be all right?—I have no doubt at all.

3502. And the broad result is that they would pay about six times as much in London as at Antwerp?—If you include the £91 for light dues.

3503. If you include the items that Sir Thomas Sutherland gives?—Yes.

3504. Therefore that must be a very serious question when the transhipping of cargoes from ocean-going ships destined for the Continent is considered?—If it comes in an ocean-going ship, yes.

3505. I mean, suppose an ocean-going ship has goods consigned to the Continent, and she has the alternative of taking those goods to Antwerp or bringing those goods to London, and then sending them by a coasting steamer to Antwerp, she has to pay six times the amount of money if she adopts the alternative of coming to London in the first instance?—Quite so, and that is why we advocate these free quays.

3506. We will come to the free quays afterwards. But still it is the fact, is it not, that at the present moment the ocean-going ship has to bear six times the amount of initial expense if she elects to come to London and send her cargo forward by coasting vessels?—Yes; I think you must put it in that way.

3507. That, of course, does not apply to your vessels, which are strictly vessels making transit backwards and forwards to the Continent; but it does apply not only to Sir Thomas Sutherland's vessels, but to all the large ocean-going vessels, such as the British India Company's?—Yes.

3508. And the vessels of all those very large companies for whom Sir Thomas Sutherland was speaking?—Certainly.

3509. Then if your idea is that the cost of any improvements should be borne entirely by the ships using the Port of London, Sir Thomas Sutherland and his friends would have to pay still more?—I think it would all be raised by tonnage dues.

3510. But Sir Thomas Sutherland would still have to pay more that he does now?—Yes. The two descriptions of shipowners pay about half each. The £52,000 that is now raised by the Thames Conservancy is equally borne by the ocean-trader and the short trader

3511. But as compared with Antwerp Sir Thomas Sutherland would have to pay still more than the six times that we have been talking about?—Yes. The £25 Conservancy dues that he refers to in Question 2009 would probably be doubled.

3512. Therefore the proportion would be still greater for London as compared with Antwerp?—Certainly.

3513. Then you used the word "estuary." You said that the port authority should do all the works necessary in the estuary of the Thames. I do not know whether you mean the estuary, or the whole way up to the docks?—We think it is essential that it should be done the whole way up to the docks. But so far as the estuary is concerned—I mean the part of the river beyond the port which has to be dredged—we think that the part of the expense incurred in the neighbourhood of the Medway should be borne by the Imperial authority.

3514. Where do you mean the estuary to begin? Do you mean Yantlet Creek?—No, below that. We should rather urge upon the Commission that it should go from the Reculvers, which is below the Medway.

3515. Do you mean that the Imperial taxation should bear the cost of anything seaward of the Reculvers?—No, seaward of Yantlet Creek.

3516. The present limit of the Thames Conservancy for some of its duties?—Yes.

3517. You think that all the work of deepening and improving the river above that should be done by some port authority which would have the right to tax shipping to meet the expense of those improvements, and that there should be no public trust to absorb the docks?—Yes.

3518. Your view is that there should be no absorption of the docks by any public trust?—Certainly.

3519. Then I was going to ask you what I think Mr. Peel has already asked you, that is, whether you have considered that if the river authority were to build piers, and construct quays, as you suggest, you would have the state of things of the public authority competing with the docks?—I do not think you would. You would find, I think, that the quays in question would not in effect compete with the docks; that the

ships which would use the quays are just these very ships which have to be brought to the Port of London, and about which we have been speaking. If they come to the docks they have to incur these dock charges which they do not incur at Antwerp, and then you get this violent difference between London charges and Antwerp charges, which it is vital should be met somehow if we are going to do any good at all; and the only way to meet it apparently, with due regard to the interests of all parties, is to provide these free quays.

3520. Then you said the course suggested would be to relieve the dock companies of the growing evil of the crowd of barges?—Yes.

3521. How could it?—They get nothing out of the barges at the present time.

3522. They get the ships?—Yes. They get the dock charges of the vessels going into the docks; but it is said the ships do not come here because of the competition which we say keeps them away.

3523. If you are going to relieve the crowd of barges, you will relieve the crowd of barges by taking the ships out of the docks?—The ships are not in the docks at the present moment. It is suggested that they cannot go because of these heavy port charges.

3524. There is a crowd of barges, of which everybody complains?—Yes.

3525. You say that that crowd would be relieved by the public authority doing what you suggest. Then I point out that it could only be relieved by taking the ships away, and that is competition?—I do not think that is what I desire to convey. To start with, the vessels that would come in would discharge their cargoes on to these quays, and would go away; they would not incur any dock charges; they do not come to the dock now, but if they would have come to the dock, of course, the dock companies would lose those charges, and to that extent there would be that competition.

3526. They either relieve the congestion, or they do not. If they relieve the congestion they could only relieve it by taking the ships out of the docks. I think that must be so when you come to think of it?—The suggestion is that London is at a disadvantage with the Continental ports and trade is driven away. We are tied to this Port of London. These short traders have enormous sums invested in freehold properties, and wharves, etc., and they are tied to the Port of London, so that our suggestion is for the general good. It is vital something should be done.

3527. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) But still, unless it creates a new traffic, it will not relieve the congestion?—It will take away a small part of the traffic. With regard to the import traffic to the dock, that may be so. Now, my Lord, may I add that my Association have passed a resolution conveying exactly the principles that I have given evidence upon, which I ought to hand in.

The following resolution was handed in:—

"Resolved it is the opinion of this meeting of shipowners, representing the short sea trades, employing over one-half the steam tonnage entered and cleared through the Port of London, that:—

1. It is desirable a central authority should be formed to take over the control and administration of the Port of London, such authority to have power to borrow public money with a view to extending, improving, and adding to the facilities of the port.
2. It would be disastrous to apply any part of the funds thus raised to assist or purchase any of the existing docks or wharves, or other of the trading corporations of the port.
3. The success of the Port of London has arisen from and depends upon the maintenance, development, and free and unrestrained use of its waterways. Taxation should be limited to the maintenance and development of such waterways.
4. The existing docks (the Surrey Commercial Docks only excepted, which latter are of exceptional value for the timber ponds they include) are to some extent out of date, as is the system of closed docks.

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5. To bring the docks up to date and available for future requirements and possibilities would probably involve, in addition to the purchase money, heavy outlay for the deepening of dock-sills and dock-basins, the underpinning and rebuilding of dock-quay walls, and superstructures and railway and quay extensions. Such expenditure would, we think, with the purchase money of the old docks, exceed the cost of new docks, to say nothing of the loss of time and the fact that when completed these docks would not be equal to modern requirements.
6. From London Bridge down to Woolwich private enterprise has during a long series of years to a large extent embanked both sides of the river with quay walls, and built thereon warehouses and quays, which have developed to a large extent the trade of London by water. Ships using these wharves pay no dock dues, and can time their arrivals and departures to suit markets and their own convenience.
7. This meeting is of opinion that the new authority should in the main expend its funds, and the money to be borrowed from the public.
   (a) In broadening the channel and deepening the bed of the river where such works can efficiently and satisfactorily be performed.
   (b) In embanking the sides of the river and erecting quay walls and piers thereat, and providing deep water berths for steamers of the largest tonnage, which will enable them to avoid the delays consequent upon docking and undocking, and to load and discharge their cargoes with the greatest rapidity and the least expense, and by saving dock dues be thus prepared to pay additional tonnage dues to the port authority, and thus find the funds to meet the necessary charges in respect of the works in question.
8. The barging system is a necessity to the port, and ought not to be hindered by taxation of any kind, beyond what is fair and reasonable in connection with the expenditure of the controlling authority. In the opinion of this meeting it is necessary that the bargeowners should remain free of taxation on entering the docks or using the public quays in the port. It is urgently necessary that the system which requires the exclusive employment of licensed lightermen should be amended.
9. This meeting is further of opinion that it is of great importance to the merchants and traders of the Port of London, that Part 7 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, should be maintained.
10. It is essential in the national interests and in the interests of the Port of London, as the largest transhipping centre in the United Kingdom, that the taxation of the port should be kept to the lowest possible figure, having regard to the competition of Continental ports, and that anything in the nature of taxation on goods or a substantial tax on lighters would be detrimental to the port.
11. Any outlay on capital account should be so applied as that the works undertaken may earn the interest thereon, and be so planned as to create an inducement to strangers to send their ships to the port, and so bring new trade.
12. That these resolutions be sealed, and Mr. Cattarns be requested to present the same to the Royal Commission, and support them by evidence."

Mr. James Greig called and examined.

Mr. J. Greig

3528. (*Chairman.*) You are managing director of the Free Trade Wharf Company, Limited?—Yes.

3529. Will you tell us what is the accommodation at your wharf?—At this wharf we accommodate four lines of coasting steamers, viz.: The Tyne Steam Shipping Company, Limited, trading to Newcastle; the Tees Union Shipping Company, Limited, trading to the Tees; the Little Western Steamship Company, trading to Torquay, Penzance, Bristol, and Newport; the Poole Shipping Company, trading to Cowes and Poole.

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3530. Where is the Free Trade Wharf?—At Ratcliffe, just below the main entrance to the London Dock.

3531. Are you giving your evidence at the request of the Short Sea Traders' Association?—Yes.

3532. Now tell us about the Association?—The members of this Association are principally engaged in trades from London along the coast, and also in voyages to the Continent. They number 29 firms. Some of its members use the docks for their ships, but for the most part they use the river, some ships working wholly in tiers, others partly unload and load in tiers, and partly at the wharves to suit the cargoes. The inward cargo of two lines for which we are agents amounted in 1899 to 153,133 tons; of this 46 per cent. was transhipped to export ships in docks by barge. The outward cargo of those two lines was 65,325 tons, of which 24 per cent. was transhipped from import ships in dock by barge. I would particularly call attention to the goods, both export and import, that are transhipped direct by lighter from and to the coaster and the export and import ships in the docks. The quantity of goods thus dealt with in the course of the year is very heavy indeed, much heavier in some trades than ours, and it forms a very important part of the trade of the coaster, and also of the trade of the ocean-going steamers. We act as feeders to the ocean-going ships for outward cargo, which is so gravely important to London. There have been no dues or charges hitherto imposed on transhipment goods in London, and it is essential that transhipment goods should continue to be free of any port charges, because the trade has to be brought to London, and can only be secured at a minimum freight, which, in fact, has to cover agency and shipping charges in London. We have very great difficulty in retaining the carriage of these goods to London, and any additional charges would seriously injure the trade. In Middlesbrough we find a great tendency for ocean-going ships to go to Middlesbrough to take in their dead-weight cargo there, and come on to London to fill up with their measurement goods. We also find at Middlesbrough there is a great tendency for goods to be shipped direct to the Continental ports for transhipment there, notably to the German lines, and the same thing prevails in all the North-East British ports, from Aberdeen southwards; and I say without hesitation any imposition of charges in London, either on the barges conveying these goods or on the goods themselves, will tend to drive them away from London. There are excellent services of steamers from Leith to Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp catering for export shipment goods and drawing them away from London. Our Association, in considering the future of the port, had in view the desirability of avoiding charges on transhipment goods and also the keeping of the expenditure as low as possible consistent with efficiency, and they adopted the resolution which our chairman—Mr. Cattarns—has brought before you. The scheme of deep-water quays we think eminently desirable and practicable for the accommodation of deep drafted ships, without the very great expense of making new docks for their accommodation. These quays would relieve the docks greatly, and being public would, at a minimum cost to the ship, give a splendid facility to secure dispatch, and for "calling ships" or for berth ships intending to load in the docks there would be a great advantage to the port. Neither rise nor fall of tide, nor the tide-way itself, would injuriously affect the working of these quays. Speaking individually, my experience of working ships at tiers and at wharves in the river leads me to think that considerable accommodation could be found for vessels to discharge in the river lower down, say, below Blackwall, and the river authorities should, I think, turn their attention to this point at once. Ships are moored in the upper reaches of the river in tiers at places most suitable and convenient for them to lie for the discharge of their cargoes and also for loading cargoes. I complain of the system that now prevails whereby moorings in the river are managed by a body of men who are termed "under watermen." They control groups of tiers, and make charges for the use of them, which I think is inequitable. The Conservancy puts down the ground moorings, and they also attach the first chain to these ground moorings, which is a stone or a screw. I understand that these ground moorings and the first chain are the property of the Conservancy, but the upper chains that are attached to the first mooring chain are in some cases the property of these under watermen, and in other cases they are the property of the steamers that as a rule use the tier. These under watermen are in attendance on the ships' arrival to give them the chains, and when the ships go away, to receive the chains and get them ready for the next arrival. They make a charge for the use of these chains, collecting it themselves from the various vessels. There is no fixed charge for this. Some vessels even of small dimensions—say 200 to 300 tons—pay 25s. for the ostensible use of the chains; others, again, steamers of 1,000 tons, have been known to pay 15s. There is no regular charge, and this irregularity often gives rise to disputes. The Secretary of the Thames Conservancy at Question 6 said there was no charge for these moorings. He was mistaken as to this, as these charges make a considerable tax.

See 5628.

See 7544—5.

3533. The Secretary said the Conservancy made no charge, I think?—Possibly so, but he gave to the public the impression that there was no charge for these moorings. I submit that these moorings should be under the direct control of the Conservancy, and that the charge for moorings should be uniform, and should be paid direct to the Conservancy at the same time as the tonnage dues are paid. Here let me say that the only control that the traffic of the river has, is by the harbour master or his deputy. The area of the Harbour Master's jurisdiction is of great extent, and he cannot be in several places at once, and there is a difficulty in finding him when a blockage arises. Such blockages nearly always take place towards high water, when most of the ships are on the move, and the difficulty has to be left to solve itself without anyone's interference. I think that the services of whoever has charge of the moorings, if a Conservancy servant, could be utilised to overcome this difficulty and to clear any blockage that may temporarily arise, and to see that the navigation of the channel between the tiers and the shore is kept clear for vessels coming out from or going to the various wharves inside the tiers, so that they could get in and out without accident. We make considerable use of the tiers off the wharf for the accommodation of our vessels. The steamers from Middlesbro' discharge wholly in the tier, only coming to the wharf to load their outward goods. During the late strike of lightermen we have for greater convenience unloaded 16 of our Tees Union steamers in the docks, so that we have recent experience of unloading into lighters in the docks as well as of unloading in the tiers, and we certainly prefer unloading in the tiers, because it is handier for the moving of barges. The tide assists us in moving the barges to and from the ships as well as swinging them when necessity requires. The still waters of the docks and the proximity of other barges and vessels do not give us this facility. I may mention that we have frequently unloaded ex ship into craft 1,000 tons of iron in 12 hours entirely with ship's gear. There are suitable places for more tiers in the river, notably below Blackwall, and the accommodation of the port could be considerably increased by creating tiers there. For ships able to use the tiers and wharves London is a cheap port, there being only the tonnage dues and moorings to be paid for. I complain that I have never known the Conservancy to do any dredging off our section of the river, at least for the last 17 years.

3534. What do you call your section of the river?—Right opposite the wharf. The tendency of ships in the coasting trade is to get larger, and our present ships, when moored in the tier, take the ground at low water. I need not mention that this is detrimental, and I think that sufficient water should be made at the tiers for them to always lie afloat. At one of the tiers off this wharf—Bell Wharf Tier—at neap tide, the soundings were at high water 24ft. and 26ft., at low water 14ft. and 16ft. The steamers of the Tees Union Shipping Company when loaded draw 18ft. 6in. and 18ft. respectively, they lie in Bell Wharf Tier, so that at low water the largest would sue about 4ft. on neap tides, and, of course, more spring tides. In Bell Wharf Tier at spring tides there is high water 33ft. and 35ft., and low water 12ft. and 15ft. In the summer when the excursion traffic is on the river a serious state of things exists. At the young flood and before the steamer's stern is afloat the swell from the excursion steamer causes the bow of the moored steamer to yaw about and to grind on her heel likely to tear out her stern post. In October, 1896, the attention of the Conservancy was called to this condition of things, but nothing was done.

See 7547.

3535. Was the attention of the Conservancy called to it by your association?—The Wharfingers called attention to it. I think that the privileges of the licensed lightermen to exclusively work barges should be abolished, and any competent man should be allowed to navigate a barge, the same as on any of the

rivers in the provinces, or the same as the masters and mates of the sailing barges trading to the mouth of the Thames. The latter have no exclusive privileges, and yet are most trustworthy. Our wharf men load and unload barges, but although the ships are moored in the tier some 400ft. from the wharf, we must have a licensed man to move the barges to and from the ships. Our men are not allowed to do it. To move barges in any of the docks no licensed lighterman is required. We strongly support the resolution this association has adopted in favour of a river authority being formed, and complain that, as large taxpayers, we river traders are practically unrepresented on the Thames Conservancy Board, and we also urge that greater attention should be paid to dredging the channels.

See 3527

3536. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Is that the resolution that was put in by Mr. Cattarns?—Yes. This new central authority, the formation of which is recommended in the resolution of our association, would necessarily require money for broadening the channel and deepening the bed of the river, and for the erection of quay walls and piers and for their equipment. This money could be raised on the security of the port dues of London, but inasmuch as the ships using the quays and piers, which would be public, would pay for that accommodation, the quays would be self-supporting. Conservancy tonnage dues and rent charges, as far as they would go, would be available for the interest and redemption of the money expended on broadening the channel, deepening the bed of the river, and were more required no doubt further dues could be levied on shipping. Our Association is

See 5628.

clearly of opinion that it would be detrimental to the Port for any dues to be placed on transhipment goods or on barges carrying them. My company acquired their wharf some 17 years ago, primarily to accommodate the coasting trades with which they were connected, but they found a wharfing and warehousing trade in imported goods being done by their predecessors, and they acquired this part of the business by purchase. They endeavoured to accommodate that part of the trade still further, spending about £20,000 upon it during the last ten years. They did this knowing and relying on that statutory right that merchants and wharfingers have of free delivery of goods from vessels in the river and in the docks, the same as all the other London wharfingers both public and private have done for years past. We therefore, trust that in simple justice to us and to our fellow wharfingers and warehouse-keepers no charge will be put upon goods imported or upon the lighters removing these goods, or at least that the dock companies will be put on an equality with the wharfingers. Here I would point out that for the purpose of warehousing and economically distributing goods, the Tilbury Docks, the Royal Albert Docks, and even the Victoria Docks are inconveniently distant from London as compared with the St. Katharine Docks and the London Docks and the wharves in the upper portion of the river. For years past the dock companies have been compelled to acknowledge this, and have been quoting rates for certain classes of goods which include removal of the goods by barge from the lower docks to the St. Katharine Docks or London Docks, and warehousing them there, and in that respect the upper docks and their warehouses have been used much in the same way as the public wharves on the river. It will be noted as a rule that some wharfingers make a speciality of some particular class of goods, as, for instance, at some wharves tea is a speciality, at others coffee, and at others drugs. The importers of these commodities prefer that their goods should be warehoused at one place and not left at the different docks at which the import vessel arrives. I would point out that inland warehouses are not so convenient or economical for the distribution of goods as wharves or waterside warehouses, because a great quantity of goods have to be shipped coastwise and to the continental steamers, and it is cheaper to send these from the wharves by barge. If they lay at an inland warehouse cartage would be incurred as well as wharf charges or dock charges. In common with other wharfingers, we have to complain of the very great delay in delivery of goods that sometimes occurs from import ships to barges in the docks. Might I mention that if the river is put under the control of a new authority this authority should be fully empowered to take charge and have entire control over the stairs and over the approaches leading from the shore to the river? As it is at present there are so many authorities connected with these stairs and approaches that it is very difficult indeed for any improvement to be carried out. When we entered into possession of our premises 17 years ago we had to do a considerable amount of dredging ourselves, of course, with the consent of the Conservancy, and we succeeded in making a depth of water of from 25ft. to 29ft. at high water, giving about 10ft. at low water neaps in the ship's berth. We also wished to extend the length of our frontage so as to accommodate a longer steamer in a second berth; some public stairs stood in the way, and we saw the desirability was very great of shifting them some 20ft. lower down the river; but before this could be done we had to get the consent of the following authorities, viz.: the Vestry, the District Board of Works, the Magistrates in Petty Sessions, the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, the Watermen's Company, and the Conservancy, all of which took time and money. I point this out because I think it desirable that the new authority should have the power within themselves to effect such an alteration as we were desirous of making without having to submit the matter to all these different bodies.

See 3572.

See 7548.

3537. (*Chairman.*) I take it you are inclined to agree with the evidence which has already been given, that the navigation of barges on the river should be thrown open entirely?—Yes.

3538. You mentioned several times a river authority. Have you any suggestions to make as to its composition?—There ought to be representation of the barge owners and of shipowners, especially the coasting shipowners. That is to say, the coasting shipowners should have a proper representation upon it, because they use the river so frequently as compared with ocean-going ships. For instance, some of our vessels come into the river once a week for 50 weeks in the year.

3539. You say you are practically unrepresented on the Thames Conservancy. Is that literally true?—It is literally true. There is a long and difficult mode of registration before we can get a voice in it, and the voice is so small that the little shipowners have no representation.

3540. But you have a voice?—We have in a certain sense.

3541. Can you give the particulars of how you are represented?—It is in the Thames Conservancy Act, but I have not got it to my hand.

3542. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) About how large do the barges run that you propose should be managed by unlicensed lightermen?—All flat-bottomed barges; all barges trading in the river.

3543. What tonnage do they run to?—They run from 30 tons up to 200 tons.

3544. Would not danger arise from unlicensed persons navigating them?—No, I do not consider so. There is no more danger than in a carman driving in the streets of London.

3545. You put that as equally easy?—May I add that the owners of the barges would see that competent men were employed, because the barges are entirely at the risk of the owners, both as regards damage to the barges and damage that they do to other vessels.

3546. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You said you think it is of great importance that no charge should be put upon goods imported or upon lighters removing these goods, or, at least, that the dock companies should be put on an equality with the wharfingers. Do you mean that supposing a charge were put upon goods removed by lighters to private warehouses in the Thames, a similar charge should be put upon goods removed to the warehouses belonging to the dock companies?—Yes.

3547. You urge that the Dock Companies are warehouse owners, and therefore competitive with private warehouse owners?—To a certain extent they are.

3548. That there are, as it were, two functions of the dock?—Yes.

3549. One is to maintain the waterways, docks, and quays for transhipment, and the other for warehousing goods?—Yes.

3550. And *quâ* warehousing goods, they are directly competitive with private warehouses?—Yes.

3551. So that if anything were done to put any charge upon goods going to the private warehouses, there should be a similar charge put upon goods going to the Dock's warehouses?—That is my opinion.

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3552. So that both should be on an equal footing?—Yes.

3553. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have your Association made any complaint with regard to the grievances about mooring, the irregularity of charges, and so on?—Frequent complaint has been made. I cannot call to mind that I have actually made one lately, but there have been frequent complaints made to the Harbour Master.

3554. Official complaints on behalf of your Association?—Yes.

3555. Your Association has written letters?—Not the Association. That has not been brought by me before the Association. I may have done so as representing the shipping companies.

3556. But, at all events, I may take it from you that complaints have been made by you as a trader?—It is a long while ago if I have written about it. It is not lately. We are constantly seeing the Harbour Master, and any grievances that we may have we should tell him.

3557. That is verbal?—Yes.

3558. May I take it that the grievance or difficulty whatever it is, has been rather lessening than otherwise? Or have you been tired of making complaints? Is that it?—It has been lessening, I must say, within the last month or two.

3559. Then with regard to the control of the traffic on the river, are we to take it that your complaint is that the harbour master is physically unable to govern so large an area— that he has insufficient assistance, in fact?—That is so; that is my opinion.

3560. Are the duties well performed, so far as they can be?—So far as they can be they are, but the man cannot be in two places at once. The ships are nearly always moving at the top of the tide; within an hour of high water is when the ships are on the move, and he is wanted elsewhere, as well as at our place.

3561. If he had sufficient assistance of a qualified nature you would be satisfied?—I would be satisfied.

3562. Are you quite satisfied with the powers the harbour master has? Has he sufficient power?—Yes, I think he has. I have never made a request to him without his being able to get it attended to if it was reasonable and within his jurisdiction.

3563. You said something with regard to the excursion traffic on the river?—Yes, in the summer when the excursion traffic is on the river a serious state of things exists. At the young flood, and before the steamer's stern is afloat, the swell from the excursion steamer causes the bow of the moored steamer to yaw about and to grind on her heel like to tear out her stern post.

3564. You said something about making complaint to the Thames Conservancy?—In October, 1896, the attention of the Conservancy was called to this condition of things, but nothing was done.

3565. But what you have just stated was still happening?—Yes.

3566. Have you ever called the attention of the Thames Conservancy to the want of dredging in the river?—Only on that occasion in 1896, when we pointed out that there was a want of water at the tier, and that our ships grounded.

3567. Was that strictly limited to your quay?—It was strictly limited to the tier off the wharves.

3568. It was limited to that which affected yourselves?—Yes.

3569. It was no general complaint with regard to the river?—No.

3570. Was it in writing?—It was in writing, I believe, in 1896.

3571. But nothing since then?—Nothing since then.

3572. You said: "When we entered into possession of our premises 17 years ago we had to do a considerable amount of dredging ourselves, of course with the consent of the Conservancy." Can you give me any idea of what that cost you?—I really could not. See 3536.

3573. Was it tens of thousands of pounds?—Oh, no. I should think it would not run above £700.

3574. Not £1,000?—No.

3575. You gave us the number of authorities you had to consult, all of which, as you say, took time and money. Then you suggest that the new authority should have the power within themselves to effect such an alteration as you were desirous of making without having to submit it to all these different bodies. Do you suggest that the cost of that should be transferred from yourselves to the new authority?—No. I merely say that they would have authority to allow anyone in our position to do it.

3576. You do not wish them to do the work?—No, except at the charge of whoever wishes it to be done.

3577. (*Mr. Peel.*) Mr. Lyttelton asked you a question about the licensing of watermen. I understand that now in the docks unlicensed men can work the barges?—Yes. They can move them in the docks as they please.

3578. It has been suggested that when a certain number of these barges are being towed by a tug the men have very little to do, and therefore you might have an unlicensed man, but you want to throw all the work open, I understand. Would you have all the three different classes of barges under the control of unlicensed men?—Yes.

3579. You would have no kind of qualification demanded from these men?—Except what the masters would desire.

3580. And you would allow them to ply in the river without any qualifications?—With goods; not with passengers.

3581. That applies to all classes of barges, sailing barges and steam barges?—The sailing barges have no licensed men now. It only applies to barges moving within a certain given area of the river—Gravesend upwards.

3582. That you would throw open?—I would throw that open.

3583. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Do you know if the crews of barges trading seaward to the Thames pass any examination?—No.

3584. None whatever?—None whatever.

3585. In case of an accident caused by a barge, or to a barge, am I right in supposing that the barge is liable? For instance, suppose you have cargo, and you are run down; then are you liable to the full amount?—We are liable to the full amount without any restriction. There is no £8 per ton for barges.

3586. Then it is in the interest of the owners of barges to have careful men?—Certainly, the same as with sailing barges.

3587. Then when you talk of the authority, do you mean that this authority should have no control whatever over the docks, but only over the waterway of the Thames?—That was the resolution passed by our Association.

Mr. JOHN GLASS called and examined.

Mr. J. Glass.

3588. (*Chairman.*) You are the manager of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company?—Yes.

3589. Are you prepared to give us some particulars with regard to the company?—Yes.

3590. Apart from the particulars with regard to the company, are there any remarks you would like to make?—None, except that my company think that any scheme providing for the Port of London, unless it deals with the Regent's Canal, would be an unsatisfactory one to them, and, I think, to everybody else. It is a very important factor in dealing with the Port of London. Although it is only a small dock, the tonnage for its area compares very favourably with any of the other dock companies. The total dock tons amounted to nearly a million in the year 1900.

3591. Will you give us, in the first place, the Acts under which the company was formed?—Under the authority of the Act of 52, George III., chapter 195, Regent's Canal Act, 1812, a company was formed for making and maintaining a navigable canal from the Grand Junction Canal, in the parish of Paddington, to the River Thames, in the parish of Limehouse; further powers were obtained from Parliament in 1813, 1816, and 1819; these powers included the right to construct and maintain a basin and channel thereto from the River Thames, so as to admit of the entrance and lying of

ships in the sail basin. These works were completed, and the canal was opened by a public ceremony on 1st August, 1820. The company have, at considerable cost, from time to time (under Parliamentary authority), enlarged, deepened, and improved the dock and canal. I will hand in a schedule of the several Acts of Parliament relative to the undertakings.

(*The Witness handed in a Schedule of the several Acts of Parliament relative to the undertakings of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company. See Appendix, 11th Day, No. 5.*)

3592. Now, will you give us particulars of the works of the company?—The works of the company consist of (1) the Limehouse Dock, which has a water area of 10 acres and about 4 acres of quayage and wharfage, with a ship entrance 350ft. long, 60ft. wide, and sills laid 26ft. below Trinity high-water mark; also an entrance for barges 79ft. long, 14ft. 6in. wide, and sills laid 22ft. below Trinity high-water mark. The dock, which is within and part of the Port of London, is most conveniently situated on the north bank of the River Thames, about half a mile below the Shadwell entrance to the London Docks, one and a-half miles below London Bridge, and one-third of a mile above the Limehouse entrance to the West India Docks, and is close to the Stepney Station of the London and Blackwall Railway, which is reached by trains from Fenchurch Street Station in eight minutes, and trains run to and from this station to all stations on the Great Eastern Railway, and the London, Tilbury and Southend, Thames Haven and London, Woodford and Ongar branches thereof, and also in communication with the trains of the North London Railway Company passing Bow Station. The jetties in the dock are capable of transhipping and weighing with great rapidity and small breakage coal from screw steamers and other vessels into craft for the River Thames and other inland navigations. The cranes and jetties are of modern type and recent construction, the hydraulic and pumping engines are of ample power, and are of approved and economical design. (2) The Regent's Canal, which is navigable for barges of 100 tons burthen, communicates with the Limehouse Dock, and passes through Stepney, Mile End, Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, Islington, St. Pancras, Marylebone, and Paddington, in which last-named parish it communicates with the Grand Junction Canal. The Great Eastern, Great Northern, Midland, Great Central, and London and North Western Railway Companies have goods termini on the banks of this canal. The canal is equipped with modern pumping appliances to facilitate the passing of traffic and economise the water in times of drought or shortness of water. (3) Hertford Union Canal, which communicates with the Regent's Canal at a point 1½ miles north of the Limehouse Dock, and terminates by a junction with the River Lea, which is navigable for barges of 70 tons burthen to the town of Hertford. (4) The Brent reservoir at Hendon. This reservoir has a storage capacity of 560 million gallons. (5) The Ruislip Reservoir. This reservoir has a storage capacity of 168 million gallons. The capital of the company is: Share capital, £1,358,100; debenture stock and loans, £536,336; making a total of £1,894,436.

3593. With regard to the Brent Reservoir at Hendon, and also the Ruislip Reservoir, how do those connect with the Regent's Canal?—By a feeder which brings the water down into what is known as the long level of the canal.

3594. (*Mr. Peel.*) What is the point that connects with the Regent's Canal?—The Brent Reservoir feeder comes in at Willesden. It is not shown on the map; it is really on the territory of the Grand Junction Canal, but it is a dead level from that point to Uxbridge. There is no lock in between.

3595. (*Mr. Ellis.*) It is the old River Brent impounded, I suppose?—Yes.

3596. (*Mr. Peel.*) Where does the Ruislip feed?—The Ruislip is near Uxbridge.

3597. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) In both cases the water finds its way into the Regent's Canal by means of the Grand Junction Canal?—Yes.

3598. (*Chairman:*) Now, will you hand in your statement of the traffic, number of ships, tonnage, gross receipts, and working expenses of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company?—Yes.

(*The Witness handed in a Table showing the traffic, number of ships, tonnage, gross receipts, and working expenses of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company, for eleven years to 31st December, 1900. See Appendix, 11th Day, No. 6.*)

I also hand in an analysis of the canal and dock traffic of the company.

(*The Witness handed in an analysis of the canal and dock traffic of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company. See Appendix, 11th Day, No 7.*)

I would like to point out the importance that this coal traffic is to London. A large portion of our dock traffic comprised in that 65½ per cent. is Welsh and Scotch coal brought to London. I am not sure whether the London people thoroughly appreciate how enormous is the quantity of coal that is brought to London by sea. Unless the facilities granted by the Regent's Canal were kept up the difference to the price of coal in London would be something very considerable.

3599. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) The coal is brought to London by sea?—Yes.

3600. And it finds its destination over your canal?—Yes; this coal is brought from Welsh ports and northern ports. The expense of bringing the coal by rail would shut it out from London.

3601. (*Chairman.*) Have you any further remarks to make as to that table?—No.

3602. Will you now state the dock tonnage rates?—I will hand in a schedule of those rates.

(*The Witness handed in a Schedule of the dock tonnage rates of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company, See Appendix. 11th Day, No. 8.*)

3603. Do you wish to make any observations with regard to that?—No, I do not desire to do so.

3604. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What is the largest ship that you take into your dock?—Between 2,000 and 3,000 tons.

3605. Into the dock itself?—Yes, to discharge in the dock. The coal steamers have increased in size considerably during the last 25 years, and we have been obliged to increase and deepen our dock in consequence.

3606. The barges going into the canal are very small?—They carry up to 100 tons. They are not small.

3607. Do you use any part of the canal for the ships that come into the dock? Do any of them go up the canal any way?—No. You will see in the small map that at the Commercial Road there is a low bridge. The only sea-going vessels that come up the canal are the sailing barges. We have a large number of sailing barges with cement and ballast and similar class of goods, which lower their masts and go as far as to the river, except through the dock?—No.

3608. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Coal barges seem to go up the canal; I see you have 22 per cent.?—Yes. We have very large works on the canal—factories and electric lighting works.

3609. You deliver all along its length?—Yes.

3610. (*Mr. Peel.*) What is the largest size of these coal barges?—100 tons is the largest barge that can pass up the canal.

3611. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have given us the capital of the company. I do not think you have given your revenue and expenditure, have you?—Yes, in the statement of traffic, number of ships, tonnage, gross receipts, working expenses, etc., which has been handed in.

3612. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose it would be fair to say that the canal lives by the dock, and the dock, to some extent, lives by the canal?—Yes, they are very intimately connected.

3613. They ought to be considered together as a whole?—Yes, I think so. You cannot reach the river from the canal without passing through the dock. There is no independent road.

3614. There is no independent access from the canal to the river, except through the dock?—No.

3615. And the bulk of the traffic on the canal comes into the dock?—It does.

3616. And is transhipped there?—Yes.

3617. And *vice versa*?—Yes.

3618. Is there a large amount of traffic in the dock which finds its way to other parts besides the canal?—Yes, on to the Grand Junction Canal.

3619. By cartage?—No, not a great deal.

3620. No considerable amount by cartage?—No.

3621. Is there any considerable amount of traffic which is transhipped in the dock, and then finds its

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way into the Thames, and is distributed by means of the river?—Yes, a good deal. It follows that if a merchant has half a cargo of wood for his wharf on the canal that ship will come into the dock and discharge that portion of the cargo in the canal, and the other will probably go out into the river or to some other wharf on the River Thames.

3622. Does your return give us any proportion between the amount of traffic which is strictly canal traffic and that which is not canal traffic?—I do not think it does.

3623. What I want to know is whether this Limehouse Basin is competitive with other docks?—Only to a small extent.

3624. Its main work is serving the canal?—Yes. In fact, in the wood season we cannot accommodate all the demands that are made upon the dock by people who have canal premises. The Norwegian and Swedish ships arrive generally in gluts, and we cannot take them all in.

3625. Then to that extent it is quite a special trade?—Yes.

3626. And it is not so much competitive with the other docks?—No, except that if the manufacturers who consume this timber on the canal could not get their wood by the canal, they would have to draw it or lighter it from the docks on the other side of the water.

3627. Supposing anybody with a wharf on the canal wanted to bring a barge from one of the other docks with timber up the canal, and therefore to do that passed through the Limehouse Basin, would that barge have to pay dues?—Not dock dues. It would have to pay the same canal charges as if the barge was loaded in the dock.

3628. It would pay canal charges, not dock charges?—It would not pay anything for the dock.

3629. You have a very large amount of barge traffic in the dock, have you not?—Yes. The arrival and discharge of the canal steamers is so rapid that it is absolutely necessary to keep a large number of barges there ready for the steamers when they arrive. Sometimes we get on one tide perhaps three steamers, averaging 1,500 tons apiece. All that has got to be put into barges on one tide, and the vessels go away again. A number of barges is absolutely necessary to carry on the business. We make no charge on these barges; they are a great nuisance, but still it is part of our business, and we have to put up with it and do the best we can.

3630. You do not come here to ask that any charge should be put on the barges?—I am afraid it would not be of any use.

3631. Other dock companies have; I only want to know while you are here whether you support that view or not?—We should like it very much, but I do not think we could ask it. If we charged these barges for coming to fetch the coal, say, from the river, they would not come in, and the steamers would go to the derrick or discharge in the Pool, or go to some other moorings. As it is, we are obliged to charge the ship a mere nominal sum for dock dues. The trade will not stand more. For a steamer of 2,000 or 3,000 tons coming in with coal we only get a guinea; it is a very poor business.

3632. You pay 2½ per cent. on the share capital?—Yes, but we get that in another way. The dock gets the advantage probably of the canal.

3633. The dock you think by itself does not pay so much?—No. The only grievance that I have about the dock is against the local authorities charging us the enormous sum they do for local rates. I feel very strongly about that. I think it affects this question that you are investigating. I notice that the London Dock Company pay something like £100,000 a year for rates. For this tiny dock in two parishes we pay over £4,000 a year for local rates, and we cost them nothing. We provide our own sanitation; that is to say, we have to collect the refuse from the ships; we provide our own light and police, and so on, and yet we have to pay £4,000 a year to these two parishes. There seems to be no principle in assessing dock property. We have fought the authorities and appealed, but there is no rule laid down as to how the dock company shall be assessed. If there were the same principle laid down as there is with railway companies, I think it would be better. £4,000 a year is a substantial sum. We could do a good deal with that money for the advantage of the traders and users of the dock. But there is no principle; they simply value it according to other property in the neighbourhood.

3634. The amount you have put in your schedule for rents is nearly £22,000 a year?—Yes.

3635. Is that for rents of property other than canal property?—It is principally from wharves on the canal—not wharves at the dock, but abutting on the canal.

3636. Where you are landowners?—Yes, we are landowners of all the land round the City Road Basin, for instance.

3637. That amount of rent is very nearly the amount of interest on your capital?—It is, of the fixed interest.

3638. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have given a schedule of the Acts of Parliament. I think you have been in Parliament several times in the last few years?—Yes.

3639. For what powers did you come in 1900?—To consolidate the various Debenture Stocks of the company and to alter the name. In 1896 for power to extend and improve the dock and the lower part of the canal, and to raise the necessary capital for carrying out the works.

3640. Did you ask for any further powers for charging rates of any kind?—No.

3641. Are you in Parliament this year?—No.

3642. Are you satisfied with your Parliamentary position as to powers?—Yes, I think so.

Dr. WILLIAM COLLINGRIDGE, M.A., LL.M., called and examined.

Dr. W. Collingridge M.A., LL.M.

3643. (*Chairman.*) You are the Medical Officer of Health of the Port of London?—I am.

3644. Have you had an opportunity of looking at the terms of the reference to this Commission?—I have.

3645. If you will kindly look at it you will notice that our inquiry is more particularly directed to the interests of the promotion of the trade of the port, and that we are not inquiring into its health. We consider, therefore, that it will be sufficient if you will confine your statement to the position and powers of the Medical Officer for the port?—Would you allow me to say, in the first place, that I am instructed by the Corporation of London, in accordance with your wish, to offer you any possible source of information which is at our disposal; and I would further say that already questions have been asked and answers given as to the advisability of transferring the sanitary authority from the Corporation of London to a possible trust, and also to the Thames Conservancy. That having been already mooted, it is felt advisable that evidence should be given as to the actual value of the work, unless your Lordship is convinced on that point.

3646. You wish to call the attention of the Commission to the work which has been done by the Corporation of London?—That is so, from that point of view.

3647. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence then?—The Corporation of London was legally constituted the Port of London Sanitary Authority in 1872, by the 20th section of the Public Health Act of that year (35 and 36 Victoria, chapter 79), which was as follows:—"The Mayor, Aldermen and Commons of the City of London shall be deemed to be the Sanitary Authority of the Port of London, and shall pay out of their corporate funds all their expenses as such Port Sanitary Authority." The Act also defined the limits of the port to be those of the port, as established for the purposes of the Customs laws, and gave the Local Government Board power, by Provisional Order, to assign to the Port Sanitary Authority any powers, rights, duties, etc., under the Sanitary Acts, or any of them. The present limits of the port are defined by Treasury Minute dated 1st August, 1883, and are set out hereafter. On the 17th September, 1872, the Local Government Board issued an Order assigning certain powers to the Port Sanitary Authority under the Nisance Removal Acts, 1855, 1863, and 1866, and

the Sanitary Act, 1866, together with all the powers, authorities, and duties contained in the last mentioned Act in regard to ships and waters and persons engaged therein, and in regard to providing hospitals for the sick; and also the duty of appointing a legally qualified medical practitioner to be the medical officer of health, and also a competent person to be an inspector of nuisances. The above-mentioned powers were only assigned for the period ending the 25th March, 1873, and the order was annually re-issued without alteration until 1883. The Public Health Act, 1875 (38 and 39 Victoria, chapter 54), repealed the Act of 1872 and all the other above-mentioned Acts, and section 291 re-enacted the section constituting the Corporation the Port of London Sanitary Authority, with similar authority as before to the Local Government Board to assign powers, etc., under the Act, and with a similar provision in regard to the discharge of its expenses by the Corporation out of its corporate funds. The Local Government Board, however, continued to re-issue the original order, giving powers under the repealed Sanitary Acts, but this anomaly was corrected by a clause which the Corporation caused to be inserted in the Diseases Prevention (Metropolis) Act, 1883 (46 and 47 Victoria, chapter 35, section 8), which is as follows:—"The Local Government Board shall be deemed to have been empowered to assign to the Port Sanitary Authority of the Port of London for the whole of the said port, the powers, rights, duties, etc., which they have assigned to them; and the said Board may from time to time assign to the said Port Sanitary Authority for the whole of the said port, any powers, rights, duties, etc., of an Urban Sanitary Authority under the Public Health Act, 1875, with such modifications and additions (if any) as may appear to the Board to be required." This section also gave the Port Sanitary Authority power to acquire and hold lands for the purposes of their constitution, without any licence in mortmain. On the 20th March, 1884, the Local Government Board issued an order under the above section assigning certain powers under the Act of 1875, and re-assigning the former powers as to the appointment of a medical officer of health and inspectors of nuisances, together with assistant medical officers and assistant inspectors. Rules were duly made by the Corporation, and approved by the Local Government Board on the 4th March, 1884, for the removal to hospital of persons brought within the port by any ship or boat infected with a "Dangerous Infectious Disorder," which expression was defined to mean any one of the following diseases:—Diphtheria, erysipelas, measles, scarlatina, small-pox, typhoid or enteric fever, and typhus fever. In 1885 fresh regulations were made which included cholera in the list of diseases; but with regard to this latter disease, special regulations have from time to time been made by the Local Government Board, under which it is the duty of the medical officer to visit all ships arriving in the Port of London, whether infected with cholera or coming from an infected port, and examine all persons on board. Fresh regulations were again made in 1890 with regard to persons brought into the Port of London suffering from a dangerous infectious disorder, such disorders including only those named in the Order of 1884. By further Orders of the Local Government Board, dated respectively the 7th June, 1887, the Port of London Sanitary Authority was constituted the registration authority and the authority for supplying copies of regulations made by the Local Government Board under the Canal Boats Act, 1877 (40 and 41 Victoria, chapter 60), in respect of the following canals and rivers, viz.:—Grand Surrey Canal, Regent's Canal, Thames River. By section 142 of the Public Health (London) Act, 1891 (54 and 55 Victoria, chapter 76), section 291 of the Public Health Act, 1875, constituting the Corporation the Port of London Sanitary Authority was repealed; but section 111 of the later Act practically re-enacted the repealed section that, "The Mayor, Commonalty, and citizens of the City of London shall continue to be the Port Sanitary Authority of the Port of London, as established for the purposes of the laws relating to the Customs of the United Kingdom, and shall pay out of their corporate funds all their expenses as such Port Sanitary Authority." Section 110 of the same Act enacts that for the purposes of the Act any vessel lying in any river or other water in the district of a sanitary authority shall (subject to the provisions of the Act with respect to the Port of London Sanitary Authority) be subject to the jurisdiction of that authority in the same manner as if it were a house within such district, the master of the vessel being deemed to be the occupier thereof. Section 112 of the Act gave the Local Government Board power to assign to the Port Sanitary Authority any of the powers, rights, duties, capacities, liabilities, or obligations of a sanitary authority under this Act or under the Public Health Act, 1875, and any Act extending or amending the same, and an Order was acordingly made by the Board on the 25th March, 1892, assigning to the Port Sanitary Authority all the powers, rights, duties, etc., of a sanitary authority created by or arising out of the following sections of the Act of 1891:—Section 2, as to summary abatement of nuisances; sections 3 to 15, as to nuisances generally, appeals against Orders, power of entry, proceedings in the High Court, etc., and as to offensive trades; section 24, as to summary proceedings for abatement of nuisance in regard to smoke-consumption by fire-places, furnaces, and chimneys; section 25, as to workshops and bake-houses; section 35, as to removal of filth; sections 40 to 42, regulations as to water closets, etc.; section 43, as to cleansing or covering offensive ditches, drains, etc.; section 46, as to sanitary conveniences being used in common; section 47, as to inspection and destruction of unsound food; section 48, as to insufficient water supply for living purposes; section 50, as to cleansing of cisterns; section 53, as to penalty of fouling water; section 54, as to closing polluted wells, etc.; section 55, as to notification of infectious disease. (The Notification of Diseases Act, 1889, was as soon as possible adopted.) Section 56, as to power of sanitary authority to add to number of infectious diseases by resolution. (Under this section the Port Sanitary Authority have added "measles" to the last of dangerous infectious diseases by resolution of the Court of Common Council, dated 3rd November, 1892.) Section 57, as to non-disqualification of Medical Officer by receipt of fees; sections 58 to 62, as to prevention of infectious diseases by cleansing, disinfecting, etc.; section 65, as to penalty for non-disinfection or ceasing to occupy infected premises, etc.; section 66, as to removal to hospital of infected persons, and the making of bye-laws. (Bye-laws have been made under this section and confirmed by the Local Government Board, on the 27th January, 1893, and are set out hereafter), sections 67 to 74, dealing with exposure of infected persons and things, inspection of dairies, removal of bodies, disinfection of public conveyances, etc.; sections 75, 76, 78, 80, and 89, as to provision of hospitals and ambulances, etc.; section 95, as to supervision of tents and vans used for human habitation; section 99 (4), as to delegation of powers of sanitary authority to a committee; section 99 (5), as to power to acquire and hold land by sanitary authorities for the purposes of their duties, without license in mortmain; sections 106, 107, and 109, as to appointment of medical officers of health and sanitary inspectors; section 113, as to application of various sections of the Public Health Acts relating to powers of Local Government Board in regard to epidemic diseases; section 114, as to bye-laws incorporating sections 182 to 186 of the Public Health Act, 1875; section 115, as to powers of entry; section 116, as to penalty for obstructing officer in execution of Act; sections 117 to 124, as to summary proceedings for offences, recovery of expenses by sanitary authority, protection of officers from personal liability, etc.; section 125, as to appeal to Quarter Sessions; sections 127, 128, and 130, as to authentication of notices and forms; section 138, powers of Act to be cumulative; section 23 is expressly made applicable to the Port of London by the Act itself, and provides as follows:—(1) Every furnace employed in the working of engines by steam, and in every public bath and wash-house, or in any mill or other building used for the purposes of trade or manufacture (although a steam engine be not used therein) shall be so constructed as to consume its own smoke, (2) any person (owner, occupier, or employé) contravening the above to be liable to fines; (3) the owner or master of any steam vessel on the River Thames, either above London Bridge, or plying to and fro between London Bridge and any place westward of the Nore Light, contravening the provisions of the Act with reference to the consumption of smoke to be liable to fines; (4, 5, and 6) definitions and directions as to carrying out the provisions of the section. Vessels under the command or charge of any officer bearing Her Majesty's commission, and vessels belonging to any foreign Government are exempted from the provisions of the Act. Although numerous prosecutions have been instituted against persons offending in regard to smoke nuisances, considerable difficulty has been experienced in obtaining con-

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victions, owing to the provision of section 23 (4) of the Act, which enacts that the words "consume or burn the smoke" shall not be held in all cases to mean "consume or burn all the smoke," giving the magistrate a large discretionary power. The limits of the port are defined by Treasury minute, dated 1st August, 1883, and extend down both sides of the River Thames, from high-water mark at Teddington Lock, to an imaginary line drawn from the Pilot Mark at the entrance of Havengore Creek, in the county of Essex, to the Land's End at Warden Point, in the Isle of Sheppey, in the county of Kent, such point being the north-western limit of the Port of Faversham, and extend up and include both sides of the River Medway to an imaginary straight line drawn from the south-west point of land westward to Coalmouth Creek, thence across the said River Medway to the westernmost point of the piece of land which forms the eastern side of Stangate Creek, or in other words the north-west point of Fleet Mark, and from thence in a southerly direction to Swale Church, in the county of Kent, and thence in a north-easterly direction to Elmly Chapel, in the Isle of Sheppey, a supposed direct line from Elmly Chapel to Swale Church being the western limit of the Port of Faversham, and include the islands of Havengore Creek, called Potton and Rushly Islands, and so much of the said creek and watercourse as extends from it to the town of Rochford, and also including all other islands, rivers, streams, creeks, waters, watercourses, channels, harbours, docks, and places within the before-mentioned limits. Recognising its responsibility with regard to the protection of the entrance of the River Medway, the Corporation some years ago entered into an agreement with the Rochester Port Sanitary Authority by which all vessels entering that river on their way to Rochester are inspected by a medical officer under the control of the Corporation at Garrison Port, Sheerness. The Treasury minute of 1883 was followed by the Canal Boats Act of 1884, which threw additional duties on the authority and its officers, and in 1887 the Local Government Board issued an Order constituting the Port of London Sanitary Authority a registration authority under the Act for the Grand Surrey and the Regent's Canals, and the River Thames. In accordance with the provisions of the Canal Boats Acts, canal boats in the river and docks are constantly inspected by the officers of the authority. The wisdom of these Acts has been made apparent by the marked improvement which has since been perceptible in the condition of the canal boatmen and their families, an improvement entirely due to the continuous supervision carried out. The authority has also sanitary jurisdiction in and over any wharf and the area within the gates of any dock, and the buildings thereon respectively forming part of, or abutting upon the Port of London; and a considerable improvement has been effected in more than one instance by the Corporation putting into force their powers in regard to the sanitary condition of the various docks, creeks, wharves, etc. The Corporation, as the Port of London Sanitary Authority, for some years provided a hospital ship for the purpose of receiving and treating patients entering the Port of London suffering from infectious diseases. The ship was stationed on the River Thames about a mile below Gravesend, where vessels arriving in the river, bound for London, are by law required to stop for inspection by the officers of the Customs, as well for revenue as for health purposes. In the year 1882, the ship being out of repair, it was considered advisable to provide a hospital on land in its place. A suitable situation for such hospital was sought for, and a piece of land at Denton was selected with the advice and assistance of one of the medical inspectors of the Local Government Board, and purchased by the Corporation. The hospital was built and formally opened on the 17th April, 1884, since which time patients have been continuously received there. During the years 1882, 1883, and 1884 the expenditure in connection with the acquisition of the hospital site and the erection of the hospital amounted to about £5,000. During the ten years 1890-1899, the ordinary expenditure of the Corporation, as a port sanitary authority for the Port of London amounted to the sum of £58.362 6s. 6d., and the extraordinary expenses to £4,900 7s., or a total of £63,262 13s. 6d., the whole being provided out of City's cash, and not in any way charged upon rates.

3648. (*Chairman.*) Does that mean the Corporation fund?—Out of Corporation funds; that is, funds not raised at all by rates.

3649. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Where derived from?—From various sources. I am perhaps not in a position to explain that exactly, but it can be all laid before you.

3650. (*Chairman.*) You have the authority of the Corporation for that statement?—I have.

3651. Because it is a point which does not come under your evidence at all?—Exactly so, though I know that it is not a charge on rates. A medical officer of health was appointed in 1873, and an assistant medical officer to take charge of the hospital ship, which was moored at Gravesend. An inspector was appointed in 1873; a second in 1882; a third in 1883; a fourth in 1888; a fifth in 1892; and in consequence of the increase of work and responsibility two additional inspectors were appointed in 1893. In 1898 the two senior inspectors were allotted to the special duty of inspection of food only, and two further sanitary inspectors appointed, making a total of nine, viz.: two food inspectors and seven sanitary inspectors. A steam launch was at first hired, and afterwards purchased. In 1878 a steam launch was specially constructed for the port sanitary authority, and was appointed until 1884, when she was replaced by a larger vessel. In 1893 a second launch, still larger, was constructed. In 1896 a third launch, of a smaller type than the two previously mentioned, was placed upon the river for work in the upper reaches. All cases of infectious disease are conveyed in a specially constructed ambulance boat, either rowboat or steam launch. Disinfection is in all cases carried out gratuitously by the authority. Re-vaccination is offered free to the crews of all vessels from which cases of small-pox are removed. The river is patrolled by three sanitary inspectors in steam launches. An inspector visits each dock daily. The duties of the inspectors are to inspect the ships generally, and to make careful inquiries as to the health of the crew; referring all matters of doubt or difficulty to the medical officer of health. Inquiries are made also as to whether clothing, the property of persons who have died abroad, is carried on board, and the cause of death; disinfecting where necessary, and noting all cases in which structural alterations are required for the improvement of ventilation or light or to abate any nuisance. An important part of the duty of the port sanitary authority is the carrying out of the provisions of the Canal Boats Acts, 1877 and 1884. Under these Acts canal boats in the river and docks are constantly supervised and inspected. I have repeatedly called the attention of my committee to the marked improvement in these boats since the continuous inspection has been carried out, and my opinion has been confirmed by the Local Government Board inspector of canal boats. In 1873 the port sanitary authority was, for the first time, constituted a Registration Authority under these Acts, and 372 boats have been registered under the Acts. Special attention is paid to the supply and storage of drinking water on board vessels. The water barges are under my constant supervision, as are also the storage receptacles on vessels. The examination of cargoes of frozen meat, fruit, and vegetables is a very important part of the work, and on account of its magnitude occupies a very large proportion of the inspectors' time. Large seizures occur from time to time, and smaller seizures are very frequent. The necessity for increasing supervision in this direction being urgent, two inspectors were in October, 1898, appointed to the special duty of inspection of food, and the result has fully justified the arrangement. I would point out with regard to food inspectors that the inspectors were first of all qualified as sanitary inspectors, and were further qualified by holding a special certificate of the Sanitary Institute as inspectors of food generally. The Sanitary Institute certificate is granted after an examination on the lines laid down by the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis in their report, and is at present the only examination of the kind. The food imports are now under regular supervision, and large quantities of unsound food stuffs are now condemned which would otherwise be sold for human consumption. So rapidly has this part of the work developed that an addition to the staff of food inspectors is contemplated. To give some idea of the magnitude of the meat import trade of London, and its rapid growth, it may be mentioned that in 1880 (the first year) 400 carcases of mutton were brought to London from Australia, the total for 1900 being nearly one million; from New Zealand the number of carcases brought in 1882 was 8839, and in 1900 upwards of three millions; from the River Plate the number of carcases in 1883 was 17,165, and in 1900

upwards of a quarter of a million. That is to say, the total imports of mutton into London from all parts has increased frm 400 carcases in 1880 to nearly four and three-quarter millions in 1899.

3652. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are these the figures of the medical officer in the course of his inspection?—These are the figures that are provided by the Meat Trades Association, which are checked by the Customs in their returns. These are figures of carcases that passed through our hands.

3653. Customs figures, as usually published, are not in carcases, but in so much weight?—That is so. But they are checked by that.

3654. (*Chairman.*) Now, will you tell us about the sewage in the Thames?—Another very important work undertaken by the Port Sanitary Authority has been the representation to the Government of the nuisance, and its attendant danger to the public health caused by the discharge of crude sewage into the river Thames. In the year 1881 the Corporation, in the interests of the inhabitants of the whole of London, took up this question, and it was to a great extent due to the continued representations of the Corporation and the public attention drawn to the subject, that the Government appointed a Royal Commission. The report of the Royal Commission, which was issued in 1885, upheld the views of the Corporation as expressed before the Commission, and the recommendations of the Commission have since been carried out with marked success. Then, as to cholera, yellow fever, and plague. By an Order of the Local Government Board, dated 9th November, 1896, yellow fever and plague were added to cholera, as diseases to be dealt with by the Port Sanitary Authorites, the Privy Council having had hitherto the control of the regulations dealing with these diseases, and of vessels infected therewith. At the boarding hulk at Gravesend three medical officers are always on duty, and one at Sheerness, for the purpose of carrying out this order, and also of dealing with any imported cases of other infectious diseases. One of these officers visits, in conjunction with His Majesty's Customs, every vessel arriving from foreign ports. If the vessel arrives from any port considered dangerous, he sees every individual on board, and if any are infected they are removed to hospital, the vessel fumigated, all effects disinfected, the bilges discharged, the drinking water thrown away (after disinfection), and the tanks cleaned. In this way 16,763 vessels have been medically inspected between August, 1892, and June, 1900, carrying crews to the number of 204,777 and 164,385 passengers. The following are the existing bye-laws which were allowed by the Local Government Board on the 27th January, 1893, and replaced those allowed on the 7th May, 1885. (1.) In these bye-laws the expression "The Port Sanitary Authority" means the Mayor, the Commonalty, and the citizens of the City of London, acting as the Port Sanitary Authority of the Port of London; the expression "Dangerous infectious disease," means any one of the following diseases:—Small-pox, diphtheria, membranous croup, erysipelas, scarlatina or scarlet fever, typhus fever, typhoid fever, enteric fever, relapsing fever, continued fever, puerperal fever. (2.) Every master or other person having charge of a vessel arriving in the Port of London, with any person on board, whether a passenger or belonging to the ship's crew, suffering from a dangerous infectious disease, shall stop on arrival off the Custom House at Gravesend, and forthwith send notice to the medical officer of the Port Sanitary Authority stationed at Gravesend that there is a person on board suffering from such a disease. (3.) The master or other person in charge of the vessel shall cause her to remain off the Custom House until the Medical Officer of Health has boarded her. (4.) The Medical Officer of Health, to whom notice is given, as aforesaid, shall as soon as practicable visit the vessel and ascertain whether the person referred to in the notice is suffering from a dangerous infectious disease, and if in the opinion of the Medical Officer of Health he is and can properly be removed, and proper accommodation can be provided for him in the hospital of the Port Sanitary Authority at Gravesend, or in some other hospital to which the Port Sanitary Authority are entitled to remove patients, the master or other person having charge of the vessel shall forthwith cause such person to be removed to such hospital according to the directions of the Medical Officer of Health. (5.) If any dangerous infectious disease shall break out on board any vessel arriving in the Port of London, and after she has passed Gravesend, the master or other person having charge of such vessel shall give notice to the Medical Officer of Health of the Port Sanitary Authority, at his office at Greenwich, that there is on board a person suffering from such a disease, and if, upon examination, the Medical Officer of Health shall find that he is so suffering, the master or other person in charge of such vessel shall forthwith cause such person to be removed to a hospital to which the Port Sanitary Authority are entitled to remove patients, as directed by the Medical Officer of Health. (6.) Every person who shall offend against any of the foregoing byelaws shall be liable for every such offence to a penalty of five pounds, and in the case of a continuing offence to a further penalty of forty shillings for each day after written notice of the offence from the ort Sanitary Authority. Provided, nevertheless, that the Justices or Court before whom any complaint may be made, or any proceedings may be taken in respect of any such offence, may, if they think fit, adjudge the payment as a penalty of any sum less than the full amount of the penalty imposed by this bye-law. In view of the large number of invalided soldiers arriving in this country from South Africa, and the steps taken to prevent the introduction of contagious diseases, the following particulars may be of interest:—Early in August last a communication was received by the Corporation from the Local Government Board enclosing copy of a letter addressed to the Board by the War Office authorities on the subject of the removal to the port sanitary hospital from transports proceeding up the Thames, of soldiers invalided from South Africa and suffering from enteric fever, and stating that the Board would be glad to arrange for a conference at the Board's offices on Friday, the 10th August, between their officers and representatives of the War Office, Admiralty, and Port Sanitary Authority, for the purpose of discussing the suggestion made by the War Office, viz.: that the bye-laws made by the Port Sanitary Authority should be relaxed so as to enable military patients on transports suffering from typhus, typhoid, enteric, relapsing, or continued fever to be allowed to proceed up the river, and to be landed at Woolwich. The Port Sanitary Committee of the Corporation accordingly deputed their chairman to attend the conference as the representative of the Port of London Sanitary Authority, and empowered him to agree to a provisional arrangement subject to the final approval of the Committee. Accordingly on the 10th August the chairman, accompanied by myself, attended at the Board's offices, and the conference took place between the several representatives. After full discussion it was suggested by the representatives of the Local Government Board that the following alternate proposals should be communicated in writing by the Board to the War Office, Admiralty, and Port Sanitary Authority for their consideration, and this suggestion was concurred in by all present:—(1) That all cases of enteric fever on board transports should be removed to the port sanitary hospital, the question of their subsequent removal to Woolwich to be left to the discretion of the medical officer of health, after consultation with the War Office medical authorities; (2) That all transport ships should stop at Gravesend, and War Office or Admiralty patients be removed on a steam ambulance launch to be provided by the Admiralty and landed at Woolwich, the War Office to be responsible for the disinfection of the launch, clothing, bedding, etc., the Port Sanitary Authority disinfecting the ship. It was agreed that in the case of either of the above courses being adopted it would be necessary, in order to comply with No. 5 of the Port Sanitary bye-laws, that formal authority should be given by the War Office to the Port Sanitary Authority to remove patients to Woolwich Hospital or any other military hospital. The following words were agreed to: "That in the case of naval or military patients suffering from typhus, typhoid, enteric, relapsing or continued fever, any naval or military hospital shall be considered a hospital to which the Port of London Sanitary Authority may send patients." It was also agreed that all transport ships coming into the port with any cases of dangerous infectious disorder on board other than typhus, typhoid, enteric, relapsing or continued fever, should be dealt with entirely by the Port Sanitary Authority, whether there are cases of enteric fever also on board or not. The Corporation subsequently received from the Local Government Board a letter enclosing sugges-

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tions from the War Office as to the procedure in regard to the disposal of invalided soldiers arriving in this country in Government vessels, and their reply thereto, in which the Board stated that they agreed generally to the adoption of the proposals contained in the letter. The following are the suggestions made by the War Office authorities:—(*a*) In future all vessels to call at Southampton, and cases of enteric or other fever which may be considered in an infectious stage, together with other serious cases, to be taken to Netley Hospital, other invalids being sent by train to their destination. (*b*) When considered expedient to utilise hospitals in the West of England for home-coming invalids, the ship would disembark them at Plymouth, and the serious and infectious cases could either be landed there or at Southampton, at the discretion of the Army medical authorities. (*c*) In the event of a military hospital in the Thames Military District, or at Colchester, being selected for the reception of invalids, the serious and infectious cases would be landed at Southampton and the remainder would proceed in the ship to Tilbury Dock or Royal Albert Docks, and thence by rail to their destination. Having carefully considered the suggestions of the War Office, the Committee directed the Town Clerk to signify their approval of the same to the Local Government Board, subject to the following condition:—"That when cases are removed from vessels at either Plymouth or Southampton, or any other port, and such vessels afterwards come into the Port of London, the master shall be required to produce the certificate of the sanitary authority at the particular port at which such cases have been removed that the disinfection of the vessel has been carried out."

Then with regard to offensive cargoes, the jurisdiction of the Port Sanitary Authority was increased in 1894 by the assignment of further powers to the Corporation of London in regard to offensive cargoes; and under an Order of the Local Government Board dated 29th December, 1894, bye-laws, with reference to the carriage of offensive cargoes and matter, were made by the Port Sanitary Authority, and allowed by the Local Government Board on the 29th May, 1897. The first two bye-laws were made under section 16 (1 a.) of the Public Health (London) Act, 1891, as amended by the above-mentioned Order, and Nos. 3 to 5 under section 26 (1) of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, and are as follows:—(1) A person shall not load or carry in any ship, boat, or vessel, within the district of the Port Sanitary Authority, any dust, ashes, or rubbish, being refuse from house dust-bins which contain any mixture of any offal, carrion, fish, or filth, or of any fœcal or offensive or noxious matter or liquid, otherwise than in a suitable tank or receptacle properly constructed and furnished with a sufficient covering so as to prevent any nuisance arising therefrom; (2) every person who shall load or carry in any ship, boat or vessel, within the district aforesaid, any dust, ashes, rubbish, offal, carrion, fish or filth, or other matter liable to become offensive or to cause a nuisance if exposed to the open air, shall, except while actually engaged in loading or discharging the same, at all times keep all such dust, ashes, rubbish, offal, carrion, fish or filth or other such matter or thing properly or securely covered, so as to prevent any nuisance arising therefrom, and no such dust, ashes, rubbish, offal, carrion, fish or filth, or other such matter or thing, shall be loaded above the coamings or hatches of any such ship, boat or vessel. If after the discharge from any ship, boat or vessel, within the district of the Port Sanitary Authority, of any dust, ashes, rubbish, offal, carrion, fish, or filth, or other matter or thing which is offensive or liable to become offensive or to cause a nuisance if exposed to the open air, any such dust, ashes, rubbish, offal, carrion, fish or filth, matter or thing, may be adhering to or otherwise remaining in or upon such ship, boat or vessel, or any part thereof, or any tank or receptacle therein; the master of such ship, boat or vessel shall so far as may be necessary for the prevention of nuisance cause such ship, boat or vessel to be thoroughly cleansed and deodorised within six hours after the discharge therefrom of such dust, ashes, rubbish, offal, carrion, fish or filth, matter or thing; (3) where, for the purpose of removal within or carriage through the district of the Port Sanitary Authority any cargo, load, or collection of fœcal or offensive or noxious matter or liquid has been put into or upon any ship, boat or vessel, the owner or consignee, or any person who has undertaken to deliver such cargo, load, or collection, or who is in charge of the same, or of any such ship, boat or vessel, shall not, without a reasonable excuse, permit or allow or cause such ship, boat or vessel, containing such cargo, load or collection, or any undischarged portion thereof, to remain within the said district for a longer period than forty-eight hours; (4) every person who shall remove or carry in or through the district of the Port Sanitary Authority any fœcal or offensive or noxious matter or liquid shall use a suitable tank or receptacle properly constructed and furnished with a sufficient covering so as to prevent the escape of any such matter or liquid therefrom. Provided always that this bye-law shall not apply to the removal or carriage in or through the district of the Port Sanitary Authority of any stable or cattle manure, if and so long as the same be properly and securely covered, and be not loaded above the coamings or hatches of any ship, boat or vessel; (5) if any fœcal or offensive, or noxious matter or liquid shall have been dropped or spilt in any ship, boat or vessel, while being loaded thereon, or removed, or carried in or through such Port Sanitary district, the master of such ship, boat or vessel shall within six hours of the discharge of such matter or liquid so being removed or carried cause such ship, boat or vessel to be thoroughly cleansed of and from such matter or liquid so dropped or spilt. (6) every person who shall offend against any of the foregoing bye-laws shall be liable for every such offence to a penalty of five pounds, and in case of a continuing offence to a further penalty of forty shillings for each day after written notice of the offence from the Port Sanitary Authority. Provided, nevertheless, that the justices or court before whom any complaint may be made, or any proceedings may be taken in respect of any such offence may, if they think fit, adjudge the payment as a penalty of any sum less than the full amount of the penalty imposed by this bye-law.

3655. With reference to the Treasury minute to which you have referred, what is the force of its definition of limit. It does not seem to be in exact accordance with that which we have had before, I think, from the Thames Conservancy?—It is different altogether.

3656. Are you in favour of a uniform definition?—A uniform definition would considerably curtail the power of the Port Sanitary Authority. The question depends on what lines it followed. At present the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy extends a long way above the jurisdiction of the Corporation. There would seem to be no advantage in carrying the limits of the Port Sanitary Authority above Teddington Lock. Where the river is narrow and already within the district of riparian authorities that would seem to be a mistake.

3657. With reference to your remarks on the cattle trade, I presume they apply in great part to the frozen meat trade?—In the main part.

3658. We have had evidence from a former witness to the effect that the Cattle Market at Deptford is in the wrong place, the conditions of trade have so changed?—I am afraid I am not prepared to give evidence as to the conditions of trade.

3659. In your opinion is the Cattle Market at Deptford in the wrong place?—From a sanitary point of view I think not. I see no objection to it whatever in its present position.

3660. Have you had any complaints from shipowners as to the sanitary arrangements of the Port of London?—No.

3661. The sanitary supervision?—No. I think on the whole the shipowners are thoroughly satisfied with the conditions which at present obtain.

3662. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) From whom did the criticism of the existing state of things proceed? You said you had given your evidence in reference to certain complaints or criticisms made before this body. By whom were they made?—Not complaints or criticism. The question was raised by two witnesses as to whether it would be advisable to transfer the sanitary supervision from the Corporation to a trust or the Conservancy, and the answer was that it would be advisable, but no reasons were given. It would be most inadvisable. See 1421-3.

3663. Do you recollect by whom that was said?—I think one of the witnesses was the Chairman of the Thames Conservancy, but no reasons were given.

3664. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What staff have you under you?—We have three steam launches, each with its crew.

3665. How many inspectors?—We have seven sanitary inspectors, two food inspectors, and the Corporation are considering as to the advisability of appointing a third. We have a large hospital staff at Gravesend for the treatment of infectious diseases. We have a clerical staff and a medical staff. We have three medical officers stationed at Gravesend whose duty it is to board all foreign vessels with regard to disease. That is a different thing altogether from the sanitary inspection. They are on duty day and night, working in conjunction with His Majesty's Customs. We have also a medical officer stationed at Sheerness. It is his duty to board vessels from foreign ports.

3666. Does the expenditure of the sanitary authority vary very much from year to year?—In epidemic years it has gone up. It went up in 1884; it went up again in 1892. On the whole it is increasing slowly, with rapid development in very heavy times.

3667. The expense, whatever it is, is always furnished by the Corporation?—Always.

3668. Who controls the expenditure—the Committee of the Corporation?—The Port Sanitary Committee of the Corporation.

3669. Do you find the funds ample for all your purposes?—Ample for all that are required.

3670. You find no difficulty on the score of money?—None whatever.

3671. Your general evidence would be that the present system works well?—I think so, undoubtedly.

3672. You have nothing to urge why any greater powers should be granted to the sanitary authority or why there should be any alteration?—Alterations from time to time in questions of small matters of detail, but nothing more.

3673. Do you think the powers given to the sanitary authority are sufficient for all purposes subject to alteration from time to time in matters of detail which would be within the powers?—I do.

3674. Do you also consider that the limits of the sanitary authority are satisfactory?—Yes.

3675. They go far enough out to sea?—Yes.

3676. They ought to be retained as far as Teddington Lock?—As far as Teddington Lock, but not beyond.

3677. (*Mr. Ellis.*) May we gather that this inspection and examination of cargoes of frozen meat, fruit, vegetables, etc., which you say is such an important part of the work, proceeds smoothly? Is there any friction at all with regard to it?—No, there is no friction whatever.

3678. There are no complaints whatever made by anyone, reasonable or unreasonable, that it is an interference with trade?—No.

3679. You have no difficulty in making seizures and carrying out the thing?—We have no difficulty whatever.

3680. It is to the public advantage?—I think so undoubtedly.

3681. Are particular inspectors appointed *ad hoc*, or is that one of their duties?—There are inspectors appointed *ad hoc*, but for all important work there are special inspectors.

3682. Can you give us any idea as to how many inspectors there are for that particular province?—Two.

3683. And you are contemplating increasing them?—That is so.

3684. That is all under your supervision?—Yes.

3685. (*Mr. Peel.*) You have no complaint, have you, to make about the effluent that comes into the Thames at Barking or Crossness?—No, not of late years.

3686. Do you find that after times of storm, the storm water overflows into the Thames and brings a certain amount of crude sewage into it?—Higher up the river.

3687. But nothing to make any complaint of in the Port of London?—It creates a local nuisance for the time. Your question was first of all directed specially to the outfall. There are times of some difficulty with regard to the discharge of sewage from the storm overflows.

3688. Do you find from the docks the same thing happens occasionally—crude sewage?—No, not crude sewage from the docks. We have difficulties with the dock water, but they are easily dealt with under the Public Health Act.

3689. One of the witnesses told us that the sludge vessels of the London County Council discharge their sludge sometimes on the ebb, the result being that the flow coming up the river brought the sludge to some extent up the river. Have you had any complaints of that?—I have heard of that, but I have never had any definite complaint, and I never have been able to get any proof, although I have looked for it.

3690. Then as to the storage receptacles on vessels. You supervise the storage receptacles on vessels. Those, I suppose, are for water?—For drinking water.

3691. Are those all vessels that come up, foreign as well as British?—All vessels.

3692. Supposing you find something wrong, you can only make suggestions, can you?—All vessels coming up the river, unless they belong to our own or a foreign Government are under the Public Health Act, and if there is anything wrong to such an extent as to be a nuisance or injurious to health it can be dealt with. It makes no difference whether the vessel is a foreign vessel or an English vessel.

3693. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In case of an infectious disease, where do you send them?—We move them to our own hospital on shore below Gravesend.

3694. Are there any hospital ships on the Thames for infectious diseases?—None but the small-pox ships belonging to the Asylums Board.

3695. (*Chairman.*) Have you any tables to hand in?—Yes, I hand these tables in.

(*The Witness handed in a Return of vessels inspected by the Port Sanitary Authority since* 1873; *a return of vessels cleaned by the Port Sanitary Authority since* 1873; *a return of structural alterations insisted upon by the Port Sanitary Authority since* 1875; *a return of vessels fumigated by the Port Sanitary Authority since* 1873; *a return of infectious diseases dealt with by the Port Sanitary Authority since* 1873; *a return of infected clothing dealt with by the Port Sanitary Authority since* 1874; *a return of seizures of unsound food dealt with by the Port Sanitary Authority since* 1884; *a return of canal boats inspected, persons carried, and prosecutions instituted by the Port Sanitary Authority, under the Canal Boats Act since* 1876. *See Appendices, 11th Day, Nos.* 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16.)

3696. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you had occasion to compare your regulations for seizure with those in existence at any foreign ports?—Yes, on many points. I have made it a rule for some years to collect all the information I could with regard to foreign ports.

3697. Do you find that you give as many facilities to trade in this matter of health as is done at any foreign port?—I think that there is no comparison between the restrictions of trade from the health point of view in this country (because all our ports are fairly uniform) and any continental port. That is to say, there is absolutely no restriction whatever to an incoming vessel, provided we have full information as to the health of the crew on board. The shipowners tell us constantly that abroad they are hampered and restricted at every turn, but that in England or in London—of course, they are speaking of London to me—they have nothing whatever to complain of.

3698. So that you do all that is expedient for health, and you have all the powers that you wish to have?—I think so.

3699. And yet you do not interfere with trade in any way?—That is so. It is the constant anxiety of the authority not to interfere with trade.

3700. With reference to the table with regard to seizures of unsound food in the last two years of 1899 and 1900, the seizures are about double the maximum of any previous year, and a good deal more than the average of the previous years?—Yes.

3701. Is that due to the increased importation of unsound food or to the increased diligence of your inspectors?—It is due to the two causes. It is due, first of all, to the large increase of unsound food finding its way into the port, and it is also due to the fact I have mentioned, that in October, 1898, special food inspectors were appointed.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWELFTH DAY.

Wednesday, 20th March, 1901

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. THOMAS WILLIAM JACOBS, jun., called and examined.

Mr. T. W. Jacobs, jun.

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3702. (*Chairman.*) You are Chairman of the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge Owners of the Port of London?—Yes.

3703. And you are also Managing Director of the Thames Steam Tug and Lighterage Company, Limited?—Yes.

3704. Your association has been good enough to prepare answers to certain questions which were submitted to them by this Commission?—Yes.

3705. What is the local authority to which the owners of barges and the crews of barges are subject, and what bye-laws, if any, have been made by that authority?—The Board of Customs, the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board, the Thames Conservancy, the Watermen's Company, the Lea Conservancy, the various dock companies, and the Port Sanitary Authorities. Each body has made bye-laws or has issued orders affecting the owners and crews of barges.

3706. Will you state the number and tonnage of barges used in the Port of London under 50 tons, over 50 and under 100 tons, over 100 and under 150 tons, over 150 and under 200 tons, over 200 and under 250; distinguishing between dumb, sailing, and steam barges?—The association has not the means of furnishing these particulars, and must refer the Commissioners to the Watermen's Company, to the Registrar General of Shipping, to the Lea Conservancy, to the Grand Junction Canal Company, and to the Local Government Board.

3707. Can you state the number and tonnage of barges (divided in the way mentioned in the previous question) belonging to members of the association?—Applications have been made to the members to furnish particulars so as to enable the secretary to answer this inquiry. Answers have been received from 67, out of a total of 88 members and others identified with the association. The following is a summary of the information obtained up to the present time:—Dumb barges: 4,941 barges of the burthen tonnage of 391,329 tons, giving an average burthen of 79 tons. Sailing barges: Returns have been made by 14 firms owning 106 vessels, of the gross burthen of 11,413 tons, which gives an average burthen of 108 tons per barge. Steam barges: Returns have been made by two firms owning seven steam barges of the gross burthen of 460 tons, which gives an average burthen of 66 tons. It has not been possible, up to the present time, to distinguish the divisions of tonnage as mentioned in the question.

3708. What is the legal definition of a barge especially in regard to (*a*) Port where it is registered; (*b*) Size and tonnage; (*c*) Means of propulsion?—There are three classes of barges in use upon the River Thames, viz., dumb barges, which are propelled by oars only, or are towed by steam tugs; sailing barges, which are propelled by sails; and steam barges. There are but few of the latter vessels in the Port of London. There is no limit as to size and tonnage of any of the before-mentioned craft.

3709. Have barges increased in size during the last fifty years, and, if so, of what description and tonnage? What is the most convenient size from every point of view?—Yes, the tendency of recent years has been to build larger dumb barges. The majority in use do not exceed 60 tons dead weight, but barges of various tonnage, both decked and open, are still necessary in order to meet the requirements of particular trades.

3710. Are barges when in dock subject to any bye-laws of the dock company, and are those bye-laws rigorously enforced?—Yes.

3711. Are you convinced that that is a correct statement?—Yes.

3712. Especially as regards small fines?—Yes, speaking broadly.

3713. You say it is true?—Yes, undoubtedly.

3714. Are barges at liberty to make use of the docks at any time or tide, and in regard to the use of the quays is any payment ever charged?—Barges when *bonâ fide* engaged in the work of delivering or receiving goods are entitled to pass in or out of the docks. The dock companies fix the times, usually from two to four hours before high water each tide. The time for the locking in and out is fixed by the dock companies, and is much too limited to allow of work being done in sufficient time to permit craft to reach their destinations. Barges are not allowed the use of the quays except for mooring purposes, and no operation is permitted on the barge except the necessary work of loading or discharging cargo without payment of dock dues.

3715. What number of men are employed on each description of barge when on its journey to and from ships? (1.) While in the river. (2.) While in the docks?—(1.) When under oars only for craft under 50 tons burden, one man; over 50 and under 150, two men; and over 150, three men. Whilst being towed one man only in each barge. (2.) One man or more according to the requirements of the work.

3716. Are barges ever left in docks without attendants?—Yes, at times, when safely moored, otherwise they become subject to charges under the Dock Companies' bye-laws. They are also liable to charges if the Dock Company find it necessary to remove them during the absence of the lighterman.

3717. Would you not agree that it is a matter of common knowledge and a notorious grievance in the Port of London that barges are left unattended?—Not unless they are properly moored. They are not left adrift, certainly, at the wish of the barge owner; for he is liable for any damage they may cause in their drifting state, and he is liable to penalties under the Dock Companies' bye-laws.

3718. But, apart from the penalties, you do not agree that it is the case that barges are left?—Not unattended, unless they are made properly fast.

3719. You say only when safely moored?—Quite so. There is not only the risk of damage to other craft, but there is also the risk of damage to the barge itself and the cargo if it is left drifting about.

3720. Now, will you state the total number of persons employed on the barges? (1.) Altogether. (2.) On barges belonging to members of the association?—(1.) The association cannot give this information, and are compelled to refer the Commissioners to the Watermen's Company. (2.) About 1,500 freemen and about 400 apprentices licensed by the Watermen's Company, and about 800 unlicensed men who find employment on the barges otherwise than in navigating the same.

3721. What is the proportion of employment for barges in connection with ships moored in the river, in connection with ships coming to quays or wharves in the river, and in connection with ships in the docks respectively?—We have found it impossible to afford this information, as there are no records kept to which reference can be made or which will enable the association to answer the question.

3722. Now will you give us any information as to the nature and extent of the business of barge owners which the association may be of opinion has a bearing on the inquiry of this Commission?—The business of barge owners is the collection and delivery of goods by barges on the Thames and the various docks, wharves, creeks, and canals thereon. It is impossible to give the tonnage and value of the cargoes moved. The number of barges employed is estimated at not less than 8,000, which will afford some indication of the magnitude of the trade and the great importance thereof to the Port of London as a means of distribution.

3723. Can you state any defects in the Port of London or its administration affecting barge owners' business and any proposed remedies?—In answer to that question I may say that my committee have drawn up short and concise answers which, with permission, we shall amplify by the evidence of our witnesses later. We have put the answers in sections, which I will read: — (*a*) The law of compulsory pilotage in the port under which in the event of a collision occasioned by the pilot's default a ship owner is exempted and the pilot himself is not liable for more than £100 and his accruing pilotage. It is contended that the liability of the owner or master of a ship for loss or damage occasioned by the fault or incapacity of any pilot acting in charge of the ship should not be affected by the compulsory employment of the pilot. (*b*) The liability of a barge owner to pay to each and every claimant all damages which may be caused by collision between his barge and another vessel if such barge be in the wrong, whereas a ship owner, when liable, can, under similar circumstances, by virtue of the 'Merchant Shipping Act, 1894,' limit his liability, without regard to the number of claims, to £8 per ton, or, in case of loss of life, to £15 per ton. The barge owner claims to be placed upon an equality with the ship owner. (*c*) The necessity for improving the water way by deepening the channels at the entrance to the port, and between Gravesend and London Bridge. (*d*) The speed at which steamships, especially passenger vessels, travel between London and Gravesend, particularly in the summer months, to the injury of barges and their cargoes, a more effectual supervision by the Thames Conservancy, and prompt proceeding against offenders is called for.

See 5575.

See 7549.

3724. Are there regulations regulating speed in the lower river?—I am not sure that there are any. I think that there are not now. The Thames Conservancy had a bye-law, which I believe has been repealed, regulating the speed of vessels to seven miles an hour. I think now they rely more upon the general law that a ship must keep at such reasonable speed as not to cause damage to other vessels or to the shores of the river. I do not think there is any fixed limit.

3725. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That we can get from the Thames Conservancy. You do not speak of that first hand?—No. Then section (*e*) The facilities for docking and undocking of barges is insufficient at the present day, and means should be afforded for the locking in and out of barges at any state of the tide, instead of from three to four hours out of every 12, as now permitted. (*f*) The failure of the dock companies to provide sufficient tug power for towing barges within the dock water, and refusing to allow barge owners to keep tugs in the docks for the purpose of rendering such service.

See 5572. 6903–5.

3726. (*Chairman.*) Do you allege that this is the case?—Yes.

3727. Have the dock companies been appealed to?—I made application myself some two or three years ago to the dock companies to know whether they would permit me to keep a tug in the dock, and upon what terms. The answer was that they could not allow us upon any terms whatever. Certainly the accommodation afforded by the company is not sufficient to tow the barges as frequently and promptly as is required.

3728. Do you tell us that the dock companies have been appealed to, and have refused to give satisfaction?—They have refused to permit my company to keep a tug in the dock.

3729. And that was an official application to them, was it?—Yes.

3730. Have others done the same?—Yes, so far as I know. It is a matter of common complaint.

3731. But I am asking with regard to particular instances. Will you tell us when you made this application?—Some two or three years back.

3732. Can you show us the application?—I daresay I can find it.

3733. And the dock company's reply?—Yes.

3734. Will you let us have it?—Yes. Then section (*g*) The refusal of the dock companies to afford reasonable facilities for the passing out of laden barges in cases where a *bonâ-fide* dispute has arisen between the shipowner and the lighterman as to tally marks, conditions, numbers, or the like.

See 5576.

3735. In that case also you have instances in your mind to which you are referring?—Yes, many; and this matter I may say has been before the Board of Trade on several occasions recently. We have tried to get this particular bye-law amended. It is a bye-law sanctioned by the Board of Trade—"regulations" I think they are called. We have had several meetings before the Board of Trade with a view to getting that particular regulation amended.

3736. (*Mr. Ellis.*) These are rather general statements, although they are extremely important. I think you ought to give particular instances, and prove these general statements if you make them?—Yes, I can do that.

3737. (*Chairman.*) You allege that this is true?—Yes.

3738. We should like particulars. Can you give us them?—Yes, but I may not be able to get them to-day. I have not them here.

3739. With reference to section (*g*), we suggest that with regard to any grievances in this connection which you may have, you should put in some specific statement of what actually occurred?—Very well, my lord, that shall be done. Then section (*h*): The conditions affecting the delivery of goods from import ships to barges call for amendment. Craft are required to be in attendance for many days before the shipowner can or does in fact deliver. The docks, in consequence, become congested with craft. When the shipowner is unable to give delivery upon application, it is submitted that he should give 24 hours' notice to the consignee or his agent of his readiness to deliver, and that such delivery should be completed within 24 hours thereafter. That the shipowner should also be compelled to regulate the order in which goods are to be brought to alongside export ships, so as to avoid the further congestion of barges in the dock, and the loss caused to the owners by delay. (*i*) The want of accommodation for the quick discharge of vessels in the docks owing to the absence of modern appliances and methods, and in the river for vessels desiring to discharge there by reason of insufficient mooring accommodation. (*j*) The want of sufficient mooring accommodation for barges in the river. (*k*) Greater facilities are required from the Board of Customs with regard to the clearing of goods delivered overside: the granting of passes to leave the docks, and the working hours, which should be extended to 6 o'clock p.m.; the conditions applied to Tilbury Docks should be the same as those in force with regard to the docks higher up the river, as the carriers' liability is the same in each case.

3740. Will you explain this question with regard to the passes to leave the docks?—Do you mean the Customs' passes.

3741. We do not know quite to what you are referring there. Are passes necessary to leave the docks?—Yes, passes are necessary to leave the docks in all cases.

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First of all the pass is given by the officers on board the ships, and then it has to be revised by the Customs and the Dock officials before the goods are permitted to leave the docks. Then section (*l*) The obligation to employ only licensed men (either freemen or apprentices), without regard to the capabilities of the individuals and without any relief from liability for their negligence, as in the case of shipowners when pilots are compulsorily employed. The bargeowners claim the right to employ any person able, in their opinion, to do the necessary work, notwithstanding that he be neither a licensed waterman nor an apprentice. (*m*) The want of efficient police protection in the docks, especially at the time of strikes or labour disturbances. Owing to the peculiar circumstances under which work is carried on, the opportunities for intimidation in the lighterage business are much greater than with any other class of employment. The Metropolitan Police authorities refuse to send men into the docks, except on payment of all expenses, which are very heavy, owing to the large area to be protected, and these expenses make it quite impossible for private bodies such as the lighterage trade to avail themselves of the said protection.

3742. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I understand that these answers have been prepared by the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners?—That is so.

3743. You are the authorised representative of that association in respect of these answers that have been given?—Yes.

3744. Were they prepared at any meeting of the board or committee of the association?—At a meeting of the council of the association. Many meetings, I may say, have been held to consider the answers to be given to these questions, and these are the answers the council arrived at after a good deal of consideration.

3745. Are they placed in your hands to lay before us, as the official representative of this Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners?—Yes.

3746. You make a general statement of the failure of the dock companies to provide sufficient tug power for towing barges within the dock water, and the refusal of the dock companies to afford reasonable facilities for the passing out of laden barges, and so on?—Yes.

See 5572.

3747. You clearly understand that the Commission will require either from you direct or through the secretary specific illustrations of these complaints, with the correspondence that has taken place, fixing the dates?—Yes.

3748. These are complaints against the dock companies, and we shall have the dock companies hereafter, and they must be in a position to answer specific complaints?—Yes.

3749. We must have particular instances, giving names and dates. You quite appreciate that?—Quite.

3750. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With regard to a barge being left in the dock with only one man, if the dock company want it moved, can that one man move it?—Yes.

3751. Say a barge of 100 tons?—Yes; it is done constantly.

3752. Of course he can move it, but can he move it with the necessary facility?—In most cases I think so. I very seldom hear a complaint on that head—that the man is not able to move the barge quickly enough.

3753. Then you ask for more easy access to the docks, and also to have tugs in the docks, and questions of the same sort. Are you prepared to pay for those facilities?—Yes.

3754. And the extra pumping and the moving of barges by tugs if the docks provided them?—We are prepared to pay for the towage in the docks. That is done now in the Albert and Victoria Docks.

3755. With regard to the loss of water, two hours before high water, you wish to have access more frequently. Would you pay for the pumping required to make up the shortage of water?—No; I am not prepared to say we should do that.

3756. With regard to your answer concerning the want of sufficient mooring accommodation for barges in the river, would you pay for that accommodation or not?—We do not suggest that we should pay for it.

3757. Would you object to it?—Yes; we should object to pay for it.

3758. If it was provided?—Yes.

3759. You would like to have it for nothing?—It has not been increased in sufficient proportion to the increase of traffic in the river. It always has been free for all time.

3760. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With reference to greater facilities being required from the Board of Customs with regard to the clearing of goods delivered overside and the granting of passes to leave the docks, and the working hours, you say that the conditions applied to Tilbury Docks should be the same as those in force with regard to the docks higher up the river. What is the difference between Tilbury Docks and the docks higher up the river?—One difference is that the Customs will not permit barges to come from Tilbury unless they are locked down, whereas in the upper docks with certain goods they will permit the craft under certain conditions to leave the docks and get to the wharves without the necessity of the Customs locks. They will not under any conditions allow officers to come in the craft from Tilbury Docks, as they will in the upper docks, with bonded goods.

3761. Have you any objection to give further particulars under this head to show exactly what you mean?—None whatever. My company is not particularly concerned in Customs work, but there are two witnesses present who are able to give evidence on that particular point; they are in the habit of dealing with bonded goods.

3762. You are dealing with the Customs now?—Yes, on this particular question it is the Customs we refer to here.

3763. With reference to those questions about the number of barges, you stated that the number of barges employed is estimated at not less than 8,000, and then you stated in reply to another question that 67 out of a total of 88 members of your Association or persons identified with your Association, have given returns of very nearly 5,000 dumb barges, and 106 sailing barges, and 7 steam barges; so that your Association represents five-eighths of the whole business. Would that be a fair statement?—That is a fair statement.

3764. Are the remaining barges probably of much the same size as the barges represented by your Association?—Yes; I should imagine the large number represented by our Association would be average craft. Of course, there are many firms who are not members of our Association, but their business would be much the same.

3765. So that from these particulars we might have some idea of the total tonnage of the barges?—I think so, but I think the Watermen's Company could give it to you accurately.

3766. (*Chairman.*) Turning now to your personal evidence, we understand that you will give it as managing director of the Thames Steam Tug and Lighterage Company, Limited?—Yes.

3767. Will you give us particulars with regard to the company of which you are managing director?—The company of which I am managing director is a limited liability company registered in the year 1856 under the Joint Stock Companies Act. Its share capital is £57,200, all of which is fully paid up. The business of the company is that of carriers by water to and from the various docks in the Port of London. In addition to a large general lighterage business it also acts as sole lighterage agents for the under-mentioned railway companies, viz.: The Great Western Railway Company, the London and North-Western Railway Company, the London, Brighton, and South-Coast Railway Company, and the South-Eastern and Chatham Railway Company. The company own five tugs, and 320 dumb barges, lighters, and punts; in addition to which they have at present 30 lighters on hire from other persons. The average number of craft necessarily engaged in the company's work is about 400. Three months ago, when we were busy, we had 120 lighters on hire. To-day it is 30. The business fluctuates in that way, but the average number would remain the same taken for the whole year. My company employ upon an average 105 foremen, 30 apprentices, 110 watchmen, 5 engineers, 5 stokers, and 70 barge builders and repairers. The business which is now carried on by my company was first established early in the century, immediately after the incorporation of the Grand Junction Canal Company, and has gradually increased until it has reached its present

dimensions. I have been connected with the company for 31 years, and for the past 16 years have been, firstly, secretary, and then managing director. I have had the opportunity of making myself well acquainted with the mode in which lighterage business is carried on in the Port of London. I have made an examination of my company's books for the purpose of obtaining some data which will be of assistance to the Commission, and I find that the average yearly tonnage conveyed by the company's barges for the past three years is 600,000 tons, of which probably 70 per cent. passes into or out of the various docks. I have ascertained that the tonnage into and out of the various docks for one month, viz., May last, was 43,000 tons. It was a fair average month's work, and gives a total of 516,000 tons per annum to and from the docks. Of this month's work the tonnage inwards for export was 18,000 tons, and the tonnage outwards, either for delivery to the various railway companies or to private customers, was 25,000 tons. Of the above I estimate that 31,000 tons were collected from or delivered to the before-mentioned railway companies for export or for carriage inland or delivered by us to places outside the London radius, and 12,000 further tons were delivered by us at places and wharves within the London district, from which latter a portion was again distributed. That assuming the dock authorities were to succeed in imposing the rates upon goods carried by barges into and out of the docks and upon the barges entering and leaving such docks as suggested by the Bill brought into Parliament last Session, the goods carried by my company would have paid in respect of this month's work the sum of, say, £2,600, and the company itself would have been taxed in respect of the craft in the sum of £1,000, and my company would, therfore, necessarily be compelled, in conjunction with all other carriers by water, to increase the rates for lighterage. The said rates would have the effect of diverting water-borne traffic, as large quantities of goods now dealt with by barge would be taken over the dock-quays and conveyed away by land carriage; such charges would also seriously handicap the transhipping trade of London, which is a large and important one, and helps largely to freight our colonial and foreign steamers. The question of compulsory
See 5575. pilotage in the River Thames constitutes a grievance which for many years past has been keenly felt by lightermen and barge-owners. When, by compulsion of law, the navigation of a vessel is handed over to a pilot, it follows that in the event of collision the shipowner is exempt from liability, provided that he can show that his officers and crew gave the pilot the assistance, by way of look-out and otherwise, to which he was entitled. By section 620 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, such pilot is not responsible for damage resulting from his neglect or want of skill, beyond the sum of £100 and his current pilotage fee. If therefore, by the negligence of the pilot of a ship a lighter containing goods of great value is run down, there is practically no redress. This condition exists over the whole stretch of 25 or 26 miles of river between Gravesend and London Bridge over which barges are being constantly navigated, and it is submitted that in view of the constantly increasing steamship traffic on the Thames the time has come when, in the interests of the lighterage trade, as well as for the general advantage of the port, the exemption of the shipowner from liability should be abolished, and that the Merchant Shipping Act should be amended in this respect. In consequence of losses sustained by my company through collisions with steam vessels upon the Thames, the following letter was sent by my Association to the Corporation of the Trinity House:—"The Association of Master Lightermen and Barge Owners, Port of London, 109, Fenchurch Street, E.C., 14th March, 1898. Sir,—Upon the 15th April last year, at about half-past 10 a.m., the weather being fine and clear and the tide flood, the s.s. "Amstelstroom,' whilst in Limehouse Reach, and in charge of Edmund Lilev, a duly licensed Trinity House pilot, overtook, collided with, and sunk the lighter 'Ralph,' belonging to the Thames Steam Tug and Lighterage Company, Ltd., who are members of this Association. The collision was so severe that the barge was instantly cut in two, and the lighterman who was in charge thereof narrowly escaped drowning. The pilot is alleged to have transgressed every Thames Conservancy rule, which, under the circumstances, he ought to have observed. The barge owners' loss amounts to £118 9s., and upon the owners of the 'Amstelstroom' being applied to for payment, they promptly referred the barge owners to the pilot, to whom application was made in turn. The pilot promptly denied his liability, and sought to throw the blame upon another s.s. called 'Guildhall,' which was either about to enter, or was in the act of entering, the Millwall Dock. An action was commenced against the pilot in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, in which action he appeared and delivered a statement of defence. The trial took place upon the 28th ultimo, before the Hon. Mr. Justice Mathew, who found that the collision was brought about by the reckless navigation of the 'Amstelstroom,' that no attempt was made and no measures were taken to endeavour to prevent it, and that the defendant, as pilot, had kept on his course regardless of the consequences. Judgment was therefore given for the plaintiffs for £100 and costs, which latter have been taxed at £52 0s. 2d. Application has been made for payment, but the defendant simply declines to make any proposal for a liquidation, and the plaintiffs are therefore left to proceed against him by such process of execution as may be most effective. In addition to the before-mentioned claim, the same company have another claim against the defendant in respect of damages arising out of a collision between barges belonging to them and a steamer under his charge, and Messrs. A. Frey and Co., Limited, also members of this association, have a claim against the same pilot for damages likewise arising out of collision. In no instance has he made the slightest attempt to liquidate these claims or to meet them in a compromising spirit, so that the barge owners must either put up with the loss which they have sustained, or incur the expense of bringing actions against him in order to compel him to do that which without compulsion he ought to do, and which my council understand he is able to do, as he enjoys regular and constant work. In the interests of the various members of this association my council write to bring these circumstances to your notice, and they respectfully invite your Corporation to exercise their disciplinary powers over the pilot in question. In making this request my council wish it to be distinctly understood that they have no personal feeling against the pilot complained of; but as so many cases of this kind occur, they give the foregoing as an instance of the necessity of some steps to be taken to compel the pilots to realise and meet the responsibilities cast upon them by the Pilotage laws. I am, Sir, your obedient servant (signed), Chas. J. Yonwin, Secretary. To the Secretary, Trinity Corporation, Trinity House, Tower Hill, E.C."

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See 4047–9.

3768. Will you tell us what answer, if any, you received from Trinity House?—I will not say that we received any answer, but I saw the secretary of Trinity House. I expect we should have had a formal acknowledgment of the letter, but I don't think the matter was dealt with in the way that we thought it might have been at the time.

3769. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Can you say specifically whether there was an answer?—I cannot from memory. I should think there was an answer, but it did not deal with the matter.

3770. (*Chairman.*) Have you no correspondence to show us on the subject?—Not here.

3771. Or anywhere?—We should have it at the association, undoubtedly. If there is a letter I will undertake to let you have it. If an answer was given it led to no result.

See 4069–70.

3772. Will you continue your evidence, please?—Of the amount of the judgment recovered by my company, £152 0s. 2d., the sum of £16 and no more has been recovered during the past two and a half years from the pilot, who is an undischarged bankrupt. Upon being further pressed for payment he has stated that, in consequence of further claims on him arising out of other collisions, he should have to file his own petition in bankruptcy for the purpose of clearing off all his existing liabilities. A barge owner is liable to pay to each and every claimant all damages which may be caused by collision between his barge and another vessel, if such barge be in the wrong, whereas a shipowner when liable can, under similar circumstances, by virtue of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, limit his liability without regard to the number of claims to £8 per ton, or in case of loss of life to £15 per ton. The barge owner claims to be placed, and I submit that it is only just that he should be placed, upon an equality with the shipowner, and to be able to limit his liability in the same way. A short time ago certain members of my association were in the Admiralty Division, held to be liable in respect of a collision between their barge whilst under oars and a steamer lying alongside a wharf. In consequence of the damage to the steamer and cargo the barge owners had to pay altogether a

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sum of £2,000. The barge was a vessel of 73½ tons register. If she had been propelled by sails and registered under the Merchant Shipping Act her owners' liability towards both shipowner and cargo owners would have been £588.

See 4066-7.

3773. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You say, "A short time ago." This is a specific illustration of an action at law, as I understand. Can you give us the date?—Yes; or I can, if you would prefer it in that form, ask the principal of the particular firm to come here and give that evidence.

3774. If a statement of this kind is made it is a serious thing, and you give it in support of your claim that barge owners should be put on the same footing as shipowners?—Yes.

3775. When you amend your evidence instead of saying "a short time ago" you can give the date?—Yes, I will give you that.

3776. (*Chairman.*) Now will you please continue?—The time has arrived when, in the opinion of the Master Lightermen of London, the restrictions at present imposed upon them in respect of their choice of servants should be abolished. The following resolution was on the 26th November last passed at a meeting of the council of my Association:—"Resolved: That in the opinion of the council of this Association the trade of the Port of London is seriously hampered by the restriction placed upon the employment of lightermen on the River Thames under Section 66 of the Watermen's and Lightermen's Amendment Act, 1859, and the time has arrived when Parliament should be asked to abolish such exclusive privilege and grant to employers the right to employ such men as they deem suitable." This restriction may have had justification in years gone by prior to the advent of steam tugs, or when steam towage was in its infancy, and when a certain amount of skill in navigation and a considerable knowledge of currents and tides were essential on the part of those placed in charge of lighters. Now, owing to the employment of tugs, the duty of such men is to a large extent confined to the making fast of ropes and of watching the property placed under their charge. As an illustration of actual conditions which prevail the case of a sailing barge may be instanced. So long as she does not trade between two points, both of which are within the limits of the Watermen's Company's Act, she is under no necessity to employ licensed men. She comes up the river in charge of two men, neither of whom is certificated nor is a freeman of the Watermen's Company. These men are invariably as capable, thanks to their experience in navigation, as are the licensed watermen whom master lightermen are now compelled to employ even on towed craft, although the tug herself is exempt. The existing obligation of the master lightermen to employ only certain men for the purposes of their trade could be understood if the master were exempt from liability as is a shipowner in the case of employment of a compulsory pilot, or if there were any guarantee of special qualification on the part of those who are licensed by the Watermen's Company; but, as a matter of fact, an apprentice entered at 14 years of age is considered at the age of 16 to be quite equal to the work of a licensed lighterman. This of itself is evidence that no special skill is required. It is contended that the employers should be at liberty to engage any man whom they deem fitted for their work, more especially as under the present *régime* the statutory obligation to employ only licensed men is accompanied by no corresponding duty on the part of the latter to do the work required by them. If master lightermen employ other than licensed men they render themselves liable to penalties; and if new hands are taken on during a strike they must be discharged directly licensed watermen offer to resume work, even though temporarily. It is submitted that the maintenance of the obligation in its present form is undesirable at the present day, and that the restrictions imposed upon masters should be removed. I desire to point out that the trade of London, as a great distributing centre, has largely depended upon that facility for the water carriage of goods within the limits of the port which the Joint Committee have sought to imperil. It may be true that the tendency of the age is towards direct shipment, but a very large transhipment trade is maintained in the Thames at the present time, and will be maintained all the while cargo, whether from inland centres, coastwise, or from the Continent, may be relied upon to make up the freight of ships which, owing to their great size, afford an economical means of transport. Were any restriction placed upon the present freedom of the port in respect of the carriage of goods by means of lighters and barges, there is good ground for apprehending a diversion of cargo and a consequent loss of trade which would be inimical to the best interests of the Thames. I submit that at the present day, when there is great and increasing competition in the steamship trade, it is extremely undesirable that the welfare of the Port of London should be largely dependent on the policy adopted by dock companies whose interests are necessarily determined by dividend considerations, and whose financial prospects have been unfavourably affected by the fact that goods now pass more rapidly into consumption than formerly, and do not therefore yield so large a warehousing profit as in previous years. Looking at the future of the Port of London, it would be eminently desirable that its river and dock waters should be controlled by some representative public body which would be able to take a broad view of its requirements, and to anticipate those improvements which are essential to the maintenance of its position among the great ports of the world. The aim of such a body would necessarily be to offer all possible facilities to the various interests concerned so that the cost of work in the port would, together with its more rapid despatch, enable London to hold its own against the rivals which now threaten it.

See 5628.

3777. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With reference to what you have just now said, can you give us any idea of what kind of public body you have in your mind?—A public body that would be representative of the interests that are concerned in the commerce of the port: shipowners, merchants, and undoubtedly the representatives of the Corporation and the London County Council; and we might suggest the lightermen.

3778. When you say "controlled" is it your idea that they should be the owners of the docks as well?—Undoubtedly of the dock waters.

3779. And the quays?—Of course that would involve the present warehouses of the wharfingers along the riverside. They might be let, as the wharves are now, to private owners, and worked separately from the dock waters.

3780. First of all they would be in the ownership of this public body, and then let by them?—Yes.

3781. You have not gone into the details of what the expense would be, and how much property would have to be acquired, and points of that kind?—No, we have not. I think wharfingers and merchants are perhaps better able to deal with that than the lightermen would be.

3782. Then with reference to what you say as to the barge owners being obliged to take back men who have been on strike, the moment they are willing to come in again, have you ever tested a case of some man who has left his employment and gone on strike, and then come and offered to be taken on again?—I have passed through several strikes, and my experience is this: If I fill up the barges with men who may be competent to navigate them during the time of strike, when I am entitled to employ a man who is not licensed, immediately a man with a licence tenders himself for employment at the usual rate of remuneration I am bound to employ him.

3783. Have you ever tested such a case?—Yes.

3784. Can you refer us to the particulars of the case?—I would not risk a judgment. The Act of Parliament is so specific and clear. There is no doubt about it whatever. I am compelled under the Watermen's Act to employ a licensed man, so I have never risked taking a case to Court.

3785. That is not an answer to my question. I wished to know how far you have tested the point. You have never appealed to a judge on the question that, when these men have refused employment and you have been obliged to employ other men, the men who have been out on strike have come back again, and you have been bound to dismiss the other people, and take back the men who have been out?—I am not speaking of such a case as you put. The man does not refuse employment at the usual rates. I say when the men are prepared to come back on terms that are arranged, then immediately I am obliged to employ the licensed men.

3786. I wished to know how far that point has been before the judges and actually decided?—Such a case has not arisen because, as I say, we should not be justi-

fied. I do not know whether I have made myself clear. The section of the Act of Parliament to which I am referring says that if we are unable to employ a licensed man at the usual rate of remuneration, then we may employ whom we like; but if the licensed man is prepared to work at the usual rate of remuneration, which becomes the usual rate as soon as we have agreed terms, then we are compelled to employ him. In such a case we have never tested the point, because there has been no occasion for it. We are obliged to take the man back, the section of the Act of Parliament is so clear.

3787. That is all you have to say, is it? Your interpretation has never, in fact, been brought to the point of a judicial decision?—No, I cannot say that it has.

3788. You say that on the average you have about 400 craft engaged in your work?—Yes.

3789. Then you give the number of people that you employ on the average, including, I think, a good many that are not engaged in navigation, properly speaking. I find that you have not got one man on the average for each craft. You say you have 105 freeman, 30 apprentices, 110 watchmen, five engineers, five stokers, and 70 barge builders and repairers. Those do not add up to 400 altogether?—That may be, because we should have probably, at our railway depôts, for instance, 30 or 40 barges at one time waiting to discharge, which may be there waiting for days together. They would not require a man in attendance on each barge.

3790. How many of these men that I have enumerated are actually engaged in navigation, and what is the average number you have engaged in navigation?—The freemen and the apprentices would be generally engaged in navigation.

3791. That is 135?—Yes, that is 135.

3792. And the watchmen?—They would be engaged in looking after barges in the various docks.

3793. You are not compelled by the Watermen's Company to employ them?—No.

3794. So that 135 is the number you are compelled to employ for 400 craft?—Yes, that is so.

3795. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have referred to towage by steam. Do you know that lighters are navigated by oars, independently of steam?—Yes; but the great majority are towed.

3796. And, in the case of your being permitted to employ your own men independently of the Watermen's Company, would you have any examination at all to ascertain whether they are qualified?—We should have to judge by our experience, the same as we do now. We do not look upon the licence as any guarantee of a man's competency. Unfortunately, we are bound in all cases to employ the licensed men, but we should have a much larger area of competent men to select from if we were not.

3797. But the fact of their being freemen of the Watermen's Company surely is supposed, at all events, to be a guarantee that they know their work?—It is supposed to be; but we do not look upon the licence as any guarantee of their ability. We rely upon the famous experience and knowledge of the particular men. I think the reference that I made to the fact that an apprentice at 16 holds the licence which qualifies him to navigate the largest craft is an answer, perhaps. If a lad of 16 is qualified it does not seem to indicate that a very great amount of skill is guaranteed by the licence; but the lad of 16 gets the licence.

3798. (*Mr. Peel.*) I see you do a great deal of your business with the railway companies?—Yes.

3799. You spoke of railway depôts?—Yes.

3800. Where do you actually deliver to the railway companies, do you deliver to wharves?—To and from the railway depôts, which are situated at the Collier Dock, Poplar, for the London and North-Western and the Great Western Railway Companies; Dudman's Dock, Deptford, for the Brighton Railway Company; and Brentford Dock again for the Great Western Railway Company.

3801. Is it always going into a dock? Do you always go from one dock into another dock?—The whole of the business is not done within the dock. At Deptford Wharf thee is an outside wharf for the Brighton Railway Company.

3802. Which is possessed by the railway company?—Yes; and we deliver to and from wharves for the railway companies as well as to and from the various docks.

3803. You said that any charges made on the barges would affect the transhipment trade of London?—Yes. *Mr. T. W. Jacobs, jun.*

3804. Of course you do not apply that to the business which is not transhipment trade?—The transit trade would affect London undoubtedly—that which passes to the railway companies for transport to various parts of the country inland. To the extent of any toll imposed upon traffic carried by barges the Port of London would be handicapped as compared with ports such as Liverpool or Hull. The same foreign ports send both to Liverpool and London, and that which is distributed in the country is distributed from either port, according to the facilities which are offered. 20 Mar. 1901. See 5628.

3805. I thought you laid special stress upon it with reference to the transhipment trade in goods coming from foreign ports?—Yes; and goods passing into the country. My view was to draw a distinction between goods which passed through London for other destinations and those which remained in London for consumption.

3806. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I will ask you a few questions about this compulsory pilotage matter, which you have raised. We understand that you say your secretary will let us have the reply to the letter you have read?—Yes. See 4069-70.

3807. You had an interview, I think you told us, with the Secretary of the Trinity House?—Yes, as a result of previous interviews I had had with the Secretary of Lloyd's and the chairman of one of the big underwriting associations.

3808. We are at present dealing with Trinity House. Was the Secretary of Trinity House impressed with this grievance?—Yes, I think so. He led me to believe so; but he put it that the Trinity House could not take the initiative in any reform that was necessary.

3809. This is a case, as I understand it, in which a man who you say now is an undischarged bankrupt is in the service of the Corporation of Trinity House, and was unable to meet his obligations imposed by a court of law to the extent of £152, and that you suffered a loss of £136. Am I correct?—Yes.

3810. That is a correct recital?—Yes; that is so.

3811. Did the Corporation of Trinity House offer any defence for having such a person in their employment?—The only excuse offered, if I may so call it, by the secretary was that the man was moving a large number of vessels upon the river, and that, having regard to the extent of the business he did, the Trinity House Corporation did not feel justified in dealing with him in a summary manner, to the extent of withdrawing his licence or curtailing his privileges.

3812. Then the secretary of your association makes this assertion in the last paragraph of the letter: "So many cases of the kind occur." Do you come before us to corroborate that?—Yes.

3813. You see this is a serious matter?—Yes.

3814. It is a charge against the Trinity House. No commercial undertaking would go on employing such a person as that, and I want you to be very careful. You say you corroborate that statement—"So many cases of the kind occur"?—Yes.

3815. Now can you give me any of those cases?—I have mentioned two or three cases here against Liley, this particular pilot.

3816. Yes, we have got those, but I mean apart from those cases?—I have another case in my mind where a barge was run over and sunk.

3817. Can you tell us the name of the man?—I could not tell you without reference. I could not give you further particulars.

3818. It is not that I am wanting these things, only I want the corroboration?—We can furnish further evidence upon this point undoubtedly, if further instances are required.

3819. These words of the secretary of your association are rather serious: "So many cases of the kind occur." You have had 30 years' experience?—Yes.

3820. You are a witness of great experience, if I may say so. Am I to take it from you that you corroborate the secretary of your association in these words: "So many cases of the kind occur"?—Undoubtedly

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3821. In other words, you know that the Trinity House has a number of men who are unable to meet their obligations in this respect in the same way as this man Liley?—My own company have had other cases of the kind, and I think other witnesses will be here before you, who will be able to give you specific cases to-day.

3822. I am asking you with your 30 years' experience behind you?—There are undoubtedly other cases where pilots have not been able to meet their obligations?—

3823. Licensed pilots?—Yes.

3824. Can you give us the names of two or three?—I cannot offhand.

3825. But, surely, this is a serious matter, and you put it before us as a serious matter. Are you unable to tell us the names of any other pilots. I will not press the matter further, if you are not able to tell us any other names?—No, I am not able to give you specific names. I can furnish further particulars undoubtedly. See 5575.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) But when a witness comes here he should have all the facts.

Recalled 4066.

Mr. William Varco Williams called and examined.

Mr. W. V. Williams.

3826. (*Chairman.*) You are chairman of Samuel Williams and Sons, Limited, a member of the Thames Conservancy Board, a member of the Watermen's Company, and a Commissioner of Sewers for the county of Essex?—Yes.

3827. You have had 25 years' experience of the Port of London, and are well acquainted with the character and extent of the work which is carried on therein?—Yes.

3828. Will you tell us the capital of your company?—My company has a capital of £280,000, and owns eight steam tugs, 190 barges, and four steam dredgers. During the past year we lightered between 900,000 and 1,000,000 tons, of which about 100,000 went into dock. I may say that in addition to the 190 barges that we possess ourselves, we have a large number of craft on hire from time to time—on an average about 30, with a tonnage of 3,000 tons. My company are also owners of a continuous length of river frontage, amounting to something over a mile on the Essex shore of Halfway Reach. With regard to the proposal that quays on the Thames should be substituted for further dock accommodation, my company have from time to time given this matter very serious consideration. Antwerp and other continental ports, where the system is in operation, have been visited, and the conclusion arrived at is that the cost of providing quay space, with the necessary depth alongside of, say, 25ft. at low water (ordinary spring tides) is prohibitive, and that it would be far more economical to increase the facilities of the port by either extending the present docks, or, better still, by building new ones. See 3846-7.

3829. You say "the conclusion has been arrived at." Do you state this of your own knowledge?—We took out certain figures, and that was the conclusion we arrived at.

3830. Have you gone into the matter of cost?—Yes, we have gone into the matter of cost.

3831. And prepared estimates?—I cannot say that they were of a very definite character. We were soon satisfied that it would be more economical to construct a dock upon this particular property that we possess than to put a quay wall along the river front. On these grounds I consider that the Dock Companies have received very considerable assistance and advantage in being permitted by their Acts of Parliament to provide quay space in their docks at so much cheaper rate than the same could be provided on the river banks. The chief difficulty that would be met with in constructing quay walls, which would have to be at least 50ft. in height, would be the foundations. The rise and fall of the tide is so great that extraordinary care would have to be exercised in mooring and continual watching; while the cost of providing the special class of machinery for either discharging or loading cargo would be great, and the difference in time as compared with a vessel discharging alongside the dock quay would be considerable. Were the river to be dredged to a depth of 25ft. alongside any such proposed quay for any considerable length, it would probably, we are advised, materially alter the direction of the scour of the river.

3832. By whom were you advised?—We were advised by the Thames Conservancy Board. We approached them to see whether permission would be granted by them as the authority to dredge a berth of that depth alongside. The suggestion that we received from them was that there would be probably opposition from them on the ground that it would so materially alter the scour of the river that they would not allow us to do it.

3833. Have you taken the expert opinion of an engineer on the point?—No, not beyond that. In my opinion the deepening of the channel to 30ft. up to the Albert Dock, and widening the same to 1,000ft., while doubtless desirable from many points of view, is, on the score of the enormous expense, unadvisable at the present moment. The cost of dredging alone has been roughly estimated at a sum of £2,000,000, entirely exclusive of the necessary training walls in the lower reaches, which would cost a very large sum.

3834. Can you tell us by whom this estimate was made?—There, again, we have not gone very closely into the figures, but I may say that we have been engaged in dredging operations in the River Thames and in other ports from time to time, and, taking into consideration the quantities that would have to be dealt with, that was our estimate as to what it would probably cost.

3835. That was the estimate of your company, you mean?—Yes; that was the estimate of our company, we having some considerable experience in work of a similar nature. In addition to this, there would be the serious question of maintenance of the river walls under the jurisdiction of the Sewers Commissioners for Essex and Kent respectively, which walls might and probably would be materially affected by such deepening. These are merely floating walls, and when once in any way disturbed, it is a most difficult and expensive operation to render them again secure, as I can vouch for by my own personal experience. I think that very great delay is caused to the traffic generally, owing to the fact that the dock companies, except in the case of the Surrey Commercial Docks, have not sufficient pumping power for maintaining their head water in the dock to admit of their making use of the locks, except for two or three hours before high water. Take, for instance, a tug with six barges in tow, containing, say, 800 tons of goods. Leaving London Bridge at high water, she will be outside the Albert Docks entrance about two hours afterwards. She has, under present conditions, to lie there with her tow during the remaining five hours of the ebb, and probably two or three of the flood before the barges are allowed in. By the time the craft coming out of the dock can be got hold of by the tug, it is frequently too late to save high water even up to London Bridge. Were facilities afforded for docking and undocking craft on the ebb tide, so as to get those undocked away on the low water and early flood, they would then be well out of the way by what is ordinarily called tide time, which is naturally the proper time for handling steamers and other large vessels coming in or going out of dock. In my opinion nearly the whole of the present difficulties existing in connection with the Port are owing to the dock companies lacking the necessary means to bring their plant and machinery into such a state of efficiency as to meet latter-day requirements; in other words, the delays which shipowners complain of are not in my judgment brought about, except in a very few instances, by their inability to navigate up and down the river, but by the trouble they experience in docking and undocking and the handling of their cargoes when alongside the dock quay. With regard to compulsory pilotage, I am of opinion that the system is an extremely unsatisfactory one, and should be modified. Also that the same privileges as to limitation of liability should be granted to the bargeowner as to the shipowner. I agree upon these points with the views which have been expressed by Mr. Jacobs. So far as the lighterage trade is concerned, they have no reason to complain of the administration of the Thames Conservancy Board, who in their regulations for traffic, providing of mooring accommodation, etc., have always endeavoured to meet the trade in a fair and equitable spirit. I am strongly of opinion that steps should be taken to limit the speed at which steamers, especially excursion boats during the summer months, should be navigated, and I believe that in the

best interests of all concerned it would be most desirable that the larger class of excursion boats should not be permitted to navigate above Tilbury or Gravesend. With regard to the proposed abolition of the privileges of the watermen and lightermen on the River Thames I agree that some modification of the present system is desirable. I believe that some form of registration and licence is necessary, especially in the case of the watermen.

See 3865-8.

3836. With reference to your statement as to the dock companies lacking the necessary means to bring their plant and machinery into such a state of efficiency as to meet latter-day requirements, can you give us any more specific complaint? This is made in very general terms?—I am afraid I cannot go any nearer than that. We do say that as lightermen we have these difficulties in getting in and out at low water.

3837. To begin with, I am speaking more particularly with regard to what you told us as to the difficulties at present existing owing to the dock companies not having the necessary means to bring their plant and machinery into a state of efficiency. Are you referring to anything beyond?—No, it is only in general terms. In my opinion I do not think they have the same amount of labour-saving appliances in the Port of London that they have elsewhere.

3838. For instance?—For handling bulky general cargoes. I should say grain and that kind of thing—especially grain perhaps.

3839. Is that what you were more particularly referring to?—This is what I had more particularly in my mind.

3840. Have you any other specific instance?—I have no other specific point beyond the one I mentioned. That is the difficulty with regard to getting in and out of the dock; and I should also corroborate what was said by the previous witness with regard to towage.

3841. You told us that in your opinion the dock companies lack the necessary means to bring their plant and machinery into a state of efficiency?—Quite so.

3842. Do you say that there you are referring to grain cargoes?—To the handling of grain cargoes and labour-saving machinery generally; and in the Albert and Victoria Docks we find in practice that the tugs that are at our disposal for towing craft up and down are out of date and not at all suitable for the purpose.

3843. That is two things you have told us of. Have you anything else?—I have nothing else.

3844. And you complain of the handling of the cargo when alongside the dock quays?—Yes, I have nothing specific in that way.

3845. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I am rather anxious to probe this engineering matter a little further. Are you an engineer?—No, I am a lighterman.

3846 You said, "The conclusion arrived at is that the cost of providing quay space, with the necessary depth alongside of, say, 25ft. at low water (ordinary spring tides), is prohibitive." Can you tell me in a sentence or two on what you base that: what investigation you made; how the conclusion was arrived at, and by whom?—It was based upon our own personal experience in connection with the mile of river frontage to which I have alluded, of which we are the owners. Our original idea was to put the quay wall there. We made a number of experiments on the spot, and took bearings, and so on; we took out roughly the estimated cost of putting this wall in, and the conclusion we arrived at was that it was actually cheaper to build a dock with the ordinary entrance than to construct this quay wall on the outside of our line of frontage.

See 3828.

3847. It is based on the personal experience of your company?—Yes; it is based on our own personal experience on the spot.

3848. Then you said that if the river were to be dredged to a depth of 25ft. alongside any such proposed quay for any considerable length it would probably, you were advised, materially alter the direction of the scour of the river. Does "advised" in that case mean the Thames Conservancy's intimation that they would not permit it?—It was not of an official character from the Thames Conservancy; it was an opinion expressed by Mr. More, the engineer. When we asked him if we suggested to carry out this quay wall whether there would be any objection from an engineering point of view by the Thames Conservancy that was his personal answer. It was not official.

3849. Then it is Mr. More really?—Yes.

3850. Then you spoke of the deepening and widening the channel up to the Albert Dock, and the cost of dredging and so on, and then you said, in answer to the Chairman's questions, that you had very considerable experience in dredging. Will you give us that in specific terms? Where have you had considerable experience?—We have been engaged in dredging operations in the River Thames for a good many years. I think our first dredger was built in 1869, and since then we have been dredging continuously in the River Thames, and we have been to Portsmouth, Plymouth, and other places; therefore, we have all the data at our disposal for forming a reasonable estimate as to the cost of such a gigantic operation as this.

3851. It is based upon your own experience?—Yes.

3852. What dredging per annum have you done during the 25 years, and where?—We have been continuously dredging in the River Thames, practically.

See 5578.

3853. Where, in the River Thames?—In various parts of the River Thames. We have raised large quantities of Thames ballast for the making of concrete and other purposes, so that we know what the cost of dredging operations is. We have done a great deal of dredging for the dock companies.

3854. I want something more specific, if you please. What is your maximum in a year in thousands of tons?—I have not that at my fingers' ends, but I can furnish it.

3855. You understand my object. I want to get at the magnitude of your operations?—Yes; quite so.

3856. How many days in a year are your dredgers at work?—We work 300 days in the year.

3857. Every day except Sunday?—Yes, every day except Sunday, practically.

3858. Of what capacity is the dredger?—The present dredger has a capacity of 300 tons per hour.

3859. Would you like to say it is continuous; that the dredger is at work ten hours a day for 300 days?—No. Owing to the distance we have to go it is only towards low water that we can reach the stuff. But we have done a great deal of dredging outside the Albert Dock entrance. When the new jetty was placed there we did a good deal of work for the Dock Company. We have been dredging for the new ironclad which is to be launched from the Thames Ironworks to-morrow. We are constantly engaged in such work.

3860. At all events, you have considerable experience in dredging?—Yes, considerable—especially in connection with the river Thames.

3861. When you refer to the enormous expense, do you do that as one of the public, or do you do it as representing your firm. I want rather to know what your interest in the matter is?—Our interest as lightermen is that the facilities of the port should be increased, and that the trade of the port should be increased. We consider that a sum of £2,000,000 might be more profitably spent in other directions. That is our point.

3862. But you would like money spent on the port and river?—It requires it, without doubt.

3863. Then when you speak of the shipowners, forgive me for suggesting that your craft are not ocean-going vessels, of course?—No, they are not.

3864. To that extent the persons who have the ocean-going vessels may be left to speak for themselves, may they not?—Quite so.

3865. Then speaking with regard to the proposed abolition of the privileges of the watermen and lightermen, you said: "I agree that some modification of the present system is desirable." Can you give us a little more specifically what is in your mind?—The suggestion has been made that the privileges of watermen and lightermen should be absolutely and entirely swept away. On that point I am at issue with most of the members of the Association, especially in connection with the watermen. The watermen are a class of men who are employed in rowing labourers from the shore to and from steamers and other vessels working in the Pool and other districts. I think that, at any rate in their case, it would be most desirable that they should be men who have passed a reasonable examination in connection with the river, and who are properly acquainted with it. They frequently

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carry eight or ten men in their boats, and if incompetent men were allowed to navigate these boats I think very often there would be a serious loss of life which should be provided against. With regard to the lightermen, I do not know that there is so much to be said for them. It is quite true that nowadays nearly all the work of the port is done by towing, but as far as the apprentices are concerned I do not quite agree with what Mr. Jacobs said about their having their full licence at 16 years of age. I think in that case the barge they are in must be towed behind a tug. I do not think they would be allowed to navigate a barge under oars.

3866. What you have now said amplifies and explains the word "modification"?—Yes.

3867. I gather that you differ from the opinion of your Association?—Yes.

3868. And even from the last witness, Mr. Jacobs, in some respects?—Yes.

3869. (*Mr. Peel.*) You said the speed of excursion boats should be limited. At what speed are they allowed to go now?—There is no limit. The Thames Conservancy have no bye-law dealing with this matter. It is more a question of fact to prove that they were travelling at too great a speed on any particular occasion. What may be an extravagant rate of speed at one point may not be at another. But we suffer a great deal from the speed at which these boats do travel from time to time. Off Dagenham we have a number of barges constantly lying loaded, and on Sundays when these excursion boats are passing up and down, we find it necessary to have tugs and men in attendance in order to make the craft fast, as they may be broken adrift by these vessels passing up and down. They are continually increasing in size, and we do really believe that the interests of everybody would be served if they were not allowed to come above Gravesend or Tilbury. We consider that there is a very great risk to life and an extremely great risk to property in their coming above there.

3870. Could you give us any specific instance of damage which you have suffered in that way recently?—I could furnish you in the course of the day with numbers of claims that we have sent in and been paid.

3871. You have not had any barges sunk by these steamers, have you?—Oh, yes.

3872. With reference to deepening the channel, you say it is desirable from many points of view. Is that with reference to these larger steamers which are now coming up the Thames?—Yes.

3873. Is there any other point of view from which you think it would be desirable to increase the depth of the channel?—No. I think that is the only point.

3874. And your sole objection to deepening the channel is the expense?—I think the money might be spent in a better way. I think that is not what is most wanted.

3875. But, of course, if the non-deepening of the channel prevented these larger vessels coming up, you would consider that a very serious blow to the trade of London?—I do not think it does prevent them coming up. It merely incurs a certain amount of delay, and if the dispatch were increased by an hour or two occasionally, or on an occasional boat, I do not think it is worth paying this money for it.

3876. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You say your company owns four steam dredgers; when was the first built?—In 1869.

3877. And the last?—Last year.

3878. At what depth of water can you dredge?—40 feet.

3879. Then practically you can dredge the Thames at any time of the tide; that is, with some; I presume they are not all 40ft.?—We have had to go lower down the river year by year to find this material.

3880. But I am talking more especially of dredging shoals and deepening the river for the requirements of trade. What do you take as the rise and fall of the Thames?—20ft., practically.

3881. Do the dredgers all dredge to 40ft.?—No; we have two that would dredge 40ft., or probably a little more, but about 40ft. is their proper working depth.

3882. They are ordinary ladder bucket dredgers, I suppose?—Yes.

3883. How much would the largest carry?—She carries nothing but her own machinery. She loads barges or hoppers.

3884. Have you any steam hopper barges?—None.

3885. You mentioned the term "floating walls"; will you tell me what "floating walls" means?—In front of our property we do not find in practice that the wall has any foundation. We prove by experiment that the tide will actually find its way underneath the wall. We have there a lake of some 80 acres of water, and we find when we have a very high spring tide in the summer months, and there is very little water coming down from the country to the lake, that the water will find its way out of the river, and actually flow up into the lake. Then when we have a quantity of flood water down, as we have at the present time, and we have an extremely low spring tide the water will flow up on the outer side of the wall in the river.

3886. You have spoken of facilities being afforded for docking and undocking craft. Would you be prepared to pay for any extra pumping?—No.

3887. Then with regard to what you have said about limiting the speed of steamers, I presume that the paddle-wheel vessels affect you more than the screw vessels?—Generally speaking that is so.

3888. Are not some of those accidents to which you refer owing to the barges themselves being overloaded?—Situated as we are, in a rather exposed position, we never load the barges beyond a certain depth.

3889. I ask that question because I have noticed barges once or twice affected by a steamer going down the river, and water washing over them, and it appeared to me that the barges were very much overloaded?—I do not think I could admit that the damage is caused by the overloading of the barge. We say it is owing to the excessive rate of speed at which these vessels are navigated at certain states of the tide.

3890. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) How many men do you employ in connection with the 190 barges, and how many of them belong to the Lightermen's Company?—I should think between 75 and 100. It varies at different times of the year.

3891. Altogether you employ that number?—Between 75 and 100.

3892. How many of those belong to the Lightermen's Company?—I am referring to the lightermen pure and simple—lightermen and apprentices.

3893. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you read any of the evidence given before this Commission?—Some of it.

3894. Let me refer you to a question that was put by Sir John Wolfe-Barry on the 4th December. It is Question 2907. He asked a witness "From your knowledge of the craft on the river do you think any difficulty would be experienced if the monopoly of the "Watermen's Company was broken up?" I put that question to you?—I do not think there would be any difficulty in carrying on the trade of the Port, but I do say that there would be a serious risk if these watermen's boats were to be allowed to be navigated by incompetent men.

3895. In fact your reply was given to me when you amplified the word "modification"?—Yes.

Recalled 5578.

Mr. Richard Lambert called and examined.

Mr. R. Lambert.

3896. (*Chairman.*) You are manager and secretary of the Union Lighterage Company, Limited, of London?—Yes.

3897. You appear here representing the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge Owners?—Yes.

3898. Will you give us some particulars with respect to the Union Lighterage Company?—I have had 33 to 34 years' experience in the lighterage trade in the Port of London. The Union Lighterage Company, Limited, has a capital of £50,000, and £80,000 debentures, and was incorporated in 1876. It commenced businesss with between 40 and 50 barges, and now owns 349 barges of a dead weight capacity of 28,000 tons. The company also hires barges, as occasion requires, and when busy has some 400 barges at work. The company also owns five steam tugs, and has its own barge building and repairing yard, and employs from 65 to 70 licensed lightermen, from 30 to 50 apprentices, and from 70 to 75 non-freemen. I have taken out parti-

culars of the tonnage carried by the company in the month of March last as a fair average month, and find that 64,000 tons of goods were lightered. Of this quantity about 9,000 tons was traffic to and from the railways, about 15,000 tons was transhipment traffic to and from coasting and continental steamers, 12,000 tons was on account of wharfingers, 14,000 tons was oil, and about 14,000 tons were timber and goods to factories and private wharves on river and canals (about 35,000 tons was traffic in and out of docks). I have considered the questions which were issued by the Royal Commissioners to the Master Lightermen's Association, upon the council of which I am a member on behalf of my company. I think it is an acknowledged fact that owing to the increase in the size of steamers they are unable to go into the upper docks to discharge, and as there is not much warehousing accommodation in the lower docks, a very large portion of their cargo has necessarily to be brought up the river by lighters, and consequently there has been a considerable increase in the lighterage business during the last few years. The collection and delivery of goods by lighters enables merchants, wharfingers, and manufacturers to get such goods conveyed from and to their premises on the river and adjacent canals at a very moderate cost, and any dues levied upon the lighters or upon their cargoes for entering or leaving the docks would act prejudicially to those, including Master Lightermen, who have embarked very large sums in acquiring and extending waterside premises and building up businesses on the strength of the various Acts of Parliament passed during the past century, giving lighters free access to and from the docks. The law of compulsory pilotage in the port, under which, in the event of a collision occasioned by the pilot's default, a shipowner is exempted, and the pilot himself is not liable for more than £100 and his current pilotage, is felt to be a hardship. This is a very old grievance, and the hardships from time to time suffered by the owners of craft and goods have been laid before various Governments. I submit that the time has now arrived when it should be settled that the liability of a shipowner for loss or damage occasioned by the fault or incapacity of any pilot acting in charge of the ship shall not be affected by the compulsory employment of the pilot. The unlimited liability of a master lighterman is a very serious matter, and calls for amendment. At present the law holds a master lighterman liable for any loss of or damage to goods he carries, unless such loss or damage arises from the act of God or the King's enemies, and he is also liable for any damage caused by his barge to other vessels, cargoes, and persons to any amount arising from the negligence of the man in charge, whom, by virtue of Section 66 of the Watermen's Company Act, he is compelled to employ. Master lightermen maintain that they should be placed on the same footing as the owners of sailing barges registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, whose liability under similar circumstances is limited to £8 per ton, or in case of loss of life to £15 per ton. The obligations placed upon barge owners by Section 66 of the Watermen and Lightermen's Act, operates prejudicially to the interests of the trade of the Port. At the present time a very large proportion of the barges used for the transportation of merchandise are towed by tugs. No skill is required on the part of the man in charge of a barge so towed, and the present certificate held by him is not evidence of his competency. In order to strengthen my contention, I desire at this point to call attention to the exemptions which have already been allowed, and which are contained in Sections 311, 312, and 313 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, whereby all lighters passing entirely through the limits of the Watermen's Company Act, and any lighter navigating the Grand Junction Canal passing into or out of the said canal from or to the Thames; all lighters navigated from places above Teddington Lock as far as London Bridge; and lighters passing along the River Lea and its branches into or from or along the Thames, are not required to be navigated by a freeman, apprentice, or other person licensed by the said Company. I further desire to call attention to the fact that by a judgment of the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice delivered on the 2nd day of July, 1898, in an action, *Kennaird v. Cory and Son, Limited*, it was held that Bye-law 98 of the Watermen's Company, which sought to apply Section 66 to steam tugs was *ultra vires* as to those vessels, so that neither the master nor the mate in charge is required to be a licensed man, although having the government and controlling power over six laden barges and the responsibility for the safe navigation of both tug and tow, whilst the man upon each barge must be either a freeman or a licensed apprentice, although he has, comparatively speaking, nothing to do whilst under way. This, I submit, is an anomaly which should be put an end to, and I call attention to the operation of the statute as an existing defect which requires to be remedied. In the interest of the trade of the Port it is important that every facility should be afforded to merchants to avail themselves of the cheap method of collection and delivery of goods by barge, and that the time is past when freedom should be restricted. What adds to the cost of the Port is the delay in docking and undocking barges and in discharging cargoes from steamers. The present docks are not designed in the best manner for berthing ships with a large quantity of cargo for overside delivery, and the appliances are not adequate to ensure prompt discharge of cargo and loading same into barge. The existing defects have, I find, been fully dealt with by other witnesses who are to give evidence. More moorings should be laid down for steamers wishing to discharge into the river, and greater accommodation should be afforded for mooring barges in roads set apart for that purpose. I am in favour of a Dock and Harbour Board, which should have the control of the river up to London Bridge, and the water and quay space in the docks, but should not undertake the storing of goods. Further dock accommodation is urgently required, and it should be on the jetty system, and fitted with all modern appliances for the prompt discharge and loading of steamers, and for the equally prompt discharge and loading of barges. In place of spending several millions for the purpose of dredging a 30-foot channel up to the Albert Docks, I would prefer to see the money expended in constructing a modern dock properly fitted, in accordance with the requirements of the day.

3899. Where do you suggest this dock should be?—At Tilbury.

3900. What do you suggest its size should be?—It should be the largest possible.

3901. And cost?—I am unable to form any opinion upon that. With reference to the collection of timber overside, it is a fact that merchants having wharves on the river and canals can and do send their craft to secure delivery of their timber, and get possession of it within a few days after the commencement of discharge, whereas it frequently happens when the timber has to be stored in the Surrey Commercial Docks, it is not sorted and a return issued to the merchant until several weeks after it is landed. I cite this as showing how advantageous it is to the merchant to have delivery free by lighters. I think attention should be called to the fact that all dock companies have an unlimited supply of river water free of cost for the purposes of their docks, and in this respect are not put to any expense. Speaking generally, I agree with the complaints which have been set out by the Master Lightermen's Association. The docks should be under the protection of the Metropolitan Police, as the dock constables do not afford the necessary protection to workmen using the docks when labour disturbances arise. At the time the dock companies obtained their first Act, compensation of about one million pounds was paid to the wharfingers, and free water was granted to the lightermen. If this privilege that the lightermen now enjoy is abolished, the master lightermen would be entitled to claim compensation in the same way as the wharfingers were compensated.

See 3723–41

3902. With reference to what you say about the police question, have you any particular case to which you are referring?—During the recent strike there was not sufficient protection to the men who were working during the strike.

3903. Can you tell us of any particular instance when that was the case?—Men were intimidated on several occasions. My company had to arrange for police protection at the Victoria Dock, so that the men we had at work might receive protection. The moment those police constables were withdrawn, intimidation immediately began.

3904. Did you make any representation to the dock companies?—Yes, we saw the dock officials on the question. They would not provide the Metropolitan Police protection, we had to do that ourselves; but an arrangement was ultimately made whereby certain police protection was afforded, and the master lightermen and the dock company and others interested shared in the expense. But the dock company have really no con

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stables; there are uniformed watchmen to patrol the dock, and there are not a very large number of those.

3905. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You said that compensation of about one million pounds was paid to the wharfingers, but was not that in consideration of the monopoly granted to the docks?—The monopoly was granted to the docks, and free water was granted to lightermen.

3906. The monopoly was abolished after 21 years, was it not?—That was a monopoly that they should warehouse goods.

3907. The free water clause was given as part consideration for that?—There was no limit to the free water clause; it was perpetual.

3908. But in consideration of the dock getting a monopoly for warehousing, certain terms were accorded for barges?—I do not read it in that way. I read it that they had this privilege with regard to the dock, and they were permitted to make this water space, and the arrangement was that the lightermen should have free entrance and exit for their barges for all time.

3909. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is it not the case that the free water clause was inserted with Dock Companies which had no such monopoly?—All dock companies.

3910. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) As to the alteration you suggest as regards the certificates of men employed on lighters, I am not saying, of course, that any change will be recommended, but would your views be met by certificates not being required by men in charge of barges which are being towed, or do you wish to go further?—I submit that the employer should engage those men whom he deems suitable for the work, whether the barges are towed or whether they are navigated under oars. At the present time he has to use his judgment. The licence now granted to the lightermen extends for the navigation of barges from Teddington Lock to Lower Hope Point, Gravesend. There are numbers of men who hold those licences who have never navigated up to Brentford. If I had to send a man there I should want a man who had had experience; I do not accept a certificate as evidence of competency.

3911. Do you wish the certificate system abolished altogether?—Entirely.

3912. And abolished in the case of men in charge of boats in tow?—I wish it abolished entirely, so far as lightermen are concerned.

3913. (*Mr. Ellis.*) With regard to the question of compulsory pilotage, were you in the room when Mr. Jacobs was examined?—Yes.

3914. You have heard his replies with regard to specific cases, and the interview he had. Has your company suffered any loss or damage in this matter from the inability of pilots to meet their obligations?—There is one case, but not a very extensive one; it was a great number of years ago, where we had to accept a very small amount owing to the pilot saying he could not pay.

3915. So far as your statement that all compulsory pilotage in the Port is felt to be a hardship is concerned, that is the only personal experience you have had?—That is my only personal experience; but, of course, the risk exists at the present moment.

3916. I want to get from you whether that is all you have to tell us with regard to your company?—Just so.

3917. Did you hear the evidence of the last witness with regard to the question of certificates and so on?—Yes.

3918. Do you concur with that—you differ from it, I gather?—So far as the lightermen are concerned, I say there should be no certificate whatever.

3919. Your reply to Mr. Lyttelton exhausts the matter. You have nothing to add to it?—Only that with respect to the watermen who ply for hire they are in a totally different position. I should have no objection to their having a licence or certificate; but seeing that the master lighterman is responsible for the negligence of his servant, we maintain that we have a right to select that servant. The certificate is not evidence of competency, and it does not relieve us from the liability, which is unlimited.

3920. You said that in place of spending several millions for the purpose of dredging a 30ft. channel up to Albert Docks you would prefer to see it spent in another way. You mean, of course, from your point of view, the money could be better spent than in providing this channel?—Undoubtedly.

3921. You do not speak of ocean-going steamers?—No. I anticipate that in 60 or 70 years' time the Victoria Dock and the East India Dock will be obsolete, in the same way as the St. Katharine Dock is now, and that a new dock should be further down the river, and the steamers should go in there as they do now.

3922. You are looking ahead?—It behoves us to do so in these times.

3923. (*Mr. Peel.*) You spoke of the delay in docking and undocking barges. What is it that you ask—that you should be able to go in and out of the docks at all states of the tide?—Yes; our barges are frequently shut out of dock because of the large number that accumulate outside the entrance.

3924. You say these appliances are not adequate to ensure prompt discharge of cargo. Could you amplify that statement in any way?—There are no luffing cranes at all in any of the docks that I am aware of. They cannot pick the cargo up with a crane out of the ship's hold and put it into a barge as they can at many wharves on the river now.

3925. Is there anything else?—I should like to see certain of the modern docks on the jetty system, so that prompt delivery could be given to cargo to go into barges.

3926. There is nothing else you wish to add to that?—I should like to see better accommodation for the towing of barges within the docks.

3927. With reference to your evidence about a Dock and Harbour Board, have you considered that matter fully?—I consider that in the interest of the port it is desirable that there should be a public board, who should take the control of the docks and the rivers.

3928. You do not consider they should have the control of the wharves?—No.

3929. You would have a public body managing the docks, and therefore competing with the wharves?—No. The public body should not have anything to do with the storing of goods. That should be left to private enterprise.

3930. You mentioned that in your evidence, but they should have the control of the docks, and the control, therefore, naturally, of the dock charges?—Control of the water space and the dock quays, and, naturally, the charges which would be levied on the steamers.

3931. Not the control of the wharves?—Not the control of the wharves at all.

3932. So that you have a public body controlling the docks which would compete with the wharves?—I say that the public body should have no power as to the storing of goods.

3933. I quite accept that, but they would charge for allowing dock accommodation to ships?—Yes. They would not be in competition with the wharfingers in that respect. If a steamer goes alongside a wharf there is no charge made by the wharfinger for the accommodation given to the steamer.

3934. So that by separating the warehouse accommodation from the actual dock itself in the matter of control, you would avoid competition between the public body and the wharves?—That is my opinion.

3935. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have said that the present certificate held by the man in charge of a barge being towed is no evidence of his competency?—That is so.

3936. Can you tell us what kind of certificate it is?—It is a certificate to the effect that he is licensed to navigate any barge, that is all. A lad apprenticed at 14 years of age after he has served two years can claim his certificate to navigate a barge, and if he satisfies the Court (there is no full and thorough examination) he gets his certificate and exercises the privileges of a fully licensed lighterman so far as navigation of barges is concerned.

3937. Do you know if he passes any examination to obtain that certificate?—There is no examination. It is impossible to have any examination as to the man's ability to navigate a barge.

3938. You have spoken as to the facilities of the docks. I presume that the delivery of the barges refers to overside cargo?—Yes.

3939. What appliances could the docks supply to load from a ship overside into a barge, I presume on the opposite side of the ship—say a ship 45 to 50 feet deep?—If the ship was alongside the quay with a luffing jib it could lift out the cargo from the hold and put it over the ship's side into the barge.

3940. On the far side of the ship?—Yes.

3941. That would entail a reach of at least 60ft.?—Yes, and the cranes in use at the wharves now in London will do it 70ft.

3942. You advocate quays instead of docks. Have you any experience of a large steamer, say a steamer of 4,000 tons, alongside a wharf in the river, and the difficulty of maintaining her moorings and keeping her in position in a tideway?—No, I have no experience. I do not think such a large steamer as that has been alongside a wharf—not to my knowledge.

3943. You would not propose putting the large steamers alongside the wharves, but you say you advocate quays instead of docks?—Pardon me. I advocate the making of docks, but having a jetty system on the docks, not quays on the river side.

3944. You said you would prefer to build a modern dock instead of dredging a channel, but in every modern dock would it not be a necessity to have a deep-water channel to it?—In my opinion the modern dock should be at Tilbury. The tendency is now to get goods very quickly from Tilbury—as quickly as from the Albert Dock—and as the steamers are increasing in size year by year I think the large steamers should go into that dock. That would save the risk of the voyage up the river, and there would not be the necessity for deepening the channel to 30ft.

3945. You have drawn attention to the fact that all dock companies have an unlimited supply of river water. Do you mean to say the water could come into the docks and go out again?—The water in the docks is taken from the river, for which they pay nothing whatever.

3946. Where would you propose to take it from?—If they pay nothing for it we say we have a perfect right to go in there free. *Mr. R. Lambert.*

3947. Do you know any dock in the world where they pay for the water, whether they take it from the sea or the river?—No, I cannot say that I do. 20 Mar. 1901.

3948. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are you obliged to employ members of the Watermen's Company on your lighters whether they are competent or not?—We are obliged to employ licensed men.

3949. But if you make a selection have you always plenty of competent men satisfactory to yourselves?—Yes, they are competent generally. They answer our requirements, but our area in selecting labour is limited. For instance, if I discharge a man because he has neglected his duty I have to take another licensed man in his place. The man I have discharged will go and get employment somewhere else. We are limited to that circle of licensed men.

3950. But have you, as a matter of fact, suffered from the inconvenience of having incompetent men, and being obliged to select them from that limited field?—Undoubtedly. I am sorry to say that nine-tenths of the damages which we have to pay are caused by the negligence of the men.

3951. That is to say, that you are obliged to take incompetent men, and you are not allowed to go into the open market to get men who are competent?—I would rather use the word "careless"—not actually incompetent men. We are obliged to employ those men who have licences, who are in many cases careless men, and we are not permitted to go into the open market to get reliable men.

3952. That is to say, you employ men who would be competent if they were not careless?—Yes, generally they would be competent.

Mr. Richard Deering called and examined.

3953. (*Chairman.*) You are a managing director of Messrs. J. W. Cook and Co., Limited, Wharfingers and Bargeowners?—Yes.

3954. Are you here now representing the Association of Master Lightermen?—Yes.

3955. Will you tell us as to your company?—The company of which I am one of the managing directors is a limited liability company registered under the Joint Stock Companies Act. Its share capital is £235,000, divided into 26,000 preference shares and 21,000 ordinary shares of £5 each, all of which are fully paid-up. The business of the Company is that of carriers by water, wharfingers and barge-letters in the Port of London. The company has been formed by the amalgamation of the businesses of Mr. James W. Cook, wharfinger, and Messrs. Ross and Deering, lightermen and tugowners. My company has a river frontage at its various wharves of over 1,000ft., and has warehouse accommodation for over 20,000 tons of merchandise. Our warehouses are nearly always fully occupied, and as a rule we hold for customers the largest stocks of fibres in London. My company own three tugs, ten hulks, and 160 dumb barges of the gross tonnage of 18,500 tons. In addition to this we hire barges from time to time from other persons according to the demands of trade. The average, taking the year round, is ten barges per week or thereabouts. As to labour, I find that for the four weeks ending October 19th last year we employed per day 9 foremen, 52 lightermen, 52 labourers, 16 apprentices, 4 engineers, 4 stokers, and 8 barge repairers. This is a fair average. I have had 40 years' practical experience in the lighterage trade in the Port of London as a working freeman, a foreman, a tug-master, a manager, a master lighterman, and as a director of my company. I have made an examination of my company's books for the purposes of obtaining data to be furnished to the Commission, and I find that during the twelve months between the 1st July, 1899, and 30th June, 1900, my company lightered 253,392 tons into and out of the various docks in the Port of London.

3956. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That would be in addition to other business?—Yes, transit from a wharf to a ship in the river, or from a ship in the river to a wharf.

3957. (*Chairman.*) Can you tell us the date when your company was registered?—1897.

3958. We do not want to ask any questions as to your private accounts, but will you have any objection to telling us whether that year is a fair average year?—Just about the same as last. *Mr. R. Deering.*

3959. You have only been in operation three years, I understand?—This is the fourth year. I have no doubt whatever that the imposition of any rate upon barges entering or leaving the docks, and upon their cargoes would have the effect of diverting water-borne traffic, and would seriously affect the transhipping and coast-wise trades of the Port of London. I estimate that 125,000 tons of the goods carried yearly by us in and out of the docks are Continental and coast-wise transhipments to and from. I can, if required, give the various steamship lines by which these goods are carried. This is a large, important, and constantly increasing trade, and it is of the utmost importance not to handicap it by the imposition of charges which would have the effect of diverting it to Continental ports direct. For some years past I have considered the question of what defects exist and the improvements which are necessary in the Port of London in order to maintain its trade, and keep pace with the times as well as to offer facilities to enable the port to compete with other and rival ports, and have come to the following conclusions:—There is a necessity for restricting the speed at which steamships, and especially passenger steamers during the summer months, travel between London Bridge and Gravesend and *vice versa*. I think it is right to point out that the largest proportion of my damage does not happen from the passenger steamers, but the high rate of speed that the other steamers travel at, especially the Scotch and Continental boats. This speed is a source of great danger to barges by reason of the great swell caused by such steamers, which swell not only causes damage to the barges whilst underway and especially when in tow, but also to craft lying alongside the wharves on either side of the river. In my opinion a more effective supervision should be maintained by the river authority, and in every case where the bye-laws regulating the speed of steamers are transgressed proceedings should be promptly taken against the offenders. Barge owners should be placed upon an equality with shipowners so far as the limitation of liability is concerned in cases of damage to the vessels and goods of third persons. At present the owner of a sailing See 5628.

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barge registered under the Merchant Shipping Act can do so, but a barge owner whose vessel is registered under the Watermen's Acts cannot, although each man is a carrier by water. In my opinion the facilities for the docking and undocking of barges is insufficient in order to deal with the requirements of the present day, and for efficient working, such barges should be locked in and out at any state of the ebb tide and not for some three or four hours only on the flood, as is now the dock companies' practice. There would be no difficulty in affording this accommodation without interfering with the present height of water in the dock, if the company were to take measures to fill the locks from the stream by the use of proper pumping machinery. The companies do not at present provide sufficient tug power for the towing of barges within the dock waters, and refuse to allow barge owners to keep tugs in the docks for towing purposes, except in some isolated instances and under special agreements with certain firms, viz.: those firms who lighter for the Dock Company, or who are their tenants of certain coal drops. Master lightermen are prepared to pay for this service if efficiently rendered, so as to escape the delay which is caused by inability to get barges to and from the entrances with rapidity. The Dock Companies decline to afford reasonable facilities to lightermen, and through them to merchants, for the passing out of laden barges, upon what is called the "demand pass," in cases where there is a *bonâ-fide* dispute between the shipowner or ship worker, and the lighterman to whom cargo has been delivered, over the tally, the condition, the marks, or the number of packages, and on many occasions the pass outwards has been improperly refused by the vessel and the barge consequently delayed, to the prejudice of the lighterman and loss to the merchant. Beyond this congestion of craft in the dock is caused, for which the barge owner is unjustly blamed.

3960. Who do you consider is to blame?—The shipowner, as a rule, not the Dock Company; we have no complaint to make against the Dock Company, as far as the granting of passes goes. If any dispute arises we go to the superintendent and immediately get the matter settled. I do not think I have ever lost a tide with a barge through a dispute with the Dock Company. Our disputes arise in this way. Goods are damaged on board a ship; when I get my barge finished they say: "Come and sign for your goods"; but although the barge may have two-thirds of damaged cargo, I find on top of the receipt the words: "Received in good condition." I say: "I cannot sign that; a lot of the goods are damaged or stained," or whatever it may be. They say: "Very well; sign for 20 stained or 50 stained." I say: "I cannot sign for it in that way." Then they say: "Well, then, we cannot give you a pass," with the result that I have had a barge with about 80 per cent. of the goods in her damaged—(that would be over 1,000 packages)—and they have demanded a receipt for only 50 damaged, and that barge has been detained four days before I have been able to get the pass. The Dock Company were quite powerless in the matter; they would help us if they could, and we knew that.

See 4014.

3961. The complaint that you make when you say that the barge owner is unjustly blamed, is not against the Dock Company?—Not at all; they always assist us at once to put the matter right if the goods are delivered to us by them and we have to sign their receipt.

3962. In your opinion do the existing conditions affecting the delivery of goods into craft from import ships call for amendment?—Yes; we have been before the Board of Trade to get it done, but we have not been successful, owing to this Commission sitting. Craft are required to be in attendance for many days before the shipowner can or does, in fact, deliver. The bill of lading invariably contains a conditon that the goods shall be taken from alongside as soon as the ship is docked or ready to deliver, notably the P. and O. Company's bills of lading. There is no corresponding obligation on the ship to deliver at any time. Lightermen are, nevertheless, bound to have their craft in waiting, for if such craft are not in attendance the goods are immediately put upon the quay and become subject to charges, or if on the quay for ship's convenience, charges are immediately claimed, which the lighterman must pay before he can get his goods. It is not unusual for me to have a barge detained in the dock for three weeks waiting to receive its cargo. In order to escape the risk of having to pay land charges, lightermen are compelled to have craft in attendance. The result is that the docks become congested with barges waiting to receive goods. Of late years it has been the custom in certain cases for shipowners to undertake the discharge of their own vessels, and it is not uncommon for the shipowner, or stevedore entrusted with the work, to rent quay space from the Dock Company, on the condition that if the goods are landed there the company is to have the advantage of the landing charges, unless the cargo is put there solely for the ship's convenience. The result, therefore, is that, although he has been ready to take delivery, the lighterman is called upon to pay landing charges, for which it cannot be contended that any corresponding benefit is received by him. In my opinion the jetty system, as now in practice in the Victoria Dock, is that best adapted for the rapid discharge of a steamer. A steamer can be discharged on to one side of a jetty, and upon the other side of it barges can be berthed and loaded as the vessel is discharging. Accommodation is provided on the quay for the assortment of parcels as the goods are passed over it. Goods can also be delivered at the same time into barges placed on that side of the ship which is still accessible by water. In all the modern docks of London this principle has been lost sight of. Thus when two or more large steamers happen to lie alongside quays as ordinarily understood, there is no room for craft to receive cargo from the sheds until one or other of the steamers has moved away. This, again, is a cause of detention of large numbers of barges in the docks. With regard to the export trade, I complain that large numbers of loaded lighters are ordered into and are taken into the dock at one and the same time in order that the loading vessels may have a choice of goods. Such barges are frequently kept waiting for a long time and are passed on from one ship to another, and, although demurrage in these instances at a certain rate is paid to the lightermen by the ship, such payment is not a sufficient remuneration. The result of this course of conduct is to still further add to the congestion of craft in the docks through no fault of the lightermen, but owing to the course pursued by the Dock Company's customer, the shipowner. There is a want of accommodation for the quick discharge of vessels in the docks owing to the absence of modern appliances and modern methods, and there is also considerable delay in the river caused to vessels desiring to discharge in the stream by reason of the present accommodation being very much restricted by reason of paddle steamers, such as the Belle Line of vessels and the General Steam Navigation Company's vessels, lying at tiers above Blackwell during the winter months, and thereby occupying berths which might be profitably utilised for the discharge and loading of cargo steamers. I see no reason whatever why steamers laid up for the winter months, if not placed in one of the docks, should not be moved farther down stream, where there is ample room, and thus free the tiers above Blackwall, and afford room for the regular traders. I think greater facilities are required from the Board of Customs with regard to the clearing of goods delivered overside in the docks and river. The number of officers has been reduced of late years. The granting of passes to leave the dock should be facilitated, and the working hours extended until 6 o'clock p.m. The conditions which are applied by the Customs to Tilbury Docks are more onerous than those which are applied to the docks higher up the river. I can see no reason for this, as the lighterman's liability as a carrier towards the Customs is the same in each case.

See 7550.

3963. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) In connection with the delay of barges owing to the shipowners ordering the delivery to take place at once, have you any claim upon your customers in any way?—We give a rate; that does not include so many days to load or unload. It is so much per ton.

3964. Is not that a question which the customers should settle with the shipowner?—I do not think so. This has been the custom of the Port always. If a man is going to buy, say 500 bales of jute, he wants to know exactly how much he is going to pay for them, what the charge would be through the Port of London, and what his freight would be to the Continent. He asks me what my rate for jute is. I say 2s. per ton. But if I were to say it would be so much a day for barge and man he would not know whether he would have to quote 2s. a ton or 5s. a ton. His margin of profit might be only 2s. a ton at the best.

3965. But whatever it is, it is only a matter of business arrangement. You are the agent of the customer, and you go into the dock?—It would be fatal to a large portion of the trade, in my opinion, unless a definite rate could be given to the merchant for the carriage of the goods.

3966. That is to say, you prefer to endure the ill that you know rather than raise the question with the customer?—It has never been thoroughly considered.

3967. I am not saying practically that you could do it, but I am putting it to you that if it was a very serious grievance, an intolerable one, there would be some means of settling with the customer for whom you are the agent?—Yes. I think he would cease to employ us very shortly, because his occupation would be, like Othello's, gone.

3968. Then the shipowner's occupation would be gone at the same time?—I do not know; at one time we had a large proportion of goods through London that do not come here at all now.

3969. You see no way of remedying the difficulty or the grievance by any remonstrance or negotiation between the customer and the shipowner and yourselves?—No. I think the only thing that would get one out of it would be for the dock company to have more cranes, to give greater facilities to carry on the trade of the Port.

3970. But if you had shipowners using the lighters coming into the dock in the way you have described, merely for their convenience and keeping them, first one ship and then the other, how would you get over that, by any arrangement with the dock companies?—It is not first one ship and then another in the case of taking goods from the ship.

3971. But in the case of exporting goods?—We charge so much a ton for the transaction, and we give two clear days alongside for the export ship, and then after that we get demurrage at from 10s. to 15s. a day per barge, and the merchant has to pay for that. The amount of demurrage that I receive does not quite cover my daily expenses on the barges, and that is the most I can get.

3972. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have said that there would be no difficulty in affording the accommodation if the company were to take measures to fill the locks from the stream by the use of proper pumping machinery. Who would pay for that?—In the first place the dock company.

3973. Would the lightermen or the bargeowners be at all prepared to pay some charge for their greater convenience?—In my opinion the dock company would save a considerable amount of money per annum, because in that case they would get the water higher in the dock than it is now, they would not have so many levels, and there would not be so much muddy water come in. If they were to sink a well far enough down to get fresh water, which they could do, and put it near the hydraulic power, at night when a quarter of the hydraulic power only is required, they could pump water from the well into the dock, and they would never require to alter the level at all, except when some unforeseen thing happens, as it does at the Albert and Victoria Docks sometimes, when a ship comes which is too long for the lock. On the other hand, I have been for some years of the opinion, and I am of the opinion, that the dock companies ought to have more means than they have had in the past to facilitate the trade of the Port.

3974. Then you have said that master lightermen are prepared to pay for towing if efficiently rendered. Who is to decide if it is efficiently rendered?—What I mean by that is that there is room in the Victoria Dock to employ three tugs for barges. I should like to put three in and pay a handsome rent for the privilege of doing so. At present there is only one, and when there is a glut of work she has been taken off that work and used for towing ships. If I had tugs in the dock for towing purposes I should use one by night and two by day, and I think I should find full employment for them.

See 7550. 3975. You have said you see no reason why steamers laid up for the winter months, if not placed in one of the docks, should not be moved further down stream, and thus afford room for the regular traders. Who can control that?—The Thames Conservancy.

3976. In fact, it rests with them?—Yes.

3977. Has any representation ever been made to the Thames Conservancy about these vessels?—I could not say; not by me, at any rate.

3978. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is the use of steam barges increasing?—No. I do not know any master lighterman of the Port of London who owns a steam barge. They are used by one or two factories along the riverside, such as Charles Price, at Erith, who has a certain number of tons of oil to get up to time; but nobody else uses them, as far as I know.

3979. Then the engineers and stokers that you employ are on board tugs?—Yes.

3980. May I ask, without undue curiosity, whether your company pay a dividend?—Yes, a very small one.

3981. I suppose it is public property?—Yes.

3982. How much?—Five per cent.

3983. (*Chairman.*) Do you publish your accounts?—Yes.

3984. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Five per cent. after proper insurance, and so on?—Yes, and depreciation.

3985. You have said that continental and coastwise transhipment of goods is a large and important and constantly increasing trade. That is rather contrary to what we have heard from other witnesses—that it is disposed to decrease?—That is from over-sea; that is from Australia and India and such places; I am certain it has not increased as regards the Continent to America and India, but from Calcutta in goods for New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, the traffic has increased with my firm.

3986. Traffic coming from the East in either a P. and O. or British India steamer, destined for the Continent, would be transhipped in London, and would find its way to the Continent, as compared with a steamer going into a continental port and discharging part of her cargo there?—I could not be quite positive, but I understand that the continental ports are not quite suited to the large ships that are now in existence.

3987. You find at the present moment an increasing trade, and not a diminishing trade?—That is so. Take the "Clan" line of steamers; their largest ship was 3,100 tons five years ago, and now it is 7,000 tons.

3988. You have also said that London was losing a great quantity of goods traffic which it formerly carried?—Trade from the Continent for America, and India, and such places.

3989. You mean the goods originating on the Continent and going to America in British ships?—Yes. It seems to be collected on the other side.

3990. And carried, I suppose, in German or French ships?—I think a large proportion of the ships on that side are English, according to what I can see.

3991. Still, there are also subsidised lines?—Yes, but a large number of brokers in London have ships loaded on that side, which are English vessels.

3992. With regard to the speed of steamships, is that within the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy?—If a man does any damage, if he is going only half speed, you are supposed to be able to claim against him; but there ought to be some limit as to how fast he should travel.

3993. Do you know that the Thames Conservancy have that power already?—If a man did any damage to me from the wash, I should have to summon him in his own name.

3994. I suggest to you they have the power already?—I am not aware of it; they can say: "You are travelling too fast," but what power they have I do not know.

3995. You have not complained to them?—I have a good deal of damage occasionally, but if I get it from a compulsory pilot I put the bill in my pocket and never trouble about it.

3996. I am talking of vessels effecting the transhipment of goods in the stream?—It does affect them.

3997. I was struck with an answer which you gave to Rear-Admiral Hext when he asked you about the pumping of water. You said that you realised the time had come when the dock companies should be helped financially?—I think some means will have to be devised to get more income than they have at the present day, or else the work that is required cannot be carried out.

3998. At the same time you do not propose, as representing the lightermen, to pay any of the expense of pumping water into the docks?—If we had to pay so much per barge, we should have to charge so much to the merchants; that would be putting it practically on the goods.

3999. But that is a way of getting out of the difficulty, is it not?—I do not think it would bring them enough.

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4000. The dock companies' evidence, which, perhaps, you have read, is that they are put to very large expense in consequence of the barge traffic?—That is so. If I might venture an opinion, my idea of the matter is that the only way out of it is for the dock company to have the right to levy a toll (it would not require to be a very large one) on every ton that ships carry into the dock. That money could be looked upon as compensation for locking the barges in and out. I see no other way out of the difficulty.

4001. Your opinion is that in some way or other the expense of the barge traffic in and out of the docks shall be met?—By the goods.

4002. It ought not to fall on the dock company?—I am of opinion that there is no gentleman to be found, if you gave him £20,000 a year, who could make any more out of the docks, or do anything more with the docks, than is done at the present day.

4003. They are getting as much income out of the docks as they possibly can?—Yes, and they are giving all the facilities they can, considering the amount of income they get.

4004. You have no cause of complaint against the management of the dock?—No, I have none whatever.

4005. You said you would like to keep a tug in the dock?—It wants about three in the Victoria and Albert Docks, and one in Tilbury Dock. I do not think there is any necessity in the other docks. Of course, so far down the river you feel the breeze, and the barges are so much larger; you may put three or four men in a barge, but without a tug you can do nothing with it.

4006. The general drift of your views is that you are in favour of strengthening the dock companies?—Yes, and I am also of opinion that the present docks should be improved and enlarged enough to meet the requirements of the Port for the next 20 years.

4007. If they had got the money?—If they had got the money.

4008. I also suppose that you do not hold views in favour of creating a trust?—No, I am of opinion that the dock companies are quite capable of dealing with the matter if they had the income.

4009. (*Chairman.*) It would be interesting to us to know how you would suggest this grievance, to which you referred in connection with the demand passes, should be met?—In the event of a dispute I would like to have the power to tell the man that if they did not decide in six hours what they would do, I should give the dock company an order to land these goods, and count them if it was a question of dispute of tally; take the marks if it was a question of dispute on the marks; or if it is a question of damage, certify how many were damaged. And then the party in error should pay the expense, and the pass should then be given when the charges were paid. The dock company should not give the goods up until the charges were paid for what they had done.

4010. Do you suggest that this difficulty should be met by legislation, or by order of the Board of Customs?—We were led by the Board of Trade to hope that it would be dealt with by this Commission.

Recalled 10864.

Mr. Charles James Fielder called and examined.

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4011. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the firm of Fielder, Hickman and Co., licensed lightermen and barge owners?—Yes.

4012. Have you come here to give evidence on behalf of the Master Lightermen's Association or your firm?—On behalf of the Master Lightermen's Association.

4013. Your firm carry on business at 4, Catherine Court, Trinity Square, in the City of London?—Yes.

4014. In what trade?—We are principally in the grain and flour trade. We, however, carry general goods into the docks for export. We have 55 barges, of the gross burden tonnage of 3,300 tons. We employ upon an average about 25 lightermen per week and about six watchmen. Upon an average we lighter in a month 9,500 tons. Of this, 2,000 tons would be taken into the docks for export ships and 7,500 tons would be brought out of the docks from import ships for wharves, granaries and mills in London. I attend to the outdoor department of my firm's business, and am daily engaged in and about the various docks over the practical working of the business, and have, therefore, had ample opportunities of making myself thoroughly acquainted with it, and with the various defects that exist and remedies which suggest themselves to one's mind. I have had altogether 23 years' experience—5 years as an apprentice, 7 years as a freeman working in craft, 3 years as a foreman, and 8 years as a master lighterman. With reference to the existing defects in the Port of London, I complain firstly of the insufficient facilities afforded by the dock companies for getting in and out of the docks with barges, notably at the Royal Albert Docks, where no assistance whatever is given by the committee's servants, and no attempt whatever is made to superintend or control the locking in or out of craft. The result is that very great confusion exists, and barges are constantly delayed. Our men in charge have to get in and out as best they can. The committee's servants, besides being few in number, are masterly inactive. The delay experienced by barges at the entrances bound in for the purpose of loading grain very frequently causes such barges to be late in arriving alongside the ship, and also at the Grain Elevator Company's premises within the docks for the purpose of taking delivery within the 24 hours of which notice has been given by the dock company that the grain is ready for delivery. A dock company's policeman is stationed at the entrance to the Grain Elevator Company's premises to record the arrival of each barge, and if the 24 hours have expired by even one hour, the company claim the right to be paid full landing charges, notwithstanding that the barge may have been delayed at the lock in attempting to get in. My practical experience has enabled me to escape this imposition, but I know many instances in which other firms have been compelled to pay, notwithstanding that with proper facilities for ingress their barges would have been at the appointed place and ready to take delivery within the proper time. I also complain that when the dock companies are called upon to perform a necessary service the charge for so doing is excessive. The hydraulic cranes in the Royal Albert Docks will not lift more than 30cwt., so that for any greater weight the floating derrick has to be brought into use. This sometimes occasions a delay of three or four days, and the charge for its use by the dock company is excessive. I have a case within my own experience in which the company has made a charge against my firm of £20 for lifting a case weighing 5 tons out of a steamer's hold on to the quay, and then from the quay into the barge. It would be a double lift. There are no luffing cranes, which have been for some years past in use at many of the wharves in the river. There is also a scarcity of cranes upon the quays in the dock, so that delay frequently arises after the goods are landed and charges have been paid because of want of craneage power to put them from the quay into the barges. The shed accommodation is insufficient, the quay front being generally occupied by steamers discharging, with the result that frequently the ships' cargoes get mixed together and barges are compelled to wait until such cargoes have been sorted. We frequently have to come away short of our proper quantity, and have to go again, sometimes a fortnight, sometimes longer, afterwards to get the remainder of the parcel. There is no extra remuneration for this second journey. I think the jetty system as adopted in the Victoria Docks is the better and more convenient way, and for the reasons given by Mr. Deering in his evidence. My barges are frequently delayed in the dock for unreasonable times in waiting to be discharged into export steamers. This is a grievance about which nearly every master lighterman in London complains, and it is occasioned by the action of the shipowners in ordering more goods into the docks than the steamer can carry, and transferring the overplus to some following vessel. This undoubtedly causes a great congestion of craft in the docks, and it certainly causes great loss to the lightermen. There is very little accommodation provided by the dock company for towing barges within the docks. From end to end the Victoria and Albert Docks are four miles in length, and lie from east to west. With a wind blowing either up or down the docks the navigation of barges under oars is sometimes an impossibility. I should be prepared to pay a reasonable charge for this service if properly rendered. This want of steam power is another source of delay and cause of congestion of barges in the dock. The dock company's tug very often

only makes one journey during the day. I quite agree with, and endorse the opinions of the other witnesses as to the necessity for an amendment of the law relating to compulsory pilotage, and for extending to lightermen the same limitation of liability, which, under the Merchant Shipping Act, is enjoyed by shipowners. I agree with the previous witnesses that the dock company's refusal in case of a dispute to let a barge out upon a demand pass requires amendment. I should just like to point out that there is a difference of opinion between Mr. Deering and myself with regard to this matter. He says the dock companies are entirely blameless in the matter, or at any rate I understood him to say that in his evidence. When we have a dispute with a ship it is the dock company that steps in and refuses to allow us to leave the dock. If we have a dispute with a ship as to the quantity of goods that we have received, which oft-times happens, or as to the condition in which the goods are, we have no means whatever of getting the barge out of the dock. When the ship lies in the river, we can bring the goods up to the wharf and have them landed and whoever is wrong would have to pay; but, in the dock, there is no means of getting out. The dock company refuses to allow us to go out of the dock without a pass, although they have no claim on the barge or her cargo. And the shipowner often refuses to give us a pass because there is a dispute, and we are put to the expense of getting independent witnesses to get them to sign a clean receipt under protest. So that, although when Mr. Deering says they are not responsible for that, it is true, yet at the same time they prevent us getting our barge out of the dock because they will not allow us out without a properly signed pass.

See 3960.

4015. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Who grants the pass when you get your independent witnesses?—The mate of the ship, or the clerk sent down from the brokers.

4016. Does he grant that pass if you bring independent witnesses as to the damaged state of the cargo?—That is it.

4017. The occasion of the dispute between the shipowner and the barge arises, and then the dock company say, "Until that is adjusted we will not let you out." Is that it?—Yes, that is it.

4018. (*Chairman.*) But you look to the shipowner or the official of the ship for the document you require in order to get out?—That is it. What we should like would be to give a letter of indemnity to the dock company to hold them harmless, and then for them to let the barge go out of the dock and leave the dispute between us and the ship to be settled when the goods are landed. We would indemnify the dock company against any loss they might sustain if they would allow us to go out of their premises with the barge.

4019. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But is it not the case that if you take goods that have been in the ship, without the ship giving you a pass, the dock company really think you are somebody taking the goods away without authority, and that they are obliged to prevent?—I presume that is so.

4020. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Although they have themselves no interest in the matter?—They have no interest in the matter.

4021. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But they are obliged, being in charge of the dock, not to let any goods go away from the ship without having the ship's authority for it?—That is so. Then, in my opinion, there is a great want of mooring accommodation for barges in the river. I have endeavoured to obtain, but without success, a permanent mooring place for my firm's barges, and we are consequently compelled to make fast to other people's vessels and premises owing to our complete inability to get a lodgment elsewhere. There is an urgent want of more public buoys in the river between London Bridge and Blackwall, and I think room can readily be found by shifting steamers which are lying up in tiers between those places and by sending them elsewhere further down. My barges have been frequently delayed in the dock owing to our being unable to get Customs officers to clear the goods. I think that nearly the whole of the matters of which the dock companies have complained could be removed by the companies themselves if they were prepared to provide the necessary appliances, and to give increased facilities for the docking and undocking of barges and for the delivery of the goods. The great block of barges which frequently occurs outside the entrances could be entirely prevented by the companies making arrangements for locking the craft in and out upon their arrival in, instead of only for about three to four hours on the flood, and not at all on the ebb tide.

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4022. (*Chairman.*) With reference to your complaint that your barges have been frequently delayed, against whom does that complaint lie?—That would not be against the dock company.

4023. Against whom would it lie?—The Customs. We found that there is a scarcity of Custom House officers. The officers themselves are courteous and willing to do the very best they can, but the amount of work they have to do is rather more than they can get over in the limited time, and we are often delayed waiting for them to come and inspect our goods before we can get away from the docks.

4024 You tell us you are frequently put to this inconvenience?—Well, I should say yes, frequently.

4025. You have said frequently?—Yes.

4026. How often in the course of six months?—I should say we often wait three or four hours.

4027. But how often?—Weekly—once or twice a week.

4028. In the case of a particular vessel?—No, no particular vessel. The delay in waiting for the Custom House officers is pretty general.

4029. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) When you complain of the want of crane power at the docks, does that apply generally to all the docks, or any particular dock?—My experience is generally with the India Docks Joint Committee. There is a scarcity of crane power more especially at the quays; when vessels are occupying the quays nearly the whole of the cranes are used to discharge the vessels, and it often happens that there is no crane available, when goods are actually landed on the quays, to deliver them.

4030. Does that apply to all the docks, or to the Albert Dock in particular?—The Albert Dock in particular.

4031. Where most of your business is done?—Yes, the Albert, Victoria, and West India Docks.

4032. Do you think that the barge traffic is an increasing quantity?—Yes.

4033. Does it increase relatively to the quantity of goods brought into port? Do you take a larger proportion of a ship's cargo now than you used to take?—Yes, I should think so.

4034. In spite of all these difficulties?—Yes, in spite of all these difficulties.

4035. When you say your barges are delayed in consequence of your being unable to get the Custom House officers to clear the goods, is that a question of the number of hours or the number of men?—The number of men.

4036. It is not so much a question of hours?—No, nor yet a question of the individual officers. We find them very obliging when we can get them.

4037. (*Mr. Ellis.*) How many barges a week do you deal with?—We have 60 barges, and we allow them to do three freights in a fortnight.

4038. How many hours a week do you think you lose from want of assistance from the Custom House officers?—I could not tell you that.

4039. Can you translate it into money at all?—No, I could not do that.

4040. Still, you wish us to infer that there ought to be more assistance from the Custom House?—Yes, I do.

4041. Not only for your traffic, but for others?—Yes.

4042. Have you made any complaint to the Custom House?—I have made personal complaints to the officers on the station, and they have said that they were doing the very best they could.

4043. You have not brought the matter before the Custom House by any formal letter?—No.

4044. Now, with regard to compulsory pilotage, were you in the room when Mr. Jacobs was examined this morning?—Yes.

4045. You heard what he said?—Yes.

4046. Do you endorse all he said with regard to compulsory pilotage?—Yes.

4047. And would you say that the secretary of your association is correct in his statement when he said that so many cases of the kind occur. You will remember the phrase in the letter read by Mr. Jacobs

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pointing to a specific complaint of a pilot who is an undischarged bankrupt, he told us, who was unable to meet the decision of the Court with respect to damage. The secretary of your association used the expression: "So many cases of this kind occur." Would you say that is correct? Would you endorse that statement?—I have never had a similar case.

4048. In your personal experience you have had nothing of the kind?—No, I have never had a case like that.

4049. Your firm has no occasion to complain of that?—No.

4050. Then you said: "I think that nearly the whole of the matters of which the Dock Companies have complained could be removed by the companies themselves." Do you mean by that the matters of which lightermen have complained?—No. The Dock Companies complain of congestion of barges. They complain very much. The system in the docks is to have an order time, that is, from 5 hours to 3½ hours before high water. The barges accumulate at the dock entrance the whole of the other hours. It is almost like stopping the traffic of the Strand for an hour or two.

4051. These necessary appliances and increased facilities would all cost money, of course?—Yes, they certainly would cost money. I think that is the root of the evil.

4052. Is it your case that the Dock Companies do their best in the pecuniary position in which they stand, and that their pecuniary position should be somewhat improved?—I think that is so. It is all a question of expense certainly.

4053. Then, finally, with regard to this locking and docking, would your association or would your firm, if the increased facility was given, which would impose an extra charge upon the Dock Company, be prepared to bear some contribution to that increased cost and expense to them?—As a member of our firm, I certainly should say "Yes." If the company were prepared to give us adequate return for the amount of money demanded, we should certainly be prepared to pay it.

4054. You would be prepared to pay for increased facilities?—Yes. What I should like the Commission to understand is this. We often lie outside the dock entrances from 24 to 36 hours. We had an instance of this last week when we were outside the Victoria Dock for 36 hours. If the Dock Company would lock us in when I presented myself at the dock entrance with my barge, it would pay me to pay them a fair and reasonable amount for them to lock me in, rather than keep a man in continual attendance for 36 hours waiting for my turn.

4055. You want the regulation of three or four hours swept away and an open gate at all times; but you are prepared to pay something for that open gate?—Yes; that is so.

4056. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) If, in that case, the barges had free access to the dock, instead of waiting outside 24 hours, does not that go to show that there would be still greater congestion in the dock through those barges going in before they are wanted?—We never send them down before they are wanted.

4057. And yet we have evidence of barges waiting a long time before the ships are ready to deliver their cargo?—That is a thing that we cannot remedy. We are compelled to take the goods from the ships as they arrive, and we have no means of ascertaining when they are likely to arrive; consequently we have to be in attendance.

4058. But it would increase the congestion in the docks if the barges were there before the ships were ready to deliver the goods which, as we have had evidence to show, is very often the case?—We often have to send craft down a tide before we otherwise should, because we are never sure of getting in the dock.

4059. Then you said: "My practical experience has enabled me to escape this imposition"?—That requires a little qualification.

4060. If your practical experience enables you to escape the imposition, why should not other people have also the same practical experience, and escape too?—That requires a little qualification. What I meant to infer by that was this: Being continually about the docks, I am thoroughly conversant with their system of doing business, and when a merchant brings an order into our office, unless I have a barge in the dock or already going into the dock, I refuse to take the responsibility. I throw the responsibility upon the merchant. Then if the goods are already landed, or the time allowed by the dock company has nearly expired, I refuse to take the order. We have a time limit everywhere.

4061. That goes still further to show that having barges in the docks waiting for orders must increase the congestion?—That is true; but if I could depend upon leaving London, and going into the docks at once right to my destination, I should not have to have craft in the docks as a stand-by.

4062. Then also you complain of the cranes?—Yes, that is so.

4063. But, I take it, it has been proved by experience in almost all ports in the world that a 30 cwt. crane is a most useful crane, and that in all ports, too, there is an extra charge made for lifting heavy weights. How often do you get weights of 5 tons and upwards?—Very often. We have contracts for most of this electrical machinery, and we are getting a large number of very heavy lifts.

4064. But do you know any port in the world where they do not charge extra for these heavy lifts?—I think it is the custom to charge extra everywhere.

4065. Then you bring up the question of the ships lying up in tiers being moved further down. Have you ever made any representation to the Thames Conservancy as to that?—No.

Recalled 10920

Mr. THOMAS WILLIAM JACOBS, jun., recalled and further examined.

Mr. T. W. Jacobs, jun.

See 3773-5.

4066. (*Chairman.*) I understand that you have now the documents you promised to let us have?—Yes; I am able to hand in a report of the case that I referred to in connection with the limit of liability.

4067. Are you referring to the case in the Admiralty Division?—Yes, where there was a loss of £2,000. The case was reported in the "Shipping Gazette" of the 16th May, 1899.

(*The Witness handed in a report of the case in the High Court of Justice (Admiralty Division) as to the collision in the Lower Pool, River Thames, between the barge "Hercules" and the tug "Wasp." See Appendix, 12th Day, No. 1.*)

4068. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) There is no report in the Law Reports, is there, that you know of?—I should think most likely there would be.

See 3767-71; 3806-11.

4069. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Now, what have you in connection with the letter to Trinity House?—I have the reply of Trinity House to our letter of the 14th March.

4070. (*Chairman.*) Will you read it, please?—"Trinity House, London, E.C., 29th March, 1898. Sir,—Having laid before the Board your letter of the 14th instant, complaining on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge Owners of the Port of London, that Mr. E. Liley, a river pilot, had, while acting as pilot, been in collision with barges belonging to the Association, had been sued for damage caused by vessels under his charge, and although judgment had been given against him, he declines to make any proposal for liquidation of the damages, and requesting the intervention of the Corporation to compel him to do so by the exercise of their disciplinary powers, I am to acquaint you that the Elder Brethren have no power to assist the Association in the recovery of the amount stated to be due to them." That is signed: "Charles A. Kent," who is the secretary. The correspondence was carried further, but nothing came of it. If the Commission wish it, I will have a complete copy of the correspondence made. We did ultimately give them proof that the man was an undischarged bankrupt by handing them a certificate from the Official Receiver

at Maidstone. Then I have a copy of the Dock Company's pass regulations, which I was asked to furnish.

(*The Witness handed in Regulations of the London and India Docks Joint Committee respecting passes for lighters containing goods entered for warehousing at other places than the docks in which the ship discharges. See Appendix, 12th Day, No. 2.*)

Our point with regard to those regulations, I may say, is that we consider the Dock Company have no claim to stop our barges. It should be a matter for us to settle between ourselves and the shipowners, the same way as we do in the river. A vessel in the river has no right to detain our barges, and the matter is followed up as the owner or the broker may think expedient.

4071. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Have you had sufficient confidence in the point ever to test it?—We do it repeatedly with vessels in the river, but the dock companies step in in the case of disputes at the docks and say: "We cannot allow you to go unless you have a ship's pass."

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4072. I understand you to deny their authority to do that?—They have authority; but we want that amended. We have discussed the matter several times before the Board of Trade, and some day or other we hope to get it amended. We have no corresponding power with the goods we deliver for export. We cannot stop a ship leaving the dock.

4073. The whole point is that you should be allowed to go out provided there is a sufficient guarantee that the matter would be settled afterwards?—Quite so; in the same way that a ship leaves the dock. If we have a dispute with her we have no power to ask the dock company to stop the ship.

Recalled 5570.

Mr. ROBERT NEAL TOUGH called and examined.

Mr. R. N. Tough.

4074. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the firm of Tough and Henderson?—Yes.

4075. You are lightermen, and tug and barge owners?—Yes.

4076. You have been connected with the owning and working of barges and tugs, and the carrying of goods on the Thames, for the past 25 years?—I have.

4077. You are also a freeman of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

4078. And you have a practical knowledge of the navigation of the river?—Yes.

4079. Will you tell us how many barges you have?—My firm own or work about 100 barges, of the aggregate tonnage of about 8,000, also seven screw tugs, and two steam screw carrying barges. We swim or lighter about half a million tons of goods yearly, and tow, in addition to our own craft, and as a business, about 12,000 barges annually. We carry goods and tow craft over the whole navigable waterway of the Thames. The bulk of our business is between Erith and Kingston-on-Thames. The goods we carry are chiefly rough goods, such as timber, paper-making and building materials, chemicals, granite, iron, coal, etc. We also carry wheat and flour to mills on the Upper Thames, about Reading and Oxford, from London. While appreciating the fact that the docks are at present the only existing safe and convenient places for certain ships and trade, my view is that equally safe and certainly more convenient and less expensive places should, by some authority, be provided in the interests of the trade of the Port. I suggest all advantages lie to the stream being used as against the docks. If in the tidal way, as near to the City as possible, some miles of quays on either or both sides of the river were provided, where vessels, by paying a toll to some authority, would be allowed to moor, discharge and load cargoes, there might be no difficulty in providing a sufficient depth of water at low water alongside such quays, or in mooring ships at right angles to the river as well as parallel with it. It seems to me that provision can be made for discharging or loading at one time a cargo out of or into a vessel, and the quays, and rail, road, and water carriage. With regard to the rail carriage, this may be possible by tubular communication underground, with lifts to raise and lower railway trucks at the quays and termini. Facilities might exist for sending goods by rail from alongside the vessel at quay to some distributing depôt for the leading lines; as well also might accommodation be provided for road carriages, and for lifting and transporting goods at the quays. I would suggest that parts of such quay accommodation be let on terms, and power supplied to persons requiring goods lifted, and that public weigh-bridges, mooring and landing places for vessels and persons, be provided, a toll being charged for these facilities. I suggest also that, to further facilitate the trade of the Port, there be provided, or a power given for private enterprise to provide, large floating derricks, equipped with cranes, in the stream, at which vessels can lie and discharge or load cargoes into and out of barges. Such derricks might accommodate two vessels at a time, and deal with enormous tonnage, and work continuously. Such derricks now exist in the coal trade. In justification for the necessity of some scheme of deep water quays and of floating derricks, I think the following reasons exist. Those appertaining to the docks are Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. (1) The increasing percentage of tonnage which is imported into the docks being required to leave the docks in craft that have loaded direct from ship. (2) The delay experienced in obtaining or delivering goods both to and from the quays and ships in docks; also by loss of time to craft waiting to pass in and out of the docks and river; the block existing in the docks, waterways, and at the quays; and the unsuitability of the quays. (3) The very heavy and inequitable charges levied upon the goods when they, the dock companies, handle the goods or receive them into their possession. (4) The companies' inability to cope with the traffic now tendered them, and their inadequate quay space. The want of some proper and regular appliance to transport barges about the docks, and in and out the entrances. (5) The proposed tax sought to be levied upon goods and barges.

4080. We have no proposal for taxation before us?—No, the Bill is withdrawn. I mean the Bill by which they did propose to levy tolls. I propose to substantiate these allegations as follows:—No. 1: Dock company's statement that 40 to 60 per cent. of imports go away in barges, and that to my own knowledge many vessels have by compulsion to use the docks because they are unable to obtain a berth at a tier in the stream to discharge at, or it is stated they draw too much water to lie at such tiers. I cannot call to mind any new tier provided by the Conservancy, and I say the want of suitable tiers in the stream has been the great factor in sending this 40 to 60 per cent. of trade into the docks. No. 2: It is quite clear that a barge would often, while waiting to enter the dock and get alongside import vessel, actually, in the same time, get loaded at a vessel lying in the stream and deliver her cargo alongside its place of destination; this loss of time, working in and to the docks, and the waiting for receiving cargo, and the impediments existing in the waterways and at quays, mean more time for barge and man, and, as a consequence, increased cost of lighterage. We require and obtain from one penny to threepence per ton extra for dock work as against the stream. To instance dispatch in the stream, it is a common occurrence now for a barge to leave Kingston in the morning, tow down to Charlton, load 100 tons of coal *ex* steamer, and get back to Kingston same day, well within the time that a barge ordinarily would take to get from outside dock entrances to alongside vessel in dock. We load a great deal from the tiers, and I know the great advantage existing to ship, merchant and lighterman who can use the tiers. I find that in 70 steamers we received cargo from in the stream, we were only 210 days in all receiving that cargo, and the average is, therefore, three days per steamer; number of barges loaded is 246. I put in a table showing the length of time occupied by the Millwall Dock Company in discharging 33 of our barges.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing barges loaded with timber sent into Millwall Dock by Messrs. Tough & Henderson for Millwall Dock Company to unload, with names of barges, date barge entered dock, and date discharged in dock, and number of days each barge occupied after entering dock. See Appendix, 12th Day, No. 3.*)

The length of time entailed a loss upon the merchant of £108 5s. for demurrage on barges beyond the charge for lighterage; the delay further locked our barges up, and prevented our accepting traffic offered us, and caused customers of ours to look round and endeavour to get their traffic placed elsewhere. These 33 barges were 370 days in all discharging or waiting to discharge after

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getting into dock, being an average of more than 11 days each barge. The period was June to October, last year, inclusive, and was one merchant's business we did in deals under a certain contract he had. I also put in a table showing the length of time occurring between vessels' arrival at Gravesend and our receiving timber in the Surrey Commercial Docks.

(*The Witness handed in a return of steamers with timber discharged in Surrey Commercial Dock during September, October, and November 1900, from which Messrs. Tough & Henderson received goods overside. See Appendix, 12th Day, No. 4.*)

The table comprises a list of 29 steamers, and it will be found that 376 days were occupied, being an average of 13 days on each steamer, in our receiving our portion of the cargo. To further illustrate the delay existing at the docks, just recently—that is, last November—we had to receive six barge-loads of timber from an Allan liner in the Albert Dock. Some of the goods were delivered direct overside into craft, and some for ship's convenience were delivered to quay, and then from quay into our craft. Six barges were occupied in all 40 days in dock obtaining their freight, with the result that the merchant will have to pay 28 days demurrage on craft, amounting to £28. Coming to the third reason I give, namely, the very heavy and inequitable charges levied by the dock companies upon goods they get possession of, I propose to take some goods that my firm carry to a considerable extent. I am able to substantiate, if required, the figures I give by vouchers or dock company's printed tariff. First, wood goods, deals, battens, and boards from Baltic and Canadian ports; generally ship delivers to dock quay at her own expense. The goods being on quays, the dock companies say, "Before we will deliver to water carriage we shall require from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per standard," which is 2s. to 3s. per actual ton weight. The consideration given for such a charge amounts to the use of quay space for a period not exceeding three days and for labour in delivering from quay to barge close alongside. Secondly, I take the charges on wood-pulp, in which there is a very large trade indeed; here, again, the ship delivers direct to quay, where the pulp lies only so long as it may suit the dock companies' convenience before they will deliver to craft, which probably arrive the moment the goods were put on quay. For this the dock companies' charge is 3s. 6d. per ton for what can be, and is, to my knowledge, done for less than 1s. per ton.

4081. Where is it done for less than 1s. per ton?—I do it myself. I believe the docks do give a preferential rate to some shipowners on goods, but I cannot now prove this point.

4082. I think we must ask you not to go into these questions. They are verging on controversial matter. Will you give us the reason why you suggest that the evidence given and the tables put in establish the dock company's inability to cope with the traffic satisfactorily?—As to the fourth reason I give, I think the evidence given and the tables put in establish the dock company's inability to cope with the traffic satisfactorily. I am of opinion that instead of the dock companies allowing the waterways to be blocked up and being inaccessible, as they often are, thus preventing barges obtaining their cargoes, the dock companies should provide a reliable and regular appliance for transporting craft about the docks and in and out the entrances.

4083. Are you referring to tugs?—Yes, in that case. The dock company allow us 24 hours to get out of the dock after being loaded. If we remain in dock longer, or our barge is adrift, they put a charge on her, and this I do not complain of.

4084. Now have you anything to say with regard to the lighterage business of the Port?—Touching matters more closely connected with the lighterage business of the Port, I have endeavoured to ascertain what is the actual charge made for lighterage, that is on what I call rough goods, that is goods which do not exceed £5 per ton in value, and my own experience is that the charge does not exceed an average of 1d. per ton per mile. Large quantities of coal are carried from Brentford to Albert Dock, 23 miles, at ⅝d. per ton per mile. For valuable cargo, requiring more protection, I think the charge would not exceed 2d. per ton per mile. I speak of full cargoes. The charge for towage taken from our own tariff is 6½d. per mile per craft. I am of opinion that our business suffers adversely by the fact of so many bodies having control over us, coupled with too much legislation being passed that affects us. I suggest no authority should be empowered to make bye-laws in relation to the river or docks.

4085. You suggest, I believe, that you suffer inconvenience by reason of the river being so shallow?—Yes; we are hampered, and suffer great inconvenience and loss by reason of the river being so shallow below and above London Bridge, tidal and non-tidal, and seeing we have ourselves paid the Thames Conservancy during the past eight years £5,890 10s. 8d. for toll on goods we carry, or an average of £736 6s. 4d. per annum, we consider we are entitled to better facilities than exist, and that tolls in the tidal way shall be abolished.

4086. What depth do you suggest, up to Teddington Lock, say?—I suggest that there should be 7ft. 6in. of water at low water between London Bridge and Teddington. Then we want a uniform system of lighting on all bridges.

4087. Why?—Because the lights are very misleading now, and the river is so difficult to navigate. If it is a man who is experienced who is continually going up there he has to carry the lighting of the different bridges in his mind—or, rather, in his eye, as it were—and occasionally he forgets it and makes a mistake.

4088. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Are the lights put in different places on the arches, or in different colours?—Different colours and different places; some in the middle of an archway, and others on an abutment.

4089. (*Mr. Peel.*) Does your complaint apply to railway bridges or only to ordinary traffic bridges?—I think, without exception, all the railway bridges are lighted in the way that I should say we want them; that is to say, with a red and green light; but the other bridges are not. Then we want better facilities for navigation during construction of works and bridges. Both Kew and Vauxhall temporary bridge plans had to be altered after great agitation was brought to bear. The throwing of snow and sludge into the river should be stopped; the number of draw-docks increased, and better kept up. More mooring buoys for ships and barges, more public stairs, and made accessible for landing. Compulsory legislation for the Conservators to raise and remove wrecks and obstacles. I should like to say as to this I may be in error through looking at the draft Bill. The word there was "may," and now it is "shall" in the Act. It makes it imperative.

4090. (*Chairman.*) Has not the Trinity House power to do this?—No, not that I know of. I am of opinion that the Conservators of the Thames, by an extension of their body, will be the proper and competent authority to control all matters relating to any trust or authority that may be found necessary to be created. I am of opinion that neither the present docks nor wharves should be taken over by any public trust, but that they should remain free competitors for trade as now, and that any new scheme proposed should have for its primary and main object the relief of the existing compulsion imposed upon the trade of the Port to use the docks. If within the scope of the inquiry, I am of opinion that the Royal Commissioners would render a great service to the Port in recommending the extent of the waterways, tidal and otherwise, which shall be included to be within the Port of London—commercially, I mean.

4091. (*Mr. Peel.*) You say that you think the wharves and docks should remain free competitors, but that any new scheme should have for its primary and main object the relief of the existing compulsion imposed upon the trade of the Port to use the docks. I do not quite understand that. Do you suggest that more wharves or quays should be built in order that the vessels might not go into the docks by using these quays or wharves, or what do you mean?—I do suggest that deep-water quays should be built to provide for the accommodation which I say is required in the Port, and that the shipping should be relieved from going to the docks as now by reason of the docks not giving the facilities that the trade demands.

4092. Then you do not suggest that the facility should be given by any public authority?—I suggest that it should be done by some authority, certainly.

4093. And so far as the present docks or wharves are concerned they should remain in their present ownership?—That is so.

4094. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do I understand that you and your firm are outside the Association of Master Lightermen?

—We are not at present members. I am associated with them.

4095. You outlined a large scheme of some miles of quays on both sides of the river, and you say that rail carriage may be provided by tubular communication. Taking the quays first, have you in your mind by whom those miles of quays should be provided?—It is certainly in my mind. My idea is that these quays—six or seven miles, I say—should be constructed, and that a sum of money should be borrowed by some authority, and tolls should be levied on the shipping that loads or discharges there. I say, further, that in my idea it would not be necessary to tax any private individuals or to tax the ratepayers, but that a sufficient return for the capital that could be borrowed would be made, and would be produced by reason of the shipping that could use these quays.

4096. Then, in your opinion, in the interests of the Port and trade of London, it is desirable that some authority should be created with power to spend money?—I am certainly of that opinion.

4097. Then you went on with various particular recommendations on which I do not dwell, but towards the end of your evidence you said: "I am of opinion that our business suffers adversely by the fact of so many bodies having control over us, coupled with too much legislation being passed that affects us." I imagine as regards that that there would have to be legislation to create the new authority, would there not?—There would have to be legislation to create a new authority. It is so divided now.

4098. And with regard to so many bodies, would you have those bodies consolidated or their powers concentrated in one body?—No; I am fairly neutral about that.

4099. At all events, you said, "I suggest no authority should be empowered to make bye-laws in relation to the river or docks"?—I do say so, because the bye-laws have operated so adversely to us. I should say there should be an Act of Parliament.

4100. You are against what is called grandmotherly legislation?—I say the bye-laws have been proved to be bad over and over again. Let us have an Act of Parliament. They sneaked these bye-laws upon us, and put a different construction upon them months afterwards from what they intended to do in the passing of them or in asking them to be passed.

4101. Would you allow every man on this great highway of commerce, and the docks connected with it, to do that which is right in his own eye?—No, I would not.

4102. You would have some restriction?—I would.

4103. You said, "I am of opinion the Conservators of the Thames, by an extension of their body"—would you mind indicating what you mean precisely by that?—I say the Conservators first of all have a very large staff of very great experience, and I am of opinion no men are better versed in the whole length of the Thames and navigation of the Thames than the Conservators are as a body. They have that staff, and they have large offices. I do not care what bodies you increase the Conservators with, but I do say that there is a foundation for any trust or authority that should be recommended to be created.

4104. Then your authority really is a reformed Thames Conservancy?—If you put it so.

4105. I want to take it from you. How do you put it?—I think that is a very good definition—reformed Thames Conservancy.

4106. You accept that?—Yes, I would accept it.

4107. Then there would have to be legislation to amend the Act of 1894?—Most decidedly.

4108. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to the quays that you recommend, you say that they should be as near the City as possible. Have you formed any idea as to what that means?—I mean to say not to go further down the Thames than may be absolutely necessary to get possession of the suitable land.

4109. I want you to point out what you mean by "as near the City as possible"?—I do not suggest anywhere near London Bridge, but much further up the river than Tilbury.

4110. Do you mean below the Albert Docks?—Yes.

4111. Where the land is not built upon?—Where the land is not built upon.

4112. And there you suggest the public authority should build wharves for the discharge of vessels?—Yes.

4113. In that case they would be in competition with the docks, would they not?—They would to a certain extent. Of course some vessels would still continue to use the docks, I take it.

4114. You are in favour of competition, whether it is competition between companies, or between a public authority and a dock?—I think competition is very healthy.

4115. You have given evidence as to the time which is taken in discharging vessels into barges at Millwall Dock and the Surrey Commercial Docks. Can you tell us how much of the time is lost in getting in and out of the docks—the delay due to the dock company's operations—and how much is due to matters connected with the discharge of the vessel itself?—With regard to the table that I put in, do you mean?

4116. Yes?—I do not know of any more than the ordinary time that it takes to get from the dock entrance to the discharging place.

4117. Therefore these large excesses of delay are not due to the difficulty of getting in and out of the docks, so much as the question of discharging in the dock itself?—Not so far as this table is concerned.

4118. With regard to all the matters of lighting bridges, and alterations of plans, and throwing snow into the river, and mooring buoys, and the removal of wrecks, those are matters that are now under the jurisdiction of the Thames Conserveancy, are they not?—Most of them.

4119. I think every one of them?—No, not the throwing of snow and sludge into the river. I think certain vestries or the Corporation of London have the right to do that.

4120. The Conservancy people at present make a great many bye-laws?—They have powers to make certain bye-laws.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I think they have power to make bye-laws on some 40 different subjects.

4121. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) On almost every conceivable subject they are the people who make bye-laws?—Yes.

4122. I think it is a fact that bye-laws have to be submitted to the Board of Trade before they are authorised?—That is so.

4123. And that notice is given to those who are affected by the bye-laws?—Yes, by way of advertisement.

4124. Can you give us any better way of doing it?—I do not complain of the way it is done. I complain that they should be made at all.

4125. You are against all bye-laws?—Yes.

4126. You say that everybody should do exactly what is right in his own eyes?—No. I say that there should be an Act of Parliament instead of a bye-law.

4127. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Have you had any experience of Acts of Parliament dealing with minute regulations of rivers?—I have had a great deal of experience of bye-laws and Acts of Parliament, and a great many bye-laws have turned out to operate in a way they never were intended to.

4128. But the Act of Parliament says if the Thames Conservancy want to make bye-laws they have to submit them to the Board of Trade for approval, and notice has to be given to all people who are likely to be affected, so that they may be heard, and not until they are heard can the bye-laws become operative. Do you mean to say it would be more convenient to business that every separate bye-law should be made the subject of a separate Act of Parliament? You would have no chance at all of being heard in that case?—I rather differ from you there. My experience is that these authorities often make bye-laws which really, in fact, they have no right to make, but they are passed by the Board of Trade.

4129. At any rate, it is the rule now that everybody is heard before the Board of Trade before the bye-law becomes operative?—That is so.

4130. Even then, if it is unreasonable or contrary to law, you can take it to the Courts and get it over ruled?—Yes, get it upset.

(Adjourned to Monday next, March 25th, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

Monday, 25th March, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. STEPHEN PENNEY called and examined.

Mr. S. Penney.

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4131. (*Chairman.*) You are a pilot engaged in conducting vessels from Gravesend to the sea?—Yes.

4132. How long have you been so engaged?—Since 1876.

4133. Are you employed by any special line of steamers?—The Peninsular and Oriental Company.

4134. Will you tell us what you can with regard to the navigable channel of the river with which you are acquainted?—At the present time I should say the water from Gravesend to the Nore is in better condition than it has been the number of years that I have been acquainted with it. I may say that previous to 1876 I was 13 years in the service of the Honourable Corporation of Trinity House, so that I have been acquainted with those waters for a number of years, and I have no hesitation in saying that at the present moment the condition of the channel is better than it has been at any time that I have known it.

4135. Have you anything to suggest that would add to the safety or convenience of vessels entering or clearing the Port of London?—Yes. My first suggestion to the Commissioners is that there should be employed a permanent surveyor. I have never known any shoals of importance to be found in the waters between the North Foreland and Gravesend but what a ship's bottom has found them. The ship's bottom has found the shoals by grounding on them.

4136. Have you any other suggestion to make?—One has to be very careful about making suggestions. You asked me about the water in the channels. The remarks that I have made simply refer to from Gravesend to the Nore; but I should like to point out to the Commission that there is likely to be a very serious alteration in the different channels at the estuary of the Thames. The place to my mind is shoaling up very considerably, and is likely to cause great inconvenience at no very late date. In proof of that statement I may say this with regard to one shoal. When the Duke of Edinburgh Channel was opened it had 30ft. at least in it, and at the present moment I think I am right in saying that it has 15ft. in it; and from observations in going down I have noticed at different points the sand is going out, and in one of the cases I have reported that to the Board.

4137. What Board?—The Trinity Board. I believe a great deal of that has been brought about by the discharge of mud and sewage from different vessels that go down there to discharge. In fact, on one occasion I reported to the Trinity Board—my pilotage Board—that a vessel turned round under my bows right in the navigable channel, and dropped her cargo into the fairway. This was a large lighter in tow 10th September, 1898, at 2 a.m. In fact, just in that locality there is a great decrease of water and a narrowing of the channel. I believe that in the Edinburgh Channel there will be a great alteration, because when those steamers of the London County Council go down and discharge their sewage I believe they do not go down far enough, and the time of tide that they get down there is very nearly low water, and when they discharge it it comes back on the first flood.

4138. Have you anything to tell us more particularly with reference to the action of the County Council in discharging sewage in the Barrow Deep?—They discharge it. I cannot tell you the exact distance, but the upper part is marked by a buoy, and as soon as they get within that they let go their sewage, they discharge their cargo. Se 7552.

4139. Have you any remarks to make on that action?—Only that they should not be allowed to do it, and that they should be compelled to go a great deal further down than they go at the present time. In my opinion the steamers of the London County Council, in discharging their sewage, discharge it too near the Port of London. I think they should be compelled, if discharging it in the Barrow Deep, to go to the lower part of the Barrow Deep instead of the upper part. (*The witness explained on the map.*)

4140. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) How many miles further would that be?—They ought to go 10 miles further down than they do at the present moment.

4141. (*Chairman.*) And as to the Edinburgh Channel?—The whole of those channels are silting up.

4142. Is that due to sewage?—That I cannot tell you.

4143. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Any discharge that takes place you think should be below the Edinburgh Channel?—Yes, so that there should be no chance of its washing across to those channels.

4144. (*Chairman.*) Is the discharging done on an ebb tide as a rule?—The vessels get to Gravesend about high water, and at the time they get to the discharging ground the ebb tide is nearly expended. My contention is that what they put over is so far up that it comes back with the first of the flood.

4145. Do you advocate the appointment of a permanent marine surveyor between Gravesend and the North Foreland?—I do, strongly.

4146. Do you wish to tell us anything as to the establishment of tide signals?—Under the present system the ships are now getting of such large draught that I think there should be some means of informing a vessel how much water there is on the Middle. With all the calculations in a man's mind I do not think he can establish sufficient to know near enough when a ship of very heavy draught can pass those waters, because, after all is said and done, it is marked that we have 24ft. of water. Well, it is simply in a ditch, and nine times out of ten you will find either fishing boats there or vessels brought up. They use the best water in that little space, and one does not find that out till one gets there. I believe there should be the establishment somewhere near Southend of some conspicuous tide signal similar to what is on the West Cliff at Ramsgate, in the shape of a very large ball, which shows when there is a certain rise of tide, so that one would have no doubt in crossing over

the Middle as to whether one could or could not get through the narrow part of the channel. That ball would indicate that the water had risen, say, 5, 6, 7, or 10ft., and one would have no hesitation in crossing over any part of the ground.

4147. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are you speaking of the Leigh Middle Shoals now?—That is the side that a ship would go up.

4148. The Leigh Middle Shoals as a whole, I mean?—Yes.

4149. (*Chairman.*) Are you aware of any complaints from wharfingers or others as to the speed at which ships navigate the river, causing damage?—That does not affect anything below Gravesend.

4150. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I do not quite understand as to the tide signals. Who do you suggest should have the authority to give the tide signals?—That is beyond me. I could not tell you that.

4151. The point I rather want information upon is, who do you suggest would be more capable of intimating the state of the tide than gentlemen of your experience—than pilots, for instance?—This should be a shore-tide signal.

4152. You have not thought as to into whose jurisdiction you should put that matter?—At the present moment the position that I suggest would, I take it, fall under the Honourable Corporation of Trinity House, as it is outside the limits of the Thames Conservancy.

4153. (*Mr. Ellis.*) How long have you been a pilot?—Since 1876. I have been connected with the water since 1862.

4154. Then you have had nearly forty years' experience?—Very near.

4155. Are there any gradations of pilots?—Yes.

4156. Superior and inferior. I mean, do you rise from the ranks?—The system of appointing pilots is that when a pilot is first examined, it is either for north or south, and for 14ft. draught of water; after he has served for three years in either of those channels as what is called an under-draught pilot for 14ft., he can apply to the Honourable Board for permission to be examined for the upper draught. They take him, and he is examined, and then after passing the upper draught for the south channel, he can make application to have his licence extended to the Isle of Wight on re-examination.

4157. Then there is a classification?—Yes.

4158. I presume, now, you are in the first class?—I hold all the licences that the Honourable Corporation grant.

4159. Could you give us an idea of how many ships you pilot up or out in a year?—Roughly speaking, I should say about one a week. It may be one or two over, or one or two under, but I think since I have worked outwards for the Peninsular and Oriental Company, my ships run once a week.

4160. Are you attached to any company?—The Peninsular and Oriental Company.

4161. They apply to the Trinity House for a pilot, do they?—No; that is not the system. They select their own pilot.

4162. They came to you?—Yes, that is so. If that system is not adopted, I have no doubt that, if the Corporation were applied to for a pilot, they would select one.

4163. When you say "the Corporation," you mean the Trinity House?—Yes.

4164. Then you are in the service of the Trinity House, but attached to the Peninsular and Oriental Company; is that it?—Yes, that is so.

4165. How long have you held what I may call the first-class certificate? How long have you been in the premier position?—As a first-class pilot, do you mean?

4166. Yes, how long have you been in the first rank?—21 years and 10 months.

4167. During that time has the size of ships that you have had to deal with been increasing?—Very considerably.

4168. Have the navigable channels of the Thames been improving relatively to the size of the ships during that 25 years?—Naturally, since the barges have been stopped from throwing their refuse into the river.

4169. By the prohibition of the throwing of refuse into the river the accumulation or silting up has been hindered, not to say stopped?—Yes.

4170. Has anything been done by art apart from nature to improve the navigable channels relatively to the increase that has gone on in the size of the ships?—In Gravesend Reach and in the Lower Hope Reach we have four things that they call dredgers. In the Lower Hope Reach those dredgers have been there to my personal knowledge from four to five years. I do not know when they work, but they certainly do more damage in blocking up the Reach than the bottom does.

4171. Then the dredgers have not improved the navigable channel very much?—Some of those dredgers were at work in the Thames when I went into the service of the Corporation.

4172. And they are rather antiquated, perhaps?—Well, I should think they are.

4173. This is what I want to get at if you will assist me. Will you tell this Commission whether, in your opinion, having regard to the increase in the size of the ships, the navigable channel is for the large ships of to-day as good as the navigable channel was 25 years ago for the ships of that day?—I should say better.

4174. Will you explain why?—I can only say, as in the answer I first gave, that the channels are better now than they were 25 years ago.

4175. Through natural scour?—Yes. That answer only applies down as far as the Nore.

4176. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Did you appear before the Lower Thames Navigation Commission of 1894?—I did, when you were there.

4177. I daresay you have read the Report?—Yes, I read it at the time, but I have not looked at it lately.

4178. Perhaps the most important recommendation of that Commission was that a 30ft. navigable channel at low water should be provided up to Gravesend?—That is so.

4179. That had your support?—That had my support.

4180. And the warm support of Sir Thomas Sutherland and the gentlemen who appeared for the large shipping interest?—I cannot say that. I fail to see the good of a 30ft. channel at low water for vessels that draw 32ft.; I believe we have ships entering the Port of London running about 31ft. 8in. now.

4181. I want to point out to you that that 30ft. is at dead low water at spring tides?—I should like to know what "dead low water" means. I contend that though our Admiralty charts are marked at low water, ordinary spring tides, at times there is a great deal less water than is marked on them.

4182. Everybody knows that there are extraordinary spring tides as well as ordinary spring tides. At extraordinary spring tides you get less water?—Yes, but those extraordinary spring tides come when one hardly knows anything about it, and that is the reason of my contention that there should be established a good tide signal.

4183. Apart from that question, if you have a depth of 30ft. at dead low water at ordinary spring tides the detention in that channel must be very much less than if it is only 26ft.?—Quite so.

4184. Therefore, if you got 30ft. instead of 26ft. up to Gravesend you would have a very great amelioration in the question of detention?—If my memory is correct, I think that 30ft. channel was to be 600ft. wide.

4185. Yes, it was something of that sort?—You would have to have a very different arrangement to what you have at the present time to keep a channel of 600ft. clear.

4186. How it is to be done is a matter apart. I am speaking of the convenience to shipping if it were done?—No doubt ships would not be delayed. They would get up to Gravesend at low water.

4187. The Commission of 1894 was precluded from dealing with the river higher up than Gravesend. Will you let us have your idea on the question of what depth of water would be desirable above Gravesend?—I would rather you put that question to a river pilot. My duties only commence and finish at Gravesend.

4188. I daresay you also recollect that the Commission of 1894 recommended that there should be an an-

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nual survey of the river to lay down what changes were taking place?—I believe so.

4189. Do you think that would be a desirable thing?—I strongly support it.

4190. I suppose you say that the results of the survey should be made public property?—Yes.

4191. That they should be published in much the same way as you know is done at Liverpool?—I believe it is done.

4192. I suppose that the question of fog is a very important thing in the navigation of large vessels?—It is; and not only fog, but one of the greatest curses that pilots have to deal with is the smoke from the cement factories. I am speaking from Gravesend down in the Lower Hope Reach. It is not the first, second, or third time that there have been some very serious collisions brought about by that smoke alone.

4193. With regard to the Duke of Edinburgh Channel, am I right in thinking that that channel was a new channel at the time that the Duke of Edinburgh was in command or, at any rate, was connected with the River Thames in some way?—I think that the channel was officially opened by the "Duke of Connaught," one of the Orient Steam Navigation Company's steamers with troops on board, when the Duke of Edinburgh went out.

4194. How many years ago is that?—About 20 years ago.

4195. At that time and before that time there was no channel sufficiently pronounced through that course for big ships?—No.

4196. At that time what was the route taken by big ships?—In daytime they went through the Alexandra Channel.

4197. The Alexandra Channel is nearer the Nore?—Yes. Then if it was night-time the ship would come down, it would anchor in the Nob Channel, and then wait until the tide flowed sufficiently to allow it to proceed across the flats of the Girdler through the Prince's Channel.

4198. That was a difficult channel, and necessitated caution and delay?—There was only about 17ft. or 18ft. of water, so that if the draught was over that you had to wait till the tide flowed to enable you to go across.

4199. You did not take the course of going outside everything?—No.

4200. You always waited to go through the Alexandra Channel?—Yes; there was no chance of taking any other course.

4201. It would be too far out, I suppose, to go right away down Barrow Deep?—You could not take a channel that was not buoyed and marked.

4202. In those days you went out through the Alexandra or the Girdler?—Yes.

4203. The Duke of Edinburgh Channel was found to be improving?—Yes.

4204. And became the principal channel for the in-and-out traffic of the Thames?—Yes, and it is so now.

4205. But now it is beginning to deteriorate?—Yes; I think it is.

4206. Are the other channels at all improving?—I think so. My ships are large vessels, and there is much less risk in going through the Duke of Edinburgh Channel than in going through others, so that I use no other channel but the deep ship channel.

4207. You cannot say for certain that any deterioration of the Duke of Edinburgh Channel has not been to some extent compensated by the improvements of the other channels?—I cannot at the moment.

4208. I suppose it is quite agreeable with all the history of the estuary of the Thames that these channels open from time to time and close from time to time?—I have not known that.

4209. You know there was no way at all through the Duke of Edinburgh Channel at one time?—The first vessel that went through the Duke of Edinburgh Channel was the "Great Eastern," when she took the first cable; the channel was specially buoyed for that occasion.

4210. But that was not so fine a channel as it is now, or as good as it was, say, five or six years ago?—It was much wider than it is now. It was much wider when it was first buoyed by the Trinity Corporation.

4211. And deeper?—Yes.

4212. From that time it has been getting worse?—Yes.

4213. You think that may be due to the deposit of materials by the London County Council?—I do.

4214. Have you any proof of that? Have you picked up any sewage or anything of that sort?—I was at anchor when I was piloting a Peninsular and Oriental Company's ship inward. I got caught in the upper part of the Black Deep, not far from the Nob gas buoy. When we got under weigh in the morning, the chief officer when he came on to the bridge said to me, "Where in the name of Fortune have you anchored the ship?"

4215. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) How was the tide running?—It was flood tide. I said, "Anchored the ship? Why, in the Black Deep." I should not like to say what his remark was, but he said, "Well, you have anchored her in some very peculiar stuff." I said, "What is it?" He said, "The mud that has come up on that anchor stinks something fearful." I asked him if he would send for a little on the bridge, and it was taken off the anchor and brought up. It was of a bluish stinking nature, and to my mind was nothing more or less than sewage.

4216. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Can you give us the date of that?—No; I could not give you the date.

4217. Was it one year ago or two years ago?—It was about eight or nine years ago.

4218. (*Chairman.*) Have you had any similar experience since?—No; I have not.

4219. You must have anchored constantly just about there since?—No; not near there. Perhaps just the lower part.

4220. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you know that the County Council steamers begin to discharge in Barrow Deep?—I do not.

4221. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you ever seen sewage discharged actually when the flood tide was running or just beginning to make?—Yes, at the upper part of the Barrow Deep.

4222. You have actually seen the lighter discharging her sludge with the young flood making?—I have seen the County Council's steamers at the upper part of the Barrow Deep on the first of the flood.

4223. Could you say that they were actually discharging at the time?—I could not say what they were doing. I could see them going round.

4224. Did you see them arrive and turn round?—Yes. They go down and turn round.

4225. The very fact of turning would show that they had discharged their cargo, I presume?—I take it that would be so.

4226. Do you know who is in charge of the river so far as buoys and navigation and shoals go, from Gravesend to the North Foreland?—The Honourable Corporation of Trinity House. See 5569.

4227. At present they do not survey it, do they?—I cannot say that they do not survey it.

4228. You know of no official survey?—No; I know that there has been a survey just lately done by the Thames Conservancy officials.

4229. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Is the Honourable Corporation the same thing as the Trinity House?—Yes.

4230. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you ever, in navigating a heavy draught ship, been delayed a considerable time in recent years?—Not latterly, not since I gave evidence in 1894.

4231. In navigating a heavy draught ship from the Nore to Gravesend, would you say you have been detained by want of water? Have you had to anchor for want of water?—Many a time I have done that.

4232. Have you ever had to actually turn round and go back to find deeper water?—I have anchored on several occasions quite recently with Peninsular and Oriental Company's ships on the outward passage when we have got away from Gravesend. I might have gone through, but it was a question whether I should, and rather than run the risk of touching ground I have put the anchor down and waited until the tide flowed.

4233. You wish to have a tide gauge to show from hour to hour, or any change, in fact, in the actual rise or fall of the tide?—Yes, because the fall affects the outward ships; the rise affects the inward ships.

Mr. HARRY DAVIES called and examined.

4234. (*Chairman.*) You are a pilot licensed to conduct vessels outwards from Gravesend?—Yes.

4235. How long have you been so employed?—Ten years.

4236. You are a master mariner and a Trinity House pilot?—Yes.

4237. Do you work for one company?—I work for the Orient Line.

4238. Exclusively?—I am exclusively engaged to work their boats outwards, but I pilot other boats not belonging to them as well.

4239. Are you of opinion that the estuary of the river is well lighted and buoyed?—Yes.

4240. What depth of water do you regard as necessary between the Nore and Gravesend?—Twenty-eight feet.

4241. Have you anything to say with regard to the deposit of mud and sludge?—Yes; I think that it ought to be shot when the ebb tide is running hard. It is generally shot on the young flood, and, consequently, tends to silt up the estuary, especially round the Duke of Edinburgh Channel. The London County Council's sludge boats generally get down at the very last of the ebb, and all the sludge is emptied just as the young flood is making; consequently, the greater part of this solid matter comes up again with the flood.

4242. Will you tell us where you have yourself seen these vessels discharging?—At the Barrow Deep.

4243. The highest point being where?—I could not say the outside limit. We see them half way down the Barrow Deep.

4244. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Pointing due north of the Girdler?—Yes. If they discharge at the upper end of the Barrow Deep at the young flood, the stuff must come back.

4245. (*Chairman.*) And you say that is the case?—That is the case, and the worse the weather is the higher up they discharge.

4246. Will you tell us whether, in your opinion, vessels are hindered owing to the presence of sailing barges or shrimping boats in the river?—They are hindered or hampered very much by both at times.

4247. Have you any suggestions to make which would add to the safety or convenience of vessels?—Do you mean as regards barges and shrimping boats?

4248. Not necessarily, but we should like to hear your opinion on that also?—As regards shrimping in the fairway I consider that it ought to be forbidden. As regards barges I should suggest that they be confined to the southern shore of the river, and tacking short of mid-channel. As regards the depth, I think we ought to have a minimum of from 26ft. to 28ft. at low water springs.

4249. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You say 28ft. as a minimum?—Yes.

4250. Supposing you had an extraordinary spring-tide when you were bringing up one of these very heavy ships, would 28ft. be enough?—If it was not enough we should have to wait until there was enough; that is, if it was an extraordinary spring tide. Vessels of more draught than 28ft. are exceptions at the present day.

4251. But there are such vessels?—There are such vessels.

4252. And the tendency is to increase?—I think the tendency is not to increase in the draught so much as in the tonnage.

4253. With reference to what you have told us about the discharge of mud and sludge, have you actually seen these barges discharging on the young flood tide?—Yes, I have seen them discharge and turn round and go back again.

4254. Actually when the young flood was making?—Yes. It must of necessity be so when the weather is bad, because they always come down from Barking on the ebb, and by the time they come to the Barrow Deep the ebb is done.

4255. I understand that the fact is they arrive there at the very end of the ebb, and when the young flood is beginning to make?—Yes.

4256. And, therefore, they must discharge their sludge on the flood tide unless they wait so many hours?—Yes.

4257. Do shrimpers keep under way when they are shrimping, or do they anchor?—They have their trawls down. They are practically helpless. We have to keep out of their way.

4259. Are there large numbers of them?—Yes, scores of them, and they are nearly always in the deep water down by Southend, where we have to go with the deep draught ships.

4259. You have heard that the last witness advocated a tide gauge. Do you advocate a tide gauge?—Yes, it is a very desirable thing, but we have a tide gauge for outward ships.

4260. Who is responsible for it?—The Thames Conservancy.

4261. Where is it?—On the Chapman Lighthouse.

4262. That would hardly show how the water higher up the river was?—No, not higher up. It simply shows the water we have over the flats at Southend.

4263. Have you ever been detained from want of water and had to anchor?—Yes.

4264. Outward or inward?—I have been detained outward.

4265. Not inward?—No, I do not work inward.

4266. Do you not work into Gravesend from the Nore?—No; I work outwards. We are divided into two bodies—inwards and outwards. The outward men are here.

4267. You have been detained?—Yes.

4268. Often?—No, not very often.

4269. Can you give us an idea how often in a year?—With the particular line that I work for, six times. That would be the maximum. We always sail at a fixed hour.

4270. (*Mr. Ellis.*) As I gather, you consider these barges and shrimpers an obstruction to navigation?—Yes, a very great obstruction, because we are practically helpless when we get into a fleet of shrimpers, as I said just now. They always dredge in the deep water down by Southend, and we practically have to keep out of their way.

4271. Have you ever had any accident?—Yes. See 8564–86.

4272. You personally?—Yes.

4273. When?—In the month of January of this year.

4274. What happened?—I had to put the ship on the mud.

4275. What ship was it?—The "Norfolk."

4276. What tonnage?—About 5,000, or 6,000 tons.

4277. Will you just tell us what happened?—I simply got into a big fleet of barges with a light air up from the north-east, and I had to port to go under their sterns; they were all standing over on the starboard tack, and before the ship could recover her port helm she touched on the Lower Hope Point.

4278. Did any damage accrue to the ship?—No, she only just put her nose there.

4279. Was she detained any time?—Two or three hours, till the young flood made.

4280. In that case there was a loss of time of a few hours to the vessel in order to avoid damage to these craft?—In order to avoid sinking barges and causing loss of life. I either had to sink the barges and drown men, or port.

4281. Have you ever had any other accident?—No.

4282. That is your only experience?—Yes.

4283. I understand, then, of course, you have never had any action against you at law?—No.

4284. Do you know any of your fellow pilots who have had actions against them at law?—Yes, a good many of them.

4285. How many?—I could not say how many, but I daresay it would enter into the teens.

4286. Arising from what?—Arising from the number of sailing barges in the river and dummy barges. Then even if a man does not have an accident you can hardly comprehend the strain that it puts on a man when he is surrounded by these barges and shrimpers in light airs and calms; because what you have to do you have to do promptly.

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4287. You would say to us within your experience, and not only your own personal experience, but what you know happens in the river, this kind of thing is an obstruction and a danger to navigation?—Yes, a great obstruction.

4288. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are you engaged entirely by the Orient Company now?—Yes.

4289. What is the largest ship they have in their fleet?—10,000 tons gross.

4290. Do you know what she draws when fully laden?—She does not draw as much as some of the older ones.

4291. Do you know how much she does draw?—26ft. or 27ft.

4292. When fully laden?—Yes, and the others draw 27ft. or 28ft.

4293. Do you pilot out the largest ships?—Yes.

4294. About how many ships outwards do you take in the year?—I take the Orient boats fortnightly; that would be 26.

4295. You say that you have been delayed as much as six times out of 26?—I say that is the maximum.

4296. But have you been delayed six times in the year out of 26 trips?—Yes, till the young flood made.

4297. Do you corroborate Mr. Penney about the deterioration of the Duke of Edinburgh Channel? Do you say that it is getting worse?—I am of opinion that heavy gales from the North East, East, and South East tend to shallow the Edinburgh Channel by the seas breaking over that part of the longsand seaward of the Edinburgh Channel and washing the sand in.

4298. That is in the middle of the channel?—Yes.

4299. Can you say when you began to see it grow?—It has been growing within the last five years.

4300. Can you tell us whether the other channels are any better? Is the Alexandra Channel getting any better?—No, I do not think there is any alteration in the Alexandra Channel as far as we know.

4301. You do not use it?—We do in the daylight with moderate draught ships.

4302. How do you find out whether a channel is improving or not? Do you take soundings as you go along?—If we have any doubt on the matter we sound all the time; and Trinity House advise us of all information they get as regards shallowings and growth of sands. They send us printed matter. See 5569.

4303. About how often do they send this?—As soon as they find out that there is any change in the channels or sands.

4304. Are the officials of Trinity House always surveying these various channels?—Yes, their boats are always at work in the district.

4305. Then the Trinity House people would know the position of the channels better than anybody else?—Yes.

4305A. Whether they were improving or not?—Yes.

Mr. EDWIN RIGDEN called and examined.

Mr. E. Rigden.

4306. (*Chairman.*) You are a pilot licensed to conduct vessels inwards from Dungeness to Gravesend?—Yes.

4307. How long have you been so employed?—Since November, 1874.

4308. Do you work for any particular company?—The Orient Company inwards.

4309. You are, of course, well acquainted with the navigable channels of the river?—Yes.

4310. What have you to say with regard to the South Channel from Gravesend to the sea?—It wants a lot of dredging.

4311. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Would you mind telling us what you mean by the "South Channel"?—The Edinburgh Channel to Gravesend.

4312. (*Chairman.*) Has it become worse in your opinion since you knew it?—Yes. On the patch in the Edinburgh Channel there is much less water than there used to be.

4313. Can you give us any suggestion as to the reason for this?—No, I cannot. The sands shift about in the channel a little.

4314. You have no other reason in your mind why it should be worse?—No, only the sands shifting about in consequence of the winds, I think, and the tides.

4315. Have you any further point which you would wish to bring to the notice of the Commission?—Yes. The Ovens Point at the lower part of Gravesend Reach I think should be dredged away just by the Ovens Buoy. A few years ago the buoy was shifted out and it is getting very narrow there. It is a very dangerous point coming up on the ebb tide with a heavy ship.

4316. Has it become worse lately?—Yes, it keeps getting worse. The buoy was shifted further out into the river a few years ago. It is a very dangerous point to turn coming up on the ebb tide. We meet many vessels coming down into the Hope while turning up into Gravesend Reach.

4317. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Would you consider it your business to make any representation to anyone after an increase in any of these shoals?—Yes.

4318. To whom would you make your complaint or representation?—To the company.

4319. And it is for them, you think, to make any representation to the Trinity House?—Yes, I should leave it to the shipowners.

4320. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to the Trinity House, do they give you information about the channels?—Yes. When they find there is any alteration they give us notice.

4321. Where do they begin to give you information—at what limit down the river? Do they give you information as to the upper river?—No; from Gravesend Reach downwards.

4322. Does anyone give you information upwards of Sea Reach?—Only to Gravesend. See 5569.

4323. Not the Trinity House?—Yes, to Gravesend.

4324. Do the Thames Conservancy give you any information as to the channels above Sea Reach?—No.

4325. Therefore, all the information you get from the Trinity House is, we may say, I suppose, seaward of Southend?—Yes, and to Gravesend.

4326. That is to say, seaward of the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy?—Yes, and from Gravesend.

4327. What information do you get with regard to the upper river—above Southend, say?—From using our own leads as we go up, and from information from Trinity House.

4328. There is no body of people like Trinity House to give you information with regard to the upper river?—No.

4329. You have to pick that up for yourselves?—Yes.

4330. By the upper river I mean upwards of Southend?—We receive information up to Gravesend.

4331. There are certain places that you have drawn our attention to where you have difficulties?—There is Mucking Flat; a very dangerous part.

4332. The navigable channel must be very narrow there?—Yes, very narrow indeed, and very dangerous. Mucking Flat is continually getting to have less water on it. Years ago there used to be 18ft. on it, and it has now got as little as 15ft.

4333. Do you navigate ships above Tilbury?—No, I stop at Gravesend.

4334. Have you anything to tell us about the discharge of sewage?—No. I have not noticed anything particular in the Edinburgh Channel, only the shoaling of the Patch.

4335. You have not found any sewage mud in that part of the river?—No, I have not.

4336. Have you anchored there at any time?—We very seldom anchor there.

4337. I suppose you navigate all classes of the Orient steamers there, big and little?—They all run very much the same draught of water.

4338. Would that be about 26ft.?—About 25ft. or 26ft.

4339. What depth of water do you say is desirable up to Tilbury?—I do not think there ought to be less than 30ft. to make it safe.

4340. You want a little to come and go on?—Yes.

4341. And 30ft. at ordinary spring tides, I suppose, might be 28ft. at extraordinary spring tides?—Yes.

4342. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Were you in the room when a witness spoke about the barges and sailing ships?—Yes.

4343. Do you agree with his evidence on that?—You mean about the innumerable barges we have to contend with?

4344. Yes?—Well, they are a serious danger to us.

4345. You would not put it as high as he put it?—No, I think not. I find the barges very accommodating. As soon as you blow the whistle to them they always tack round and try to get out of the way.

See 8564—86. 4346. Have you ever had any accidents?—I have had two accidents in the last eleven years with Orient vessels with barges.

4347. Did those accidents arise from the presence of barges in the fair way?—Yes.

4348. Were they run down?—I ran them down.

4349. How many years' experience do you say you have had?—My licence extends from 1874. It will be 26 years last November.

4350. And those are all the accidents you have had?—Yes.

4351. About how many ships do you navigate in the year?—About 52.

4352. Is that an average over the last quarter of a century?—We have been doing about a turn a week for the last few years. Previous to that it was very much less.

Mr. E. Rigden.

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4353. Do you consider that the Thames as a navigable river has been going back in your time or improving?—I think it has been going back.

4354. Why?—There is the silting up at the Ovens Point. The buoy has been placed much further out in the river, and that has made it much worse for us. Then there is the Mucking Flat. That used to have 18ft. of water on it, and now it has only 15ft.

4355. Then your experience is that relatively to the ships the navigable river has been going back?—Yes, for the class of ships that we have to navigate.

4356. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you seen the sludge barges start at all on the young flood?—I could not say that I have.

4357. Have you seen them arriving?—I have seen them arriving at the latter part of the low water in the Barrow Deep.

4358. When the young flood has begun to make?—I have seen them down there. I really have not taken particular notice about their discharging their cargo.

4359. Which gives the most trouble in the channel—the shrimpers or the barges?—I think myself that the shrimpers are much worse than the barges, because they cannot get out of the way as the barges do if you blow the whistle.

Mr. ELI MUNDY called and examined.

4360. (*Chairman.*) You are engaged in conducting vessels inwards from Dungeness to Gravesend?—Yes.

4361. How long have you been so engaged?—Twenty-two years.

4362. Are you working for one company?—Yes, the Peninsular and Oriental Company.

4363. What other experience have you had?—All classes of ships from Dungeness.

4364. We should like to hear from you anything you can tell us with regard to the navigable channels of the river?—I have nothing to remark, only that I should like to see a little more water in it from the Nore upwards—from the Nore to Gravesend.

4365. You would like there to be a uniform depth of water?—Yes; a uniform depth of water at all states of the tide.

4366. What depth do you advocate?—Thirty feet.

4367. Have you anything to tell us with regard to a channel from the East River Middle Buoy to the West River Middle Buoy?—I should like to see an improvement there in the depth of water. That is the most particular place we have to contend with.

4368. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) That is on the Leigh Middle Shoal, is it not?—Yes.

4369. (*Chairman.*) Have you any further suggestions to make with regard to improving the approaches in the river?—There are two other places that Mr. Rigden spoke of. That is the Mucking Flat and the Ovens Buoy.

4370. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you ever noticed the mud barges discharging at the last of the ebb or the beginning of the young flood?—I do not know that I have noticed them discharging. I have seen them come down there.

4371. And turn round and go back at once?—No; I will not say so.

4372. Have you ever noticed one anchor there for a considerable length of time?—No; I have not.

4373. (*Mr. Ellis.*) In your experience, has the River Thames become worse or better as a navigable channel?—It has certainly not improved.

Mr. E. Mundy.

4374. Has it gone back relatively to the size of the ships?—I could not say that it has; the ships are so much larger now than they were a few years ago—ten years, say.

4375. Then will you say the navigation remains about the same?—I should think so.

4376. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Has the channel on the south side of the river by the Leigh Middle Shoal been buoyed? I did not know whether you knew that there was a channel existing which has never been buoyed?—No; I do not know of any channel there.

4377. How many channels are buoyed through the Middle?—Sea Reach and the starboard side coming out.

4378. There is another channel further to the south which has not been buoyed. I daresay you may not know that?—I do not know of any other channel. It does not show it on the chart.

4379. Do the Thames Conservancy give you any information as to the depths of the channels between Southend and Gravesend?—All the information we get is through the Trinity House. See 5569.

4380. Do they give you any information as to the depths of the channels between Gravesend and Southend?—Yes; every information comes to us, I should take it, from Gravesend outwards.

4381. That is so, is it?—There is notice of all alterations of buoys from Gravesend outwards. That comes through the Trinity House. We do not get any information from any other body. Where Trinity House gets it from we do not know, but it comes to us from the Trinity House.

4382. Then you do get information from Gravesend all the way to the sea?—Yes. If the position of any buoys are altered we get notice of it.

4383. And the depth of water?—Yes.

4384. Do you navigate above Gravesend?—Never.

Mr. WILLIAM HENRY SANDFORD called and examined.

4385. (*Chairman.*) You are a pilot engaged in conducting vessels up and down the river between Gravesend and London Bridge?—Yes.

4386. How long have you been so engaged?—About 27 years.

4387. You have been employed by the British India Steamship Company, the Gulf Line, and Messrs. John Hall, Junior, and Co. for many years?—Yes.

Mr. W. H. Sandford.

4388. And you are, of course, well acquainted with the navigation of the River Thames?—Yes.

4389. What is your view with regard to the depth of water necessary between Gravesend and London

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Bridge?—I should like the water 28ft. to Albert Dock, and from the Albert Dock if we could get 18ft. we should be perfectly satisfied. We cannot expect to get more.

4390. That is from the Albert Dock up to London Bridge?—Yes.

4391. Have you anything to tell us with regard to mooring buoys?—I should like to point out to the Commission that it would be much better if, say at Deptford, for instance, we could get a set of buoys placed for the convenience of those cattle ships that are often in foggy weather detained there, and have no place to get to only by very dangerous navigation. They have to get back to Long Reach. They have no home till then. If a set of buoys were placed there it would be very useful for that purpose.

4392. Then with regard to fogs artificially caused, have you anything to tell us?—I can only tell you what we experience. Take from Northfleet until we arrive at Purfleet—I am speaking, of course, of calm quiet weather—we are sometimes in a state of artificial fog most dangerous to navigation and to life, almost equal to a fog.

4393. Have you any remarks to make on the question of the screening of electric lights on the river?—Yes; I should advocate the lights at the West India Dock being screened. They are powerful electric lights, and they are not screened. If they could be dealt with like they are at the Albert Docks we should find it a very great convenience. They are very glaring. There is one place particularly at Deptford—I believe it is John Penn's—where they have a very big and most powerful light. That could be screened.

See 7551.

4394. And it is not?—It is not screened. Then at Blackwall, where the torpedo boats are, there have been works going on at night, and I think they might have improved those lights by screening them. If they would do that, it would be a great assistance to us.

4395. Have you anything to say with regard to vessels improperly anchored?—Yes; I must point this out particularly with regard to Gravesend Reach. Of course, it is the worst reach that we have to deal with, on account of the pratique that must be done by the Customs there, which causes a congested state of the river generally in Gravesend Reach. There is only accommodation for seven buoys there for shipping. I should suggest that there be more buoys placed there. Of course, that would mean interfering with the hulks which are lying there, but those hulks could be moved further down. I think that would be a great advantage to shipping in Gravesend Reach. Steamers have to anchor to the prejudice of navigation.

4396. Have you any complaint to make with regard to the position of the dredgers in the winter?—Yes. I might speak of the dredgers. If we are not going to have a better system of dredging, these dredgers are obsolete, and if they are to be used they might, in foggy weather especially and at night time, be taken in shore, and only placed there when really wanted to be used. That is what I would advise.

4397. With reference to a reply you made just now in connection with the screening of electric lights, have you ever made any representation or complaint on the subject?—I have done so only under my examination before the Honourable Masters of Trinity House. I have made mention of it there in my remarks, but only there.

4398. You have never complained through the companies by whom you are employed?—No, I have not.

4399. Have you never thought it worth while?—I always look to Trinity House.

4400. You have complained to them?—Yes.

4401. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You are employed by the British India Steamship Company and Messrs. John Hall, Jun., and Co.?—Yes.

4402. Is your work exclusively for the vessels of these two companies?—Yes.

4403. What is the maximum draught of any vessel you take up?—They are heavier draughted down always. I have from 24ft. to 26ft. down, but inwards we get them lighter—22ft. to 23ft.

4404. Have you been delayed often in your voyages?—With that draught of water we are always delayed coming up. We have to wait, say, an hour's flood.

4405. What suggestion do you make as to the deepening of the channel?—I certainly would advocate 28ft. if it were possible to the Albert Dock, and above Albert Dock I would advocate 18ft. up to London Bridge.

4406. Are you informed of any alteration in the buoys by anybody when there is any alteration?—We are not dealing with buoys in the river, but as to the lights we are always advised.

4407. By whom are you advised?—By the Honourable Corporation of Trinity House. We are advised of any alteration that may take place.

4408. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What is the length of your longest ship of the British India Company's?—460ft. to 465ft.

4409. What width of channel do you advocate above Gravesend?—I am afraid we cannot get it any wider.

4410. I mean the navigable channel. Supposing they dredge to a depth of 28ft., of course they cannot dredge to a depth of 28ft. right up to the high-water mark of the channel?—No.

4411. What width of channel do you advocate if you could get it?—We should be satisfied if we could get 800ft.

4412. You would like to have 800ft.?—Yes.

4413. You would like it so that you could be able to turn or swing?—Yes.

4414. Have you ever had to turn back after taking a ship up from Gravesend because you could not get it into the dock?—Yes, many times.

4415. If there is a risk of your not getting into the dock I suppose you must turn back?—Yes, we must.

4416. I suppose there are no places where you could safely turn?—No, we must go back to Long Reach.

4417. Otherwise the ship might touch the ground?—She would undoubtedly and probably very badly.

4418. Does that happen to you often in the course of a year?—Very often in the winter months.

4419. Can you give us any idea at all how often in your experience?—I may say that I have not been turned back above twice or three times in the winter myself.

4420. In the course of a year?—In the course of a year.

4421. Are those matters at all brought to you by the other pilots in the employ of the British India Company—I mean could you give the Commission any idea how often ships connected with your company are turned back?—That is about all I could give personally but, of course, many have the same experience. I suppose it would be that average. It could not be more than that average that I am speaking of.

4422. In your experience you say about twice a year?—Twice or three times.

4423. You represent two companies, do you not?—Yes.

4424. About how many ships in the course of a year do you take up from Gravesend to, say, Albert Dock?—I suppose about 180 to 200 up and down; that is to all the docks.

4425. I suppose you may be delayed not only from want of ability to get into the dock, but also by fog?—Yes.

4426. If you run into a bank of fog I suppose you must either go on with the risk of its getting worse or you must go back?—Yes, but of course in fog one thing must be done. It is prudent to anchor. We endeavour to do the best thing we can in the circumstances. If I might be allowed to suggest that there should be a set of buoys it would very often save us from having to run back to Long Reach. It would very often save us that if we could have one set of buoys placed—I do not care if it is abreast of the Albert Dock, which is a very good place, where there is plenty of room, or in the upper part of Woolwich Reach.

4427. A sort of place where you could go and stop until the difficulty was passed?—Yes.

4428. Would those be buoys where you would moor stem and stern?—Yes.

4429. That would involve dredging a wider place where the ships could be moored, would it not?—Yes. At present there is not more than, say, 16ft. there. They would have to make 26ft. or 28ft.

4430. And you would also, I suppose, have to have it there at the side of the channel so as to get out of the fairway?—Yes. This only happens on the low water when you are getting into trouble, or nearly on the low water.

4431. You could not put the mooring buoys right in the middle of the channel?—No.

4432. They would have to be at the side?—Yes. There are buoys there now, only they are for smaller vessels —colliers.

4433. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You told us that this incident of detention has happened two or three times a year to you?—Yes.

4434. Can you give us an idea how many pilots there are whose experience might be similar to your own?—I should say that dealing with all those large vessels the same experience would exist, because it is only with large vessels that you have to go back.

4435. How many would there be in the winter, do you think?—That would be the average of the big draught ships.

4436. That is all you have personal experience of?—Yes.

4437. How many pilots would have the same experience?—I should say that there are 12 to 14 pilots like myself that are so placed.

4438. Then there would be 20 or 30 incidents of the same kind in the winter?—Yes, I should say that would be so.

4439. Do you wish us to understand that the fogs, electric lights, and the vessels improperly anchored are an increasing difficulty to navigation?—Yes, I would certainly say so. *See 7551.

4440. All those elements of difficulty are increasing, are they?—Yes, especially the cement business. Of course, that is a growing evil, if I may say so.

4441. There are more factories and more chimneys?—Yes; we have much more to contend with than we used to have.

4442. Have you any association of pilots—any trades union?—No.

4443. Then no representation has gone from any collective body of pilots. It has been an individual complaint, has it?—Yes.

4444. You have personally written letters, perhaps?—I do not say that I have written letters, but I have made that my objection before the Elder Brethren.

4445. The Elder Brethren of Trinity House have received from you verbal complaints?—Yes.

4446. You have been unable to make complaints to any authority with regard to the increasing amount of smoke?—We have never been in that position. We have never been asked. The question was brought up some years ago at Northfleet, but we were not interviewed on the question. *Mr. W. H. Sandford.* 25 Mar. 1901.

4447. Has any improvement taken place in consequence of the representations of yourself or your fellow pilots with regard to the improper mooring of these vessels?—No, I cannot say that there has been any improvement.

4448. Nothing has been done?—Nothing has been done in that respect.

4449. Were you present in this room when one of the witnesses spoke of the sailing barges and fishing boats?—Yes.

4450. Do you agree with that evidence? Have they been to you personally any difficulty?—If I speak from my experience I must say that these last two or three years I have found a great improvement with bargemen. There was a time when they were very obstinate, but I must say there has been a great improvement. If we give them the necessary whistle that we use, they certainly seem to act better.

4451. Have they become more reasonable?—Yes, they have become more reasonable in putting their helm down, and more reasonable with regard to their duties altogether.

4452. More reasonable in meeting the requirements of navigation?—Yes.

4453. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With regard to dredgers, do you know if they are under the control of any board?—They are under the Conservancy control.

4454. Are all the dredgers under the Conservancy control?—They are under the control in one way, but I believe I am right in saying that there are individual speculations. In some cases people have one or two of their own.

4455. But as to the positions they occupy, and the time they occupy them, are they under any control in that way that you know of?—I am not sure in answering that question, but I believe they are under the Thames Conservancy instructions.

4456. Do they make any signal to you at all on which side to go?—No.

4457. Are there any laws of that kind on the Thames?—No; we use our own judgment in that respect. As I said before, if they could be taken away in the foggy weather and on the dark nights that we have, and then replaced when they are at work, I think it would obviate a great difficulty.

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAM CHANEY called and examined.

4458. (*Chairman.*) You are licensed to conduct vessels up and down the River Thames between Gravesend and London Bridge?—Yes. *Mr. G. W. Chaney.*

4459. How long have you been so engaged?—About 12 years.

4460. By whom are you engaged?—By the Atlantic Transport Line and the National Line.

4461. What is your opinion with regard to the necessary depth of water between Gravesend and London Bridge?—I think it should be 28ft. to the Albert Dock.

4462. What is the maximum draught of a vessel of the Atlantic Transport Co.?—You can class them in three classes: One class, 24ft.; another class, 26ft. to 28ft.; and the other, from 30ft. to 31ft.

4463. They are among the biggest vessels that come up?—Yes; 31ft. 6in. is the biggest draught that I have seen.

4464. What is her name?—The "Minneapolis."

4465. Have you found that the position of dredgers when not working is a cause of obstruction?—Yes, they are a great obstruction. In the navigable time for working up and down the river they lie in the channel not working, whereas if they had cross chains they could heave them in on one side or the other, clear of the channel.

4466. Have you any suggestion to make with regard to mooring buoys?—Yes. I should like some mooring buoys at Deptford for the cattle steamers when detained by fog. There is nowhere for a vessel to moor to at Deptford in the event of fog setting in.

4467. With regard to fog, have you found that the smoke from factories causes an artificial fog?—Yes, as far as half-way up Long Reach.

4468. And is it therefore a source of danger to navigation?—Yes.

4469. Are you also of opinion that the electric lights ought to be screened?—Yes.

4470. Have you ever made any complaint or representation on that subject?—I have mentioned it to Trinity House at my annual examination.

4471. Do you know whether any steps have been taken by them?—I do not know at all.

4472. Have you any other suggestions to make to us as to any steps that might be taken in order to improve the navigation of the river?—Gravesend Reach is very bad. After two or three days' fog it gets into such a congested state that there is no room to navigate in at all. Barques come up to Gravesend from the Baltic, and they lie there as long as a fortnight at a time. With regard to the buoys in Gravesend Reach, four of them are useless in my opinion. If they were taken away they would give a long ship ample room to swing about at her anchor in the line of the red light in the anchorage.

4473. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With regard to the dredgers, you say they lie in the middle of the stream when not working. Is it not a fact that many of those dredgers cannot work except, say, within two or three hours of low water?—I believe they work from an hour's ebb until an hour's flood.

4474. Do you know if they are under the control of any board?—I do not know, without it is the Thames Conservancy.

4475. They make no signal as to which side you should pass on, do they?—No.

4476. Have they no regulation at all?—No; you have to pass them according to the set of the tide.

Mr. MILES KIRK BURTON called and examined.

Mr. M. K. Burton.

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4477. (*Chairman.*) You are the General Manager and Secretary of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—Yes.

4478. Will you tell us how long you have held that office?—I was appointed Secretary in 1890, and General Manager in 1894.

4479. Will you give us shortly an account of the origin of your trust, and also a sketch of how the undertaking has gradually passed from the Corporation to the hands of the trust?—From the year 1709, when the first Act relating to a dock at Liverpool was passed, to the year 1857, the docks at Liverpool belonged to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of Liverpool. By an Act passed in the year 1811 the Corporation were formed into a body corporate for the purpose of working the same under the style of "The Trustees of the Liverpool Docks." In 1851, by an Act of that year, the management of the Docks was vested in a body called "The Committee for the Affairs of the Estate of the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks," commonly known as "The Liverpool Dock Committee," consisting of 24 members, of whom 12 were nominated by the Council of the Borough of Liverpool, and 12 were elected by the Dock Ratepayers. The Corporation of Liverpool in their capacity as "Trustees of the Liverpool Docks," had, when assembled in Common Council, power, with the assent of two-thirds of the members present at such Council, to annul any proceeding, resolution, or direction of the Dock Committee. The Corporation had also power to levy dues on vessels and goods carried in vessels that entered or used any of the docks belonging to the Corporation as trustees, or transhipped or discharged cargo in certain parts of the river, and the dues so received were expended in the maintenance and management of the docks, etc. The Corporation had also power to levy on all vessels entering the port, except vessels driven in by stress of weather, harbour and light dues, for the maintenance of the buoys, landmarks, and telegraphs within the port, the expenses of lights and lifeboats, the expenses of the office of Marine Surveyor, and the improvement of the port, except in the construction of docks. The Corporation also levied certain dues on goods entering or leaving the Port, and anchorage dues on ships entering the Port, and such dues known as town dues were carried to the account of the Borough Fund of the Borough of Liverpool. In 1844, by an Act entitled "The Birkenhead Dock Act, 1844," certain persons therein called the Birkenhead Dock Commissioners were appointed Commissioners for the purpose of carrying into effect works for the formation of tidal basins and a dock at Birkenhead. In 1845 an Act was passed incorporating a company called "The Birkenhead Dock Company," with a capital of £1,000,000 and certain borrowing powers, and with powers to make and maintain docks and works at Birkenhead, adjoining the docks, and works proposed to be constructed by the Birkenhead Dock Commissioners. In 1848 all the powers and property of the Birkenhead Dock Commissioners were vested in a body corporate called the "Trustees of the Birkenhead Docks." In 1855 the undermentioned bodies were each of them prosecuting Bills in Parliament in relation to works undertaken or about to be undertaken by such bodies respectively and such Bills were all referred to the same Committee of the House of Commons, namely, the Trustees of the Birkenhead Docks, the Birkenhead Dock Company, the Liverpool Dock Trustees, and the Corporation of Liverpool; and the Committee, after hearing evidence, intimated that they entertained an opinion that it would be to the advantage of the maritime trade of the Port of Liverpool and of the public that the whole dock system on both sides of the Mersey should be under one trust. In consequence of this intimation an agreement was entered into between the trustees of the Birkenhead Docks, the Birkenhead Dock Company, and the Corporation of Liverpool, transferring to and vesting in the last-named body all the property and liabilities of the first-named body and company. This agreement was confirmed by the Birkenhead Docks Act, 1855. The 19th Section of this Act, after reciting that it was expedient that the same rates, dues, and charges should be levied in respect of the Birkenhead Docks as were levied in respect of the Liverpool Docks, and that all the docks should be placed permanently under the same control and management and be consolidated, and become part of the existing estate of the Liverpool Docks, enacted that the Corporation of Liverpool should, and they were required, either alone or conjointly with the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks, to prosecute a Bill in Parliament in the ensuing Session for obtaining the requisite powers for accomplishing the said objects. The Committee of the House of Commons to which the abovementioned Liverpool and Birkenhead Bills were referred made a special report, which was as follows:—

See 4578–83

> "The Committee on Group (D) of Private Bills, in considering the Liverpool Docks Bill, and the Birkenhead Docks and Liverpool Docks Bill, referred to them, have come to the conclusion that it is of great importance that an amalgamation should take place of the Birkenhead and Liverpool Docks on both sides of the river, under the control of one public body."
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> "In lending their assistance to promote and effect this amalgamation, the Committee have not been able to provide for all the points which must ultimately be arranged with regard to it, and which it is proposed should be finally settled in a Bill to be introduced in the next Session. They are, however, desirous of specially calling attention to the following subjects, viz.:—
>
> (1) "That the earliest opportunity should be taken of carefully considering the constitution of the Dock Trust with reference to the altered circumstances in which it will be placed in consequence of this amalgamation."
>
> (2) "That they should have provided for the immediate equalisation of the rates of both sides of the river, with the full concurrence of the promoters of the Bill, had they not been apprehensive that, on technical grounds, the passing of measures which they considered of urgent public advantage during the present Session would have been endangered."
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> (3) "That they were very sensible of the importance of accurately defining and limiting the arrangements consequent on the proposed transfer of the Birkenhead property from the Liverpool Corporation to the Dock Trustees; but as the whole matter will necessarily come under the consideration of Parliament next Session, they are unwilling to prejudge this particular part of it."

In the Session of 1856, being the Session next ensuing the one in which the Birkenhead Docks Act, 1855, was passed, the Liverpool Corporation prosecuted a Bill in Parliament in relation to the Birkenhead Docks, purporting to be so prosecuted in obedience to such Act, and in accordance with the special report of the Committee above mentioned, but as no provision was made in the Bill for the transfer of the Birkenhead Docks to the Liverpool Dock Trustees, nor any provision for repealing the power vested in the Corporation of Liverpool of annulling any proceeding of the Liverpool Dock Committee, nor for declaring the Corporation of Liverpool to be trustees of the Birkenhead Docks for the public, and prohibiting them deriving any pecuniary benefit therefrom, the Bill was rejected by Parliament. In the latter part of the year 1856 the Corporation of Liverpool gave notice that they intended, during the ensuing Session, to make application to Parliament for a Bill in relation to the Birkenhead Docks, but as no provision was made in the Bill for carrying into effect the recommendations contained in the special report of the said Committee, a Bill, afterwards called "The Mersey Docks and Harbour Act, 1857," was promoted in opposition, in which it was recited that it was expedient "that the management of the docks of Liverpool and Birkenhead, and the control over pilotage, harbour lights, and all other matters conducive to the safety or convenience of the shipping frequenting the Port of Liverpool should, subject to the powers of the Conservancy Commissioners, be vested in an independent public body, elected by the persons that pay rates, for the maintenance of the docks and works; and that all rates and dues levied on shipping frequenting the Port of Liverpool, or on goods carried in such shipping other than rates and dues payable to Her Majesty,

should be applied for the benefit of the Port of Liverpool and of the shipping that frequent such Port." This Bill received the Royal assent on the 25th of August, 1857. The duty of carrying into effect the provisions of the Act was vested in a Board called "The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board," and such Board, it was enacted, should be a body corporate, with a perpetual succession and a Common Seal, and having a capacity to hold lands subject to the provisions of the Act. By this Act all the estate and interest in docks and other property at Birkenhead or elsewhere, which were transferred or intended to be transferred to the Corporation of Liverpool by the Birkenhead Docks Act, 1855, and all docks, lights, buoys, and other property at Liverpool or elsewhere, held by or in trust for the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks, together with all powers, rights, and privileges vested in the Corporation of Liverpool, the Liverpool Dock Trustees, or the Liverpool Dock Committee; powers of licensing and regulating pilots and of fixing pilotage rates, and of imposing or collecting town and anchorage dues; rights of appointing a water bailiff and of removing sunken vessels; together with the rights and privileges in respect of the Conservancy of the River Mersey as were then vested in or exercisable by the Corporation of Liverpool, were, upon and after the 1st January, 1858, vested in the Board. From this date also the Board were required to pay so much of the salary of the acting conservator appointed by the Conservancy Commissioners as was then paid by the Corporation, together with all other expenses then incurred or payable by the Corporation in respect of the conservancy of the River Mersey. The Act also provided that the Board should promote a Bill in the ensuing Session for consolidating the several Acts then in force, and for obtaining any additional powers that were necessary or expedient for carrying into effect the purposes of the Act of 1857 and for other purposes. This Bill was brought in and resulted in the Act known as The Mersey Dock Acts Consolidation Act, 1858, which received the Royal assent on the 12th July, 1858.

See 4595-616.

4480. Now will you tell us the number of members on the existing Board?—By the Act of 1857, as amended by the Act of 1858, the number of members on the Board is 28, of whom 24 are "elective" members, and four "nominee" members. By the Act of 1857 it was provided that a person to be qualified to be an "elective" member must reside within the borough or the Customs Port of Liverpool or within ten miles of the outward boundary of the said borough or port, and must pay within the year immediately preceding his election dock rates to an amount of not less than £50. This amount was subsequently reduced to £25. An "elective" member of the Board must be a British subject. The present limits of the Customs Port of Liverpool were fixed by a Treasury Order dated November 3rd, 1896, and, stated briefly, may be said to extend from the termination of the Port of Chester, *i.e.*, the "Redstones" in Hoylake, and to continue up the River Mersey on the Cheshire shore to Ince Ferry, thence across the River to Dungeon Point on the Lancashire shore, and along the Lancashire shore to the southern boundary of the Port of Preston, namely, the inner northwest sea mark on the beach at Formby Point. The qualification of a dock elector entitled to vote at the election of an "elective" member of the Board is the payment during the twelve months immediately preceding the 1st of August in any year, either by himself or by some person on his behalf (and it is not necessary that the elector should carry on business at Liverpool or in the neighbourhood), in respect of rates legally demandable from him of an amount of not less than £10. A dock elector must be a British subject, or if a foreigner must be resident within the United Kingdom. A list is kept by the Board of all duly qualified dock electors, which is revised at some time in the months of September or October in every year by the barrister for the time being appointed to revise the list of burgesses of Liverpool, and provision is made for electors to object to names being on the list. Seven days previous notice of the time and place at which the Court for the revision of the list of the dock electors is to sit is given by advertisement in one of the newspapers published in Liverpool, Manchester, and Leeds, and by affixing a statement to the outer door of the Town Hall of Liverpool and to the outer door of the Town Hall of Birkenhead. The Board also send by post to the Town Clerk of each of the undermentioned cities and boroughs seven clear days at least before the first day on which the Revision Court shall sit, a copy of the list of dock electors and a printed copy of the statement above referred to, viz., Manchester, Salford, Oldham, Huddersfield, Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, Halifax, Blackburn, Burnley, Preston, Bolton, Bury, Stalybridge, Stockport, Wigan, Rochdale, Ashton-under-Lyne, Chester, Darwen, St. Helens, Hyde, Bacup, Heywood and Warrington. The list of dock electors is, before revision, fixed to the outer door of the Town Halls of Liverpool and Birkenhead, and after revision, printed copies are sold at a reasonable price to any person requiring the same. A dock elector is entitled to one vote only, and voting by proxy is not permitted. No person is entitled to vote at the election of members of the Board, unless his name appears upon the revised list of dock electors made during the previous year, and any person wilfully personating any person entitled to vote is liable to a penalty not exceeding £20. The four "nominee" members of the Board are appointed by the Conservancy Commissioners of the River Mersey, who are: The First Lord of the Admiralty, the President of the Board of Trade, and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, for the time being. Each "elective" member is elected, and each "nominee" member is appointed for a term of four years, but at the expiration of that period is eligible for re-election or re-appointment. Six of the "elective" members and one "nominee" member retire by rotation on the 20th of December in each year. A meeting of the dock electors is convened for the 12th of December in each year for the purpose of receiving nominations to fill the vacancies caused by the retiring "elective" members, and notice of the date of such meeting is given to the dock electors by advertisements in newspapers published in Manchester, Liverpool and Birkenhead, and by notices affixed to the outer doors of the Town Halls of Liverpool and Birkenhead, and to some of the offices belonging to the Board. If more candidates are proposed than the number to be elected, a poll may be demanded; but if not, or if no poll is demanded, a declaration by the returning officer, who is the Chairman of the Board for the previous year or some person appointed by him, that the candidates are elected members of the Board is evidence of the fact. In the event of a poll being demanded, the Board send by post to the Town Clerk of each of the beforementioned cities and boroughs a notice of the time and place of taking the poll, with a list of the candidates, and cause such poll to be advertised in such newspapers as in the case of revision proceedings. Polling clerks are appointed by the returning officer, and proper polling books provided. The poll is opened at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of the appointed day at Liverpool and Birkenhead, and closes at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, except in the case of disturbance or riot, when the closing of the poll may be fixed to take place at such time as the returning officer directs. The poll at any place of voting may also be closed at any time before 4 o'clock, if one hour has elapsed during which no vote has been tendered at such place of voting. The name and address of every voter, and the manner in which he votes, are entered in the polling books, and at the close of the poll the returning officer sums up the votes, and as soon as possible publishes the names of the candidates elected by advertisement in some one or more newspaper or newspapers published in Liverpool, and by affixing a list of such candidates to the outer door of the Town Hall of Liverpool, and to the outer door of the Town Hall of Birkenhead. If from any cause whatever the place of any vacating member is not filled up at the poll, such vacancy is deemed to be a casual vacancy, and is dealt with accordingly. During any vacancy, and is dealt with accordingly. During any as if no vacancy had occurred, and any casual vacancy in the office of an "elective" member may be filled up by the elective members themselves. The appointment of a "nominee" member, in the place of the "nominee" member who retires by rotation on the 20th of December in each year is made by the Conservancy Commissioners, and any casual vacancy in the office of a "nominee" member is also filled up by the said Commissioners. A member chosen to fill a casual vacancy, either "elective" or "nominee," can only retain office so long as the vacating member would have retained the same if such vacancy had not occurred. Every new "elective" member who is elected, whether at the nomination or as the result of a poll, is entitled to enter upon and take office as an "elective" member on the 21st of December next after such election, and not sooner. The Board are required by the Act of 1857 to hold a meeting for the despatch of business at least once in

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every week, but no business is to be transacted at any meeting unless at least three members are present. All questions are decided by a majority of votes of the members present. Disqualification of members.—If any member of the Board: (1) Holds any office or place of profit under the Board; or (2) participates in the profits of any work done by the order of the Board; or (3) is concerned in or participates in the profits of any contract entered into with the Board; he ceases to be a member of the Board, and his office thereupon becomes vacant, except that no member shall vacate his office by reason of his being a shareholder in any company supplying water or gas by order of the Board, or being interested in any sale or lease of any lands or any loan of money to the Board, but no member is entitled to vote in respect of any supply of water or gas by any company in which he is a shareholder, or in respect of any question connected therewith, or as regards any sale or lease of lands or loan of money in which he is interested, and if he does so vote his vote is not counted, and he renders himself liable to a penalty not exceeding £20. The members of the Board receive no remuneration for their services, and they are exempt from serving on juries. The Board out of their number appoint a Chairman, who holds office for a year, and he is eligible for reappointment. The Board are authorised to delegate any of their powers to Committees consisting of such members of their body as they may think fit. Under this power Standing Committees are appointed, and between them attend to all the general work of the Trust. Special Committees are appointed, from time to time, as may appear to be necessary for particular occasions or purposes, the functions of such Special Committees ceasing upon the adoption or approval by the Board of any report or recommendation from them. The office of every Committee (unless sooner determined) ceases on the 19th of December in each year, and the Committees are reappointed at the first meeting of the Board held on or after the 21st of December; that is, the day upon which the new members commence to hold office. In addition to any powers acquired by the Board under the Act of 1857, the Board have been authorised, from time to time under various Acts, to borrow money at interest on the security of any rate or rates, or any dues forming part of their general receipts, and the amount so authorised to be borrowed was, at the 1st July, 1900, £24,914,966, and the amount actually borrowed £19,930,990.

4481. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) When you say "To borrow money at interest on the security of any rate or rates," is that any rates of the City of Liverpool?—No; it is dock tonnage rates on the ships and town dues on the goods. The rate is received from ships and from goods; it has nothing whatever to do with the Corporation in any shape or form.

4482. (*Chairman.*) Can you give us a general due date?—No, I cannot, because it runs up to 20 or 30 years, and the annuities are perpetual.

4483. I think your board are required to submit to Parliament each year an account of receipts during the preceding 12 months?—Yes; but the Government have never at any time contributed, or been asked to contribute in any way, to the capital expenditure of the board; the board have at all times been able to meet their own financial liabilities.

4484. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Is there any power in your hands for the Government to so contribute a rate in aid?—None whatever that I am aware of.

4485. What is this contribution that you are speaking of? You say the Government have never contributed, or been asked to contribute in any way, to the capital expenditure of the board. What power is that?—That is merely a remark in case it might occur to anyone that as the accounts are submitted to the Government, the Government might be asked for something in regard to the accounts. It is to make it quite clear that we have nothing whatever to do with the Government. The Government have never offered, and have never been asked to give us anything at all. We do not want anything. For the purpose of securing the proper audit of the board's accounts twelve audit commissioners are elected and appointed out of the body of dock electors, and such elections are conducted in a similar manner to those in which members of the board are elected. In addition to the audit commissioners, the Board of Trade are authorised to appoint a special auditor, who may act either alone or with the elected auditors in the auditing of the board's accounts. The procedure followed at the Port of Liverpool in connection with the docking and berthing of vessels, the discharge of vessels, and the manipulation of goods on the quays is as follows:—The docking and berthing of vessels.—This may be divided into three classes, namely: (A) transient vessels, that is, vessels which do not trade regularly to the port; (B) vessels belonging to a line which trades regularly to the port, and which have a particular berth appropriated to their use; (C) vessels using a berth in the board's "closed" or warehouse docks. With regard to Class A (transient vessels, steam or sailing), the general custom as regards docking and berthing is as follows:—The owners or agents of the vessel apply in writing to the harbour-master for a discharging berth for the vessel, and at a personal interview which usually follows the application, the system of docks which the vessel is to enter is decided upon, and the dock-master is then instructed by the harbour-master, by memorandum, telegraph, or telephone, to give the vessel a berth in turn on her arrival. Upon the arrival of the vessel in the river, the information as to the system of docks she is to enter is furnished to the master and pilot of the vessel by the owners or agents of the vessel through the medium of the boatmen and others employed by them in connection with the docking, etc., of the vessel. As soon as the vessel is at the dock entrance, with ropes out and all ready to go into the dock, the pilot gives up the charge of the vessel to the dock officials, and sends to the dock-master a form, known as a "docking note" (forms of which the pilot has with him), containing particulars of the vessel's name, register tonnage, extreme outside beam, maximum draught of water and least rise of floor, and to which is appended a memorandum drawing the attention of shipmasters to a few of the more prominent of the bye-laws for the regulation of vessels in the docks. This form is required to be filled up, signed by the captain, and witnessed by the pilot, or, should a pilot not be on board, by the chief mate. A copy of the bye-laws is placed on board every transient vessel on arrival and on the regular traders about once every six months. The vessel is then docked as soon as circumstances (turn, depth of water, etc.) will permit, and is placed by the ship's people at the berth to which her turn entitles her. With regard to Class B, that is, vessels belonging to a line which trades regularly to the port, and which have a particular berth appropriated to their use, in most cases notice, either verbal or in writing, is given by the owners or agents to the dock-master that the vessel is expected to dock on a certain tide, and in other instances, such as some of the coasting steamers, intimation is not always given, because the boats run with such regularity it is not necessary. As in the case of a transient vessel, the regular trader is passed by the ship's people, on docking, to the berth appropriated to the use of the line to which she belongs. The fact that the vessel has an appropriated berth renders it unnecessary to follow certain formalities (such as the berthing book application for stages, gas, etc.), which are followed when the vessels have not an appropriated berth, as parties holding appropriated berths are required to provide their own stages, and to have their own meter for the gas supply. It sometimes occurs that owing to want of room at the quay or in the shed at the berth appropriated to the line to which she belongs, the regular trader has to obtain accommodation in the unappropriated portion of a dock. In this event the vessel is treated as a transient vessel entering dock would be, but it is the custom for any transient vessel docking on the same tide to take turn before her. As to Class C, that is, vessels using a berth in the Board's "closed" or warehouse docks, application (which is nearly always verbal) is made by the owners or agents to the chief warehouse manager for a discharging berth, and when this has been arranged, the chief warehouse manager notifies the warehouse keeper, and the latter informs the dock master that the vessel is due, and indicates the berth at the warehouses at which the vessel is to be placed. In other cases the parties apply to the harbour master, who arranges the docking; the chief warehouse manager and the harbour master are in constant communication. With regard to a vessel arriving with a full cargo of grain and breadstuffs, the harbour master is authorised, provided there is room in the dock and a sufficient depth of water to enable the vessel to enter, to order her to the Grain Warehouse Dock (Waterloo Dock), Liverpool, to discharge, unless the owners or agents of the vessel

should elect to send the vessel to the Board's grain warehouses at the Birkenhead Docks for that purpose. As to the discharge of vessels and the manipulation of goods on the quays, these may also be divided into three classes:—Vessels from foreign ports; vessels from coastwise ports; and vessels discharged in one of the Board's "closed" or warehouse docks. The discharging of vessels from foreign ports is performed by master lumpers, who are licensed by the Board, and are employed by the owners or agents of the vessel.

4486. (*Chairman.*) What is a master lumper?—A master lumper is the party who does the discharging from the hold of the ship. The master stevedore is the man who stows the cargo; the master lumper is the man who unloads it from the ship.

4487. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Does he employ his own labour?—Yes.

4488. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Is he on board the ship or does he take charge of the goods afterwards?—He is in the hold of the ship. The master lumper by whom a transient vessel is discharged is usually a professional master lumper, but in the case of vessels belonging to a line which trades regularly to the port the master lumper is usually one of the managing owners, duly licensed, or in the case of vessels belonging to incorporated companies an officer of the company, duly licensed. The discharging consists of taking the cargo out of the vessel and delivering it over the ship's rail. This work is performed by means of the ship's own steam winches or by hydraulic cranes provided by the board and let out on hire, or by both. All work done on board in connection with the discharge is paid for by the owners or agents of the vessel. There are no fixed charges for this work, but such charges are mutually arranged between the master lumper and the owners or agents of the vessel by whom he is employed. Every person licensed by the Board to act as a master lumper is required before he shall be capable of acting as such to execute to the Board a bond in the sum of £200 for paying or satisfying the owners of goods unstowed or unshipped by him in his capacity of a master lumper, or by the porters in his employ or under his direction the amount of any loss, damage, or injury which such goods may sustain during unstowing and unshipping, and the owners of any goods sustaining such loss, etc., may sue in their own name the master lumper and his sureties upon the bond in the same manner as if the bond had been executed to them and not to the board. The appointment by the Board of master lumpers does not prevent the owner or master of any vessel from employing her crew in discharging any portion of her cargo nor render such master or owner or crew liable to any penalty for so doing. When goods are delivered overside into barges the work is performed by the master lumper (unless some operations are required to be performed involving the intervention of a master porter hereinafter referred to), and is carried out by arrangement between the owners or agents of the vessel and the consignees of the goods. As to the discharge of vessels from coastwise ports, the intervention of a master lumper is not necessary in connection with the discharge of goods from vessels from coastwise ports. Goods are usually discharged from these vessels and landed on to the quays by the ship's own appliances, and at the expense of the owners or agents of the vessels. Then as to the discharge of vessels in one of the board's "closed" or warehouse docks. No persons except those appointed and employed by the board, or the crew of the vessel, or other persons in special cases with the consent of the board are allowed to work within the walls of any warehouse dock in the unshipping and landing of the cargo of any vessel using such dock, and the master of any vessel having cargo on board and entering any warehouse dock is required to deliver to the superintendent of the warehouse, within 24 hours after the entrance of the vessel into the dock, a copy of the manifest of the cargo of the vessel, under a penalty not exceeding £5. The board have authority, however, to declare by resolution that their warehouse docks or any portion of them may be worked in the same manner and subject to the same bye-laws, etc., as open docks belonging to the board. Quite recently the board have done so by withdrawing the restrictions as regards the Albert Dock warehouses. That is one of the largest warehouses which we have in Liverpool. The work of discharging vessels in the warehouse docks is generally carried out by the board's officials. The discharging, as in the open docks, consists in taking the cargo out of the vessel and delivering it over the ship's rail. All work done on board is paid for by the shipowner, and the rates are fixed by the board. As to the discharge of vessels generally, the board are authorised to appoint surveyors of cargoes and goods, and have so appointed a number of surveyors, and divided the dock estate into districts, and allotted a district to each surveyor. Every surveyor of cargoes appointed by the board is required, on the request of the owners or consignees of a vessel or her cargo, to examine the stowage of the cargo, and investigate the nature and extent of the damage (if any) which such cargo may have sustained, and also, when requested, to report upon and certify to the owners or consignees of the vessel or her cargo the state of the cargo in respect of its stowage, damage, etc. All surveyors of cargoes have full power at all times during the discharge of the cargo of any vessel to go on board and inspect any part of the vessel and her cargo, and if, on such inspection, he is of opinion that any part of the cargo has sustained damage by reason of improper stowage he is required, before leaving the vessel, to give notice in writing to the master or other officer in charge of the vessel that there is, in his judgment, improper stowage in respect of the goods mentioned in such notice. Persons obstructing or preventing any surveyor from inspecting any part of a vessel or her cargo are liable to a penalty of not exceeding £10.

4489. Is this decision of a surveyor final as between the master and the merchant?—It is generally accepted as final. A law suit may arise out of it, and then, of course, the surveyor is called to produce his certificate and to give evidence on it.

4490. But as a general rule it is final in practice?—It is in practice. With regard to the manipulation of goods on the quays and goods landed from vessels from foreign ports, the cargo of every vessel from any foreign or colonial port using any open dock, is required to be received, weighed and loaded off by one set of porters only, in the employ and under the directions and orders of one of the master porters licensed by the Board, and any person acting as master porter without being licensed by the Board is liable to a penalty not exceeding £50. Every master porter, immediately after he is licensed, and before he is capable of acting as such, is required to execute to the Board a bond in the sum of £500, to be conditioned for paying or satisfying the owners of goods received weighed or loaded off by such master porter, or by the porters in his employ, or under his direction, the amount of any loss, damage or injury which such goods may sustain during receiving, weighing, and loading off; and the owner of any goods sustaining such damage, etc., may sue, in his own name, the master porter and his sureties, upon such bond, in the same manner as he might have done in case the bond had been executed to him and not to the Board. A master porter is responsible not only to the Board, but also to each consignee for any goods committed to his care, and also to the owner of the vessel by which such goods may have been imported, for the correct weighing, taring, scribing, marking, and measuring, as the case may be, of such goods; and he is also required, when goods have been weighed or measured, to furnish, if requested, to each consignee and to the owner of the vessel a correct account in detail of the weight, measurement, and marks of such goods; and he is further, if required, to furnish to the Board an abstract of such account showing the total number of packages and the gross and net weight or measurement, as the case may be, of each mark or consignment of such goods, and at the same time to furnish to the collector or other proper officer of customs, a duplicate of such abstract. A master porter is also required, previously to receiving on the quay any portion of the cargo of any vessel in respect of which he may have been appointed the master porter, to appoint a competent landing clerk, whose duty it is to be present at all times when any portion of the cargo is in course of being discharged, and to record, in books to be approved by the Board, the marks, numbers, weights, and measurements of all goods discharged, the day when they are discharged, and the day and hour when they are delivered. Bye-laws are made by the Board from time to time for the regulation and good government of persons licensed by them to act as master porters, and for defining and regulating the amount of the charges allowed to be made by the master porters for work done by them. The manner in which it is decided who is entitled to act as master porter at any vessel is as follows:—As respects every steam vessel (except as hereinafter mentioned as regards entire

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cargoes belonging to one consignee), the master porter is one or other of the following persons, provided they are respectively qualified, namely, the managing owner, the consignee of the vessel, or, in the case of steam vessels belonging to incorporated companies, then any officer of the company to which the vessel belongs. The owner of the entire cargo of any vessel, whether a steam or sailing vessel, may employ any licensed master porter he may think proper for such vessel, or act himself if he be licensed. As respects all other vessels, whether steamers or not, in every case where there is more than one consignee of goods by a vessel, the consignee of goods *bonâ fide* paying the largest amount of freight is, if qualified, the master porter. If the consignee above referred to is not so qualified, or if he decline to act or omit to give notice, in writing, to the owner or consignee of the vessel of his intention to act, before 12 o'clock noon of the day (exclusive of Sunday or any legal holiday) next after the report of the vessel at the Custom House, then the consignee of goods *bonâ fide* paying the next largest amount of freight is the master porter, if qualified. If two or more consignees of goods qualified to act pay an equal amount of freight, or if there is any difference among the consignees of goods as to the amount of freight to be paid by them, then the owner or consignee of the vessel decides which of the several master porters, qualified and claiming to act, shall act. If neither the consignee of goods paying the largest or next largest amount of freight is qualified, or, if qualified, if neither is willing to act, or if neither of them gives notice of his intention to act as above mentioned, then the owner or consignee of the vessel becomes the master porter if qualified and willing to act, otherwise he must nominate some other qualified master porter. There are a number of professional licensed master porters who undertake work on behalf of shipowners and merchants. In the case of regular lines of steamers, having appropriated berths, the master porter is usually one of the managing owners, or, in the case of steam vessels belonging to incorporated companies, an officer of the company. When a vessel commences to discharge, the master porter receives the goods at the ship's rail from the master lumper, selects to mark, examines for external damage and separates goods accordingly, weighs if necessary, delivers to carts if in attendance, or if not, stows the goods on the quay and delivers them subsequently to the consignees when applied for. Goods are only delivered to consignees by the master porter on the written order from the shipowner. The master porter is required to watch goods discharged from a ship for which he is acting as master porter until such goods are actually loaded off from the quay, except in cases where the goods belong to the master porter, or when all the goods remaining on the quay belong to one consignee, and such consignee gives notice to the master porter that he does not require the goods to be watched. The charge for watching, which is payable by the consignee, is 5s. per day or night. The charges to be made by master porters for work done by them are specified in the schedule of charges appended to the bye-laws made by the Board. All goods (except timber discharged at the timber quays, which is hereinafter referred to) are allowed to remain on the quays without paying rent for the following periods, namely:—At an appropriated berth, 72 hours; at an unappropriated berth, if discharged from steamers, 72 hours; at an unappropriated berth, if discharged from sailing vessels, 48 hours; calculated from 5 o'clock p.m. of the day upon which the goods are deposited on the quays—Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday, and other legal holidays not included. If goods are not removed from the quay (appropriated or unappropriated) within the above mentioned periods, they become liable to quay penalty rent at the rate of 5s. per hour for the first 24 hours, and 10s. per hour thereafter, irrespective of quantity, unless, in the discretion of the Board's Traffic Manager, the goods can be allowed to be placed on special quay rent, in which case the rate charged is, at the Liverpool Docks, one halfpenny per square yard per day on the area of the space occupied, and at the Birkenhead Docks a slightly lower rate. As a rule, a deposit is allowed by the Board to be accepted by the Chief Traffic Manager in respect of the quay penalty rent incurred, and the case is subsequently considered on appeal by the Traffic Committee of the Board, and (if the circumstances warrant) a reduction is made in the amount. Goods lying on the quay at an appropriated berth are not granted special quay rent except with the consent of the parties to whom such berth is appropriated. If goods remain on any quay so as to cause an obstruction for a longer period than is necessary for removing them, the Board may remove the goods to one of their warehouses or other place of safety, and there detain the goods until the charges thereon are paid, and, in the event of the charges on the goods not being paid within 10 days after the removal of the goods from the quay, the goods may be sold by public auction. The Board have erected, on the quays of their docks, transit sheds, and such sheds have been approved for the reception of dutiable goods by the Commissioners of Customs. If any goods deposited in a transit shed are not, within 48 hours from the day on which they were so deposited, entered with the Customs and the order for landing lodged with the proper officer of Customs, the Board may, on the next following day, cause the goods to be entered at the Custom House, and having obtained the proper Customs authority, may cause the goods to be weighed or measured, so that they may be passed by the Customs landing waiter. The Board may also retain the goods as security for the payment of the Customs Duties, and of the Board's and other charges on the goods, and, if the goods remain in the transit shed, for a period of seven days, after being passed by the Customs' landing-waiter, the Board may warehouse the goods in any warehouse, whether belonging to the Board or not, which has been approved by the Commissioners of Customs for the warehousing of bonded goods. No charge is made by the Board for the use of any transit shed in respect of goods deposited therein, unless the goods remain longer than one day after being passed by the Customs' landing-waiter, in which case they become liable to a rent for each day, thereafter, after the rate of four times the amount set forth in the schedule of warehouse rates, rents and charges, as chargeable per week for rent on such goods in the dock warehouses. All operations in connection with dutiable goods are performed by master porters, as in the case of other goods. The Board have also provided a depôt for the storage of goods in transit, pending the arrival of, or in readiness for, the outward vessel to receive them, and the charges payable to the Board in respect of goods placed in the depôt are set out on page 76 of the schedule of warehouse rates, etc., above alluded to. Timber discharged at the appointed timber quays from either steamers or sailing vessels, is allowed to remain on the quay, free from the payment of rent for the following periods:—

Deals and Boards.	Other Descriptions of Timber.	
	During the period between the 1st of January and the 30th June.	During the period between the 1st of July and the 31st December.
72 hours	72 hours	48 hours.

Commencing from the evening of the day upon which the timber may have been landed on the quay—Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday, and other legal holidays not included.

If the timber is not removed from the quays within the above-mentioned periods it becomes liable to quay penalty rent and special quay rent, under the same conditions and at the same rates as other goods, except that the rate of special quay rent on timber removed from the quay on the margin of the dock across the roadway behind such quay on to the upper timber quay is one farthing per square yard per week on the space occupied. Deals, planks, boards, and railway sleepers of pine, fir, spruce, and pitch pine, etc., other than baulk and log timber, are landed and placed on the quay at the expense of the owners or agents of the vessel. The consignees of the timber select and load off, no master porter being employed, this being the practice of the trade. Baulk and log timber are taken from the ship's port or rail by the consignees of the timber, who do all the handling in connection with placing the timber on the quay, and afterwards measuring and delivering it. As to vessels from coastwise ports, goods discharged from vessels from coastwise ports are usually loaded off by the consignees of the goods, and at their own expense. It is not obligatory to employ a master porter in connection with the manipulation on the quay of goods discharged from steamers from coastwise ports. The goods are allowed to remain on the quays free of

rent for the same periods as general goods discharged from steamers and sailing vessels respectively from foreign ports, and if not removed within those periods become liable to quay penalty rent and special quay rent, under the same conditions and at the same rates as other general goods above alluded to. Now, as to goods discharged from vessels in one of the Board's "closed" or warehouse docks. The manipulation on the quay of goods discharged from vessels in one of the Board's "closed" or warehouse docks is generally carried out by the Board's officials. The usual operations are performed, namely, receiving from the ship, weighing, gauging or counting, selecting to mark, and loading off if carts are in attendance, or if not, stowing on the quay, and delivering subsequently to consignees when applied for. Goods are also housed by the Board in their warehouses direct from the ship, without being stowed on the quay, and also after having been stowed on the quay. The charges for the operations performed by the Board in connection with goods are set forth in the schedules of warehouse rates, charges, and rent. Goods other than grain are generally weighed at landing, and a record of the weights is taken by the Board, but it sometimes occurs that, owing to rapid despatch in the discharge or to other causes, this cannot be done. In this case the goods are then ordinarily weighed on delivery if the goods require to be weighed, and if instructions have not been received by the Board not to weigh the goods. If the goods (usually weighed) are not weighed at the time of landing or receiving a deduction is made from the usual charges. All grain discharged at and intended to be stored in the grain warehouses at the Waterloo Dock or Birkenhead is weighed by hopper at the time of housing, unless an objection to such mode of weighing is given to the Board prior to the commencement of such operation, in which case the grain is weighed by ordinary beam scale. Grain delivered from the quay is weighed at delivery only, unless instructions have been received by the Board from the consignees to weigh at landing, and, even when this is done, it is customary for the produce to be re-weighed on delivery unless delivery is taken direct from the ship. Warehouse rent is chargeable from and including the date upon which the first portion of the goods named in each housing order is landed, but if the goods have been on special quay rent the warehouse rent commences on and from the day following that upon which the special quay rent ceases. Goods may, at the discretion of the chief warehouse manager, remain on the quay on special rent at the same rates as at the open docks. A freight book giving the total weights of the different consignments or marks of cargo is furnished by the Board to the shipowner, and landing accounts giving similar particulars (in detail if requested, as regards package goods) are given to the consignees of the goods. Similar information as regards the total weight of the different consignments is also supplied by the Board to the Customs authorities. With respect to vessels and goods generally, vessels laden with petroleum are subject to the Board's petroleum bye-laws and to certain specific rules and regulations. In accordance with the Customs regulations, vessels from foreign ports are required to be reported at the Custom House within 24 hours from the time of entering the port, but vessels arriving from coastwise ports are not required to be reported or cleared within any specified time, but as a rule they report on arrival. All vessels entering the docks are liable to payment to the Board of Dock Tonnage Rates according to table No. 1, page 22, of the Tables of Rates and Dues on Ships, and pilotage rates are paid at the same time. Vessels paying dock tonnage rates may remain in the docks for the space of two months from the time of first going into any dock without incurring any further charge, but any vessel remaining in dock after that period becomes liable to dock rent of one penny per ton per week for the first six months dating from the expiration of the first two months, and twopence per ton per week afterwards. Any time the vessel may be in the graving docks is deducted. All goods imported from foreign ports and brought into the docks are liable to the payment of dock rates and town dues (see Table 5, page 27). These rates and dues are required to be paid before the delivery of the goods is allowed to be taken from the dock quays. An entry for each parcel of goods imported is exhibited to the Board, and after the rates are paid the goods are ready for delivery. Goods imported coastwise and brought into the Board's docks are liable to dock rates and town dues, but at the present time only town dues are being collected. All vessels coming into or going out of the Port of Liverpool and not entering into the docks are liable, according to the tonnage burden thereof, to the payment of harbour rates as set forth in the schedule annexed to the Mersey Docks Act, 1874, according to the several classes of voyages described in such schedule, and such rates are to be paid to the Board by the masters or owners of such vessels. The maximum harbour rates set forth in the schedule above-mentioned are not, however, levied at present, and the scale of harbour rates actually demanded by the Board at the present time is as shown in the Table, which I will now hand in.

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(*The witness handed in a Table showing the harbour rates on vessels using the docks of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. See Appendix, 13th day, No. 1.*)

In the case of vessels which enter the Board's docks, etc., and thus incur dock tonnage rates, the amount of the harbour rates applicable to the class of voyage performed is included in, and forms part of, the dock tonnage rates which the vessel has to pay as shown in this further table, which I hand in.

(*The witness handed in a Table showing the dock tonnage rates on vessels using the docks of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. See Appendix, 13th day, No. 2.*)

Out of this payment for dock tonnage rates, the full amount of the harbour rates is always credited to the Board's conservancy account, the funds of which account are entirely devoted to the maintenance of the lighthouses, lightships, etc., and in the improvement of the port and harbour (other than the docks), for which purposes the harbour rates are levied. The Board have the sole property in, custody, and charge of the weights, scales, and other weighing materials used on the dock quays, and no other weights, scales, or weighing materials are allowed to be used on the quays except by coastwise vessels and for the weighing of grain, flour, palm-nut kernels, frozen meat, locust beans, cotton seed, onions, and nuts, or in some special cases by permission of the Board. The Board pay the whole expense of policing the dock estate, and the constables are supplied by the City of Liverpool as regards the whole of the Liverpool Docks, and by the borough of Birkenhead as respects the whole of the Birkenhead Docks only on a special requisition by the Board. The beats to be patrolled by the constables are subject generally to the Board's arrangements.

4491. (*Chairman.*) Is the working of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board satisfactory, in your opinion?—Very.

4492. You have no improvement that you would suggest?—No.

4493. I should like to ask whether politics enter into the election of the Board?—Absolutely in no way whatever.

4494. You are of opinion that the public ownership of docks is preferable to private ownership?—I think so.

4495. Will you give us your reasons?—I think so, because my experience has been entirely confined to the results of the public ownership. I know very little about private ownership of docks.

4496. That is your conviction?—That is my conviction.

4497. Is it your opinion that management by a Trust is more advantageous than management by a municipality?—Yes, distinctly.

4498. Do you think it is advisable for wharves to be included in any proposals for dock management?—We have no wharves in Liverpool in the sense that, as I understand, you have them here. You have wharves in London to which we have nothing corresponding at Liverpool.

4499. Will you explain to us the lighterage system in force at the Port of Liverpool? Are any charges levied on lighters or on goods discharged into lighters?—As regards lighters themselves, I should imagine that is a small matter in comparison with the lighterage system in London. During the last twelve months about 125,000 of what you call lighters and what we call flats or barges, passed in and out of the docks at Liverpool. I should fancy that it is a very small number in comparison with the barges passing up and down the Thames. Those barges would come into the docks and bring goods for vessels. They are not charged any rates, but the goods which they bring pay dues exactly in the same way as if they had been carted to the dock and put down on the quay.

4500. In answer to my question as to whether any charges are levied on what you call flats, or on goods discharged into flats, your answer in

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the first case is in the affirmative, and in the second case in the negative?—Will you allow me to make myself clear. Goods brought into the docks by barges pay dues if they are coming into the dock for outward shipment. There is very little traffic, in fact none at all, in the river at Liverpool of goods coming down in barges and being landed on to the quay.

4501. It is not what is called a barge port at all?—No. The goods which the barges bring down for transshipment for foreign vessels pay dock rates and town dues, just the same as if they had been brought to the dock quay in carts; but the barge which brings the goods does not pay any dues.

4502. Have you anything at all to say with regard to the Customs regulations?—No; nothing specially.

4503. Do you think they could be improved?—I do not know that they could. I have not heard any complaints or any fault found with the Customs.

4504. I am referring more particularly to the question of the times of working?—No. The Collector of Customs is exceedingly ready and willing at all times to do anything that is necessary.

4505. From your experience there is no complaint?—No; far from it.

4506. With reference to the discharge of vessels from foreign ports, you told us that the work was performed by means of the ship's own steam winches and by rydraulic cranes provided by the Board. I understand you have a good many two-storey sheds in Liverpool?—We have a considerable number.

4507. Do you find them a great success?—Yes.

4508. Are you adding to them?—We are adding to them very largely at the present moment.

4509. Any shed accommodation which you might put now would be two-storey?—No; not necessarily. We are adding some single-storey sheds that will be 150ft. or 200ft. wide. Some shipowners prefer the wide single shed and some the double; there is a difference of opinion.

4510. Which, in your opinion, is the better?—I prefer the double-storey.

4511. Have you any complaint at Liverpool as to lack of proper dispatch?—No, I cannot say that we have; very quick dispatch is given at all times.

4512. It is a matter to which you give particular attention, I understand?—Very much so.

4513. You recognise the importance to the shipowner is very great?—Yes.

4514. That is constantly brought home to you by the shipowner, I suppose?—Yes; the shipowner himself does the discharging. The Board itself, except in what we call our warehouse docks, does not discharge any ships.

4515. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Will you tell us shortly what is the difference between the procedure in unloading in the Port of Liverpool and in the Port of London? I mean this: I understand that in your unloading, the ship loses responsibility the moment the goods pass the rail?—In Liverpool, yes.

4516. Do you know what happens in London?—No; I do not.

4517. What dues would be levied on overside cargo in a dock in Liverpool unloading from the ship straight into a barge?—Precisely the same as if they landed on the other side on to the quay. Water space is just as valuable to us as quay space.

4518. You say that if goods are not removed from the quays within a certain time, they become liable to a quay penalty rent. Do you find that goods are not removed, as a rule, in the allowed time, or that they are removed in the allowed time?—It is a very customary thing for goods to be allowed to remain a little longer on the quay for the purpose of convenience to anyone taking the goods away, but as a rule everyone is anxious to take the goods away.

4519. They do not remain, as a rule, long enough to have the extra charges upon them?—Plenty of goods remain on the quay on which the penalty is charged, but the majority of the goods go away.

4520. (*Mr. Peel.*) You say that if the goods are not removed within certain times, they become liable to quay penalty rent at the rate of 5s. per hour for the first 24 hours, and 10s. per hour thereafter, irrespective of quantity? I do not quite understand that. Do you mean to say that is the charge made on the whole of the cargo of one ship?—Supposing there were 100 bales of cotton, the penalty charge spoken of would be 5s. per hour on the lot; that would be £6 for 24 hours. If it was 100 bales or ten bales, it would be the same penalty charge. It is not a question of quantity.

4521. Is it a question of space?—No. If it was 100 bales of cotton they would have to pay the same as if it was ten bales.

4522. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) That is a rather curious arrangement, is it not?—That is the arrangement.

4523. Practically you have the same fine for an amount of goods that may immensely block you, and one that would hardly block you at all?—Yes; that is so.

4524. (*Mr. Peel.*) Is a certain space allotted on the quay to the cargo of each ship?—The master porter collects the goods on the quays.

4525. Now, as to the composition of the authority. Practically, I suppose, the same people are re-elected after their four years?—No; I can hardly say that. The Board would sometimes run for perhaps three or four years without an election, and then there is an election and changes take place in the body. Then, also, changes take place from resignations and from other causes.

4526. Do you find that members of the municipal councils of Birkenhead and Liverpool sit on this Board much?—I do not think at the present moment there is any member from Birkenhead. I think there is one member of the Liverpool Corporation who sits on the Board.

4527. They are practically quite separate as regards members?—Absolutely separate.

4528. Is any unloading done in the river?—Very little.

4529. Is it mostly done inside the docks, or is it done a good deal on the quays on the river?—In the docks on to the quays.

4530. But not on to the quays by the side of the river, which are shown on the map?—No. Those are what we call pier heads, but there is nothing done there.

4531. Practically they must come into one dock or the other?—Practically they must do so. There is nothing done at the pier heads, as we call them.

4532. I suppose the amount of the transhipment trade is not very great compared with the trade direct inwards or outwards?—By comparison it is not, but at the same time it is large.

4533. Could you give roughly a percentage of it?—No.

4534. Do you arrange, as far as you can, that certain classes of goods go to certain specific docks, where the arrangements for those classes of goods are the most convenient?—Quite so. The Atlantic trade, for instance, favour the northern docks, the Alexandra, the Langton, and the Huskisson. Some of the China boats would go to the south end and Birkenhead.

4535. That is partly owing to the way in which they have been built and the conveniences that you have for them?—Yes, you may take it that way.

4536. For instance, goods coming in bulk which have to be weighed?—It is not quite so much a question of goods, as it is a question of vessels. All the larger vessels must go into the larger docks.

4537. The qualification is according to vessels rather than according to goods?—Yes; the larger vessels must go necessarily into the larger docks.

4538. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You mentioned that there were certain appropriated berths. On what basis are they appropriated?—On the amount of work that the firm who own the vessels can do at them.

4539. It being supposed that they will keep them properly employed?—They must.

4540. That is quite at the discretion of the Board?—Absolutely.

4541. You mentioned something about goods coming by barges paying the same as if they came by cart. Is there a specified charge for all goods coming into the dock by cart?—If they come to the docks to be exported, and are deposited on the quays, they pay these dock rates and town dues, whether they come by cart or not.

4542. Whether they come by barge or by cart?—Yes.

4543. That is quite different to London?—Apparently.

4544. I suppose a very large amount of the traffic comes by cart?—The largest.

4545. Where does the bulk of the cargo discharged at Liverpool go to. Does it go to private warehouses, or the Board warehouses?—The bulk of it goes to private warehouses. We have only comparatively small accommodation in the shape of warehouses. The four warehouse systems are the Albert, Wapping, Stanley, and Birkenhead. By far the larger quantity goes to private warehouses.

4546. The bulk of it goes by wagon and lorry, does it not?—Yes.

4547. There is not a very large quantity goes away direct by rail?—A comparatively small quantity, hardly anything direct.

4548. You said that goods discharged into a barge would have to pay the same rent as if they were discharged on to the quay?—The same dues. Goods discharged overside into a barge and taken away what we call up the river would pay exactly the same dock rates and town charges that they would pay if they were landed on to the quay and taken away by carts.

4549. There is no rent paid for 72 hours on the quay?—No.

4550. Then, except for delay in clearing quays, whatever payment was made would be paid by the cartage, or the charge if conveyed by barge. That would be whatever revenue the Board would get out of that traffic?—The revenue that we get would be the dock rates and town dues on the goods, and the incidental revenue that might be paid for goods delayed and remaining on the quays.

4551. Beyond 72 and 48 hours respectively?—Yes.

4552. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Take the case of a barge entering a dock. Would she declare the weight of her cargo?—No.

4553. Then how is it ascertained?—It appears on the ship's manifest.

4554. The dock rates and town dues are then assessed on that tonnage?—On the description which appears in the ship's manifest.

4555. That would be, *mutatis mutandis*, the same as when a cart arrives?—Precisely the same.

4556. Can you tell me the distinction between dock rates and town dues?—I hardly can.

4557. I suppose both go to the Trust?—They both go to the Trust.

4558. It is rather a name than otherwise now, I suppose?—It is a name more than anything else. It has been more than once suggested that they should be thrown together.

4559. Practically it would be the same thing?—Yes.

4560. For the payment of those rates and dues the barge in one case and the cart in the other would have the right of free quay space for 72 hours?—That is so.

4561. No remuneration is paid to the members of the Board?—None whatever.

4562. How long do they hold office?—Four years.

4563. Could you say of what classes the Board mainly consists? Are they shipowners or merchants?—As soon as a gentleman becomes a member of the Board his identity in connection with any outside combination ceases. May I put it in this way? A body outside, say, for instance the cotton people, or the sugar people, may send perhaps three or four or five members in, but when they get on the Board there is no cotton or sugar or anything else about it; they are members of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

4564. But, as a fact, although they are not so designated, does the Board consist in the main of merchants or shipowners?—Representatives from the Steamship Owners' Association; representatives from the Shipowners' Association; representatives from the General Brokers' Association; representatives from the Cotton Association; and so with Corn, Provisions, and Fruit. That, perhaps, covers the whole ground.

4565. Is there any difficulty at all in getting what I may call the best men to serve?—No.

4566. (*Chairman.*) Do you have a representative from the merchant element?—Yes; perhaps you may look upon the General Brokers' Association as the merchants' element.

4567. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What is the experience of Liverpool as regards the desirability of the Corporation being the dock authority?—I do not know; that was almost before my day, and I have been there forty years. *Mr. M. K. Burton.* 25 Mar. 1901.

4568. It is a matter of history; perhaps you are familiar with the matter?—It was not a question so much of Liverpool as of people outside Liverpool who wanted to have the docks separated from the Corporation.

4569. On what experience was that based? You know perhaps the reason of the detachment?—In the latter part of the year 1856 the Corporation of Liverpool gave notice that they intended, during the ensuing session, to make application to Parliament for a Bill in relation to the Birkenhead Docks, but as no provision was made in the Bill for carrying into effect the recommendations contained in the special report of the said committee, a Bill, afterwards called the Mersey Docks and Harbours Act, 1857, was promoted.

4570. The recital of the Bill is that it was expedient "that the management of the docks of Liverpool and Birkenhead, and the control over pilotage, harbour lights, and all other matters conducive to the safety or convenience of the shippping frequenting the Port of Liverpool, should, subject to the powers of the Conservancy Commissioners, be vested in an independent public body, elected by the persons that pay rates for the maintenance of the docks and works"?—That is so. That was promoted by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and the Great Western Railway Company, I believe.

4571. Your view is that the opposition which resulted in the formation of a separate Board came from outside Liverpool, and not from within?—Yes.

4572. (*Chairman.*) You are perhaps aware that the warehousing in London has decreased of late years?—Yes. See 4673-6.

4573. Is that your experience of Liverpool in regard to the tonnage stored?—No, it certainly is not the case in Liverpool.

4574. Has it increased?—It must have done so. I am speaking very much without the book, because I have no actual statistics to go upon. The whole trade in the port has increased so greatly that the proportion stored in the warehouses must have increased.

4575. You say the tonnage stored has increased?—I should think so, distinctly.

4576. There has been a suggestion in other places that free trade and the very great prosperity of the country has led a port to form a kind of Clapham Junction or clearing house, goods passing through it and not being stored. Do you say that is not your experience?—I do not think so. No doubt more has been distributed, but I think proportionately more has been warehoused.

4577. I do not want to ask you for any particular figures, but is it your impression that the tonnage stored in a year is greater than it was five years ago, for instance?—That is so.

4578. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You said: "In 1855 the undermentioned bodies were each of them prosecuting Bills in Parliament in relation to works undertaken or about to be undertaken by such bodies respectively, and such Bills were all referred to the same Committee of the House of Commons." Did the undermentioned bodies, namely, the trustees of the Birkenhead Docks, the Birkenhead Dock Company, the Liverpool Dock Trustees, and the Corporation of Liverpool promote Bills in Parliament in 1855?—There was a Bill promoted in 1855 which subsequently became the Birkenhead Dock Act, 1855. See 4479.

4579. My question is: Did those bodies promote Bills in 1855?—Yes.

4580. Those Bills were referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons?—Yes.

4581. And that Committee of the House of Commons to which the above-mentioned Bills were referred made a special report, did it not?—I believe it did.

4582. I want you to read the first paragraph of that special report?—The Committee of the House of Commons to which the Liverpool and Birkenhead Bills were referred made a special report, as follows:—"The committee on group (D) of Private Bills, in considering the Liverpool Docks Bill, and the Birkenhead Docks and Liverpool Docks Bill, referred to them, have come to

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the conclusion that it is of great importance that an amalgamation should take place of the Birkenhead and Liverpool Docks on both sides of the river, under the control of one public body."

4583. Then that Committee of the House of Commons in 1855 recommended an amalgamation of the authorities dealing with docks on both sides of the River Mersey?—Yes, clearly.

4584. Then in the next session, that is, 1856, did the Liverpool Corporation promote a Bill in Parliament in relation to the Birkenhead Docks?—Yes.

4585. Was that Bill rejected?—It was.

4586. Then in the latter part of the year 1856 the Corporation gave notice that they intended to promote another Bill in the ensuing session?—That is so.

4587. Did they promote a Bill in the session of 1857?—They did.

4588. Did anyone else promote a Bill in the session of 1857 dealing with the same matter?—Those three bodies that I have mentioned before—the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the Manchester Commercial Association, and the Great Western Railway Company.

4589. Then what happened as the result of the session of 1857?—That Bill received the Royal assent on the 25th August, 1857, carrying out what was suggested.

4590. Now, please be careful how you reply to this question, because it is important. When you say "that Bill," do you mean the Bill promoted by the Corporation of Liverpool or the Bill promoted by the three bodies?—I believe the Bill promoted by the three bodies. I think so.

4591. Are you not quite sure?—No, I am not quite sure.

4592. Then we must take that *quantum valeat*. At all events, the Bill received the Royal assent on the 25th August, 1857, which is the Mersey Docks and Harbour Bill?—Yes.

4593. And that is the foundation of their authority and as amended by the Act of 1858, the next year, it contains their powers?—Precisely.

4594. This is a very important matter. Do you think it was the Bill of the other three bodies?—Yes.

4595. You are the authorative witness of what I will call a model body—the greatest Trust in the British Isles really. Then you say, "By this Act"—that is the Act of 1857—"all the estate and interest in docks and other property at Birkenhead or elsewhere, which were transferred or intended to be transferred to the Corporation of Liverpool by the 'Birkenhead Docks Act, 1855,' and all docks, lights, buoys, and other property at Liverpool or elsewhere held by or in trust for the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks, together with all powers, rights, and privileges vested in the Corporation of Liverpool, the Liverpool Dock Trustees, or the Liverpool Dock Committee," and so on, were transferred to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board upon and after the 1st January, 1858?—Quite so.

See 4479.

4596. Now, let me call your attention to these words, "powers, rights, and privileges vested in the Corporation of Liverpool." Were there not three bodies whose powers, rights, and privileges were inherited by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, namely, the Corporation of Liverpool, the Corporation Dock Trustees, and the Liverpool Dock Committee?—Yes, you are quite right.

4597. Now, let us take those *seriatim*. I do not deal with "powers." What were the rights of the Corporation of Liverpool that were transferred, especially financial rights?—The principal one would be the right to levy dues. I cannot set them out *seriatim* or in any detailed form, but there would be the right to borrow, the right to levy dues, and the right to provide accommodation for the trade of the port as was required. I can hardly define them more definitely than that.

4598. At all events, certain financial rights of the Corporation of Liverpool were transferred to your body?—Yes, they became ours.

4599. Now with regard to the word "privileges." What do you put under the word "privileges"?—I find it extremely difficult to analyse the word as to what was in the minds of the people when the Bill was passed.

4600. There were certain privileges?—Yes. Whatever privileges there were we inherited them.

4601. And the same took place with regard to the Liverpool Dock Trustees and the Liverpool Dock Committee?—Precisely.

4602. You have inherited everything—all the powers, rights, and privileges they had? Am I right in that?—You are perfectly correct.

4603. Now the next question I ask you is what financial consideration, if any, was given by the new body to the Corporation of Liverpool for that which was transferred?—If I am not giving you the accurate answer please correct me. There was nothing paid for the estate as an estate. The estate was transferred, but we did not pay anything for that. The principal privilege was the town dues, and we paid £1,500,000 to the Corporation for those town dues.

See 4701-2.

4604. Are you quite sure you are right?—Yes, I am right in that; but as regards the actual physical estate we paid nothing.

4605. Then to the Corporation of Liverpool there was paid by the new body the sum of £1,500,000 sterling?—Yes. That was for the privilege of taking over the town dues which the town itself had collected from time immemorial.

4606. Was that all that was paid to the Corporation of Liverpool?—That was all that was paid to the Corporation of Liverpool.

4607. Was anything paid to the Liverpool Dock Trustees?—No.

4608. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) The right to levy the dues was what you paid the money for?—Yes.

4609. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Was anything paid to the Liverpool Dock Committee?—No.

4610. Then in your account the only sum that represents something bought—the right to levy dues or whatever it was—does not exceed £1,500,000 sterling?—That is so. It included the right to levy the town dues; the anchorage dues, which were very small; the landing stage, which was almost still smaller; and the observatory, which was a very small thing.

4611. It was all covered by that sum?—Yes.

4612. For the estate nothing was paid?—No, nothing was paid for the estate.

4613. Does that last answer that nothing was paid apply also to the Liverpool Dock Trustees and the Liverpool Dock Committee?—Yes, that is all that we paid.

4614. Then in what physical condition—engineering condition—was the property. Was it in good condition when it was taken?—Whatever condition it was in we took it over, and it was supposed to be in good condition.

4615. You were not taking over, if I may use the expression, a bankrupt property?—No.

4616. You were taking over a valuable property?—Very much so.

4617. Now I want to pass to the accounts of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board for the year ending 1st July, 1900. Will you turn in the first place to the statement of "Loans on Bond and Consideration received for Mersey Dock Annuities and Promissory Notes"? That is three heads. Will you give the figures of the total amount of loans on bond on the 1st July, 1900, leaving out the shillings and pence?—£17,003,708.

4618. Now give the amount of that that was incurred during the financial year ending 30th June, 1900?—£888,789.

4619. What was the consideration received for Mersey Dock Annuities on the same date, the 1st July?—£2,702,281.

4620. How much of that was added during the year?—£900.

4621. Now give me the amount of the promissory notes?—Total, £225,000.

4622. That was all added during the last year?—That was all added during the one year.

4623. What was the grand total of the indebtedness on the 1st July, 1900?—£19,930,989, of which £1,114,689 was the increase on the year.

4624. What is the average rate of your loans on bonds? They almost all fall between 3 per cent. and

4 per cent., do they not?—No. They run from 2½ per cent. up to 4½ per cent. I think the average is about £3 11s. 6d. or £3 12s. 0d.

4625. And the consideration received for Mersey Dock Annuities runs from 2¾ per cent. to 3¾ per cent.?—Yes.

4626. Are those promissory notes notes maturing at short intervals?—Yes.

4627. Then practically your Mersey Docks and Harbour Board raise their money at from 3¼ per cent. to 3¾ per cent.?—Practically so. There are some small amounts at 2½ per cent.

4628. Now, will you turn to the next table: "Amount authorised to be raised under the borrowing powers, amount expended, and balance unexpended." What was the total amount expended to the 1st July, 1900?—£23,947,842.

4629. Where does the £4,000,000 difference between the amount expended and the amount raised come from?—It has come from sinking fund and unappropriated revenue.

4630. Then may I take it that both sinking fund and unappropriated revenue are invested in the works?—That is so.

4631. In so far as those works deteriorate, those funds diminish in value?—Yes.

4632. They are not separately invested?—No.

4633. Then I turn to the account showing balance of expenditure and revenue. I see the annual expenditure, including interest on bond debt, Mersey Dock Annuities, and promissory notes, amounted last year to the sum of £1,252,909?—Yes.

4634. And your receipts amounted to £1,418,587?—Gross; that is so.

4635. Leaving you a balance of £165,677?—That is so.

4636. Will you just tell me how you have appropriated that balance?—£80,000 of it went in rates—local poor rates.

4637. May I ask you why those rates are not charged in the expenses. There is a reason, no doubt. Are not they expenses?—They are expenses. Really this is the only reason: they were so set out when we were first charged on these docks, and it has been continued in the form you see ever since.

4638. It is an antiquated form?—Yes.

4639. Do you agree with me that it would be rather fairer financially to put them in the expenditure? They are not really a balance that you can appropriate in any other way?—No.

4640. The rates must be paid?—Yes, the rates must be paid.

4641. Then what is the next item?—There is £100,000 carried to Sinking Fund Account, and £3,621 transferred to Unappropriated Receipts Account.

4642. Now let us turn for a moment to the Unappropriated Receipts Account. That is very interesting. I see in this Unappropriated Receipts Account you begin in the last financial year with a balance of £541,970?—That is so.

4643. Perhaps you will indicate the principal items in which you have spent that?—Three 800-tons steam hoppers, £23,327; a 600-tons steam hopper barge, £7,025; a double-side ladder dredger "Tantalus," £32,404; a 50-tons barge crane, "Hercules," £14,856. Those, with some smaller items, make up £84,843.

4644. And that £84,843 of the unappropriated receipts has all been spent upon works within the control of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—Quite so.

4645. It is a mere matter of account after all, but if it had been put in the expenditure there would not have been that amount of unappropriated receipts, would there?—No, there would not.

4646. Have you any particular reason for opening an unappropriated receipts account, instead of charging these things direct to expenditure as you go on?—No, I do not know that there is any particular reason.

4647. Then you leave off the year with a balance of £461,231?—To Unappropriated Receipts Account.

4648. And that is money that you consider, if you raised a loan to replace the money you have spent, you would have in hand?—Yes.

4649. Then may I take it that financially you are in very smooth water?—We are.

4650. You have large funds at hand, if you needed them?—Yes.

4651. To improve the port and to get your new dredgers and hoppers, and what not?—Yes.

4652. In fact, from a financial point of view you are in clover?—That is so.

4653. You have as much money as ever you want?—Yes.

4654. Have you any complaint from persons on the other side who pay your dues and the charges that you make, that those are too high?—No.

4655. Have you any complaint from anybody that you are pressing on people to get your large revenue?—No, I cannot say that we have.

4656. Is everybody satisfied then?—I cannot say that. That would be saying too much.

4657. But speaking broadly?—Speaking broadly and generally, that is absolutely so, I think.

4658. The people who use the port and the public are satisfied with the manner in which your Trust raises its revenue?—They are satisfied, and when very prosperous times come, big reductions are made.

4659. That is what I am coming to. You have no motive or incentive to charge more than is necessary to preserve your financial position?—None whatever.

4660. Have you made remissions of charges as a matter of fact?—In 1880 the dues on goods and ships were reduced to the extent of £112,000 per annum; in 1884 the dues on goods, principally cotton, rice, iron, and steel, were reduced to the extent of £29,000 per annum; in 1895 the dues on goods, principally wheat, petroleum, and provisions, were reduced to the extent of £24,000 per annum, and in the same year the dues on ships were reduced to the extent of £29,000, making for that year £53,000. In 1896 the last big reduction was made; that was on cotton, and it amounted to about £37,000 per annum.

4661. Then may I take it that it is the policy of your Trust to administer their property and carry out their work with an eye to the promotion of the trade of the port and river?—That is the only interest they have, the promotion of the trade of the Port of Liverpool.

4662. Have you had any complaints from the Corporation of Liverpool as to the manner in which you have exercised the rights taken over from them?—None.

4663. They are satisfied?—They are quite satisfied. We are on excellent terms with them.

4664. Have the Corporation of Liverpool any representative by right on your body?—None.

4665. I need hardly ask you whether your body is one of high reputation in the locality?—The very best.

4666. Men of the highest character and position and experience are willing to serve upon it?—Yes.

4667. Anxious, perhaps?—Well, they are quite willing if they can spare the time, at all events. It is a very heavy tax.

4668. You are the secretary, and I will not ask you any engineering questions. Mr. Lyster, I think, is your engineer?—Yes.

4669. Turning for a moment to the engineer's department; general repairs, maintenance, and improvements last year amounted to £211,000?—That is so.

4670. Can you give us any idea how many men are employed under Mr. Lyster?—On new works at the present moment I should think there must be close upon 8,000.

4671. Now, finally, will you just turn to what you call the "Mersey Conservancy Account"? How does that differ from the general trust? Is it a subordinate body?—No.

4672. Will you just explain what the Mersey Conservancy Account means here? It amounts to £73,000?—The Mersey Conservancy Account becomes the account it is from the proportion of the tonnage dues that are collected. I have stated in my evidence that a proportion of the tonnage dues was transferred to Conservancy Account, and the Conservancy Account is then debited with the cost of the dredging, buoying, lighting, lifeboats, and landmarks, and so on.

4673. It is a sub-account, like the engineer's?—Yes. May I amend one statement about the warehouses? The Chairman asked me the question whether the ware-

See 4572-7.

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houses were doing as well as they were doing four or five years ago, and I think the answer that I gave might be misunderstood. There is more business coming to the Port, and therefore there must be more business going to the warehouses; but if the question had been followed by another one as to whether the goods were being distributed more freely from the quays I should have said yes.

4674. (*Chairman.*) I was not referring to the outside warehouses?—I thought you were referring to the outside warehouses more particularly. We are not perhaps doing quite so much in our own warehouses. I could illustrate that very readily at once. At the Albert Docks, where they are divided into blocks No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5, and No. 6, we have let one block off entirely as an ice store.

4675. Can you tell us any particular trade in which the tonnage of goods stored in the warehouses has fallen off?—No, I cannot, but our own warehouses have fallen off distinctly.

4676. Therefore you are disposed to qualify the statement you made?—Yes, I did not follow you.

4677. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I think I understood from what you said to Mr. Ellis that when the Trust was formed in 1857 the concern as a going concern was at least equally as financially sound as it is at the present day?—Quite so.

4679. It was not resting upon any extraneous supports?—Not in the smallest degree.

4679. It was sound in itself?—Yes, it was sound in itself.

Recalled, 4700.

Mr. FRANCIS BROOKE GIRDLESTONE called and examined.

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4680. (*Chairman.*) You are secretary and general manager of the Dock Estate of the Corporation of the City of Bristol?—I am.

4681. You are a retired officer of the late Indian Navy?—I am.

4682. How long have you held your present position?—Since 1875 as secretary, and as general manager since 1884.

4683. Are you well acquainted with the principal ports of the United Kingdom?—I am; and also with those on the Continent and in the United States and Canada.

4684. You are no doubt acquainted with the objects of the present Inquiry?—I am, and I have followed the evidence from the beginning.

4685. You have been good enough to send us answers to certain questions which were put with regard to the Bristol Docks?—I think I have given you a pretty exhaustive statement of everything in connection with the Bristol Docks, both from a commercial and an engineering point of view, although, of course, I am not an engineer.

4686. Will you tell us what you have to say with regard to the general working of the docks and the constitution of the controlling authority, and will you state the circumstances under which the Corporation became possessed of the docks?—Bristol became known as a port at a very early period, being the centre of a large district, and situated on a river only a short distance from the sea, its position was early recognised as a very favourable one for trade and commerce. That its great rise and fall and swift flow of tide conferred much advantage in the matter of navigation to and from the ocean was evidently also realised at a very early period of its history, the vessels of that day thereby being able easily and with but little manual assistance to drift up and down themselves the somewhat tortuous stream as it then existed. The first notice of any engineering work being carried out for the improvement of the inner harbour at Bristol was in 1239, when the ground for the trench in the Marsh of St. Augustine's was purchased by the citizens from the Abbot of St. Augustine's Monastery. That trench, which was made wide enough to accommodate shipping was an enlargement of the course of the River Frome from its junction with the River Avon, opposite what is known as Prince's Wharf, to Stone Bridge, about half a mile higher up, and was completed in 1247 at a cost of about £5,000—a large sum of money in those days. This, it is believed, was one of the first works of the kind carried out in England, and was looked upon then as a great undertaking. From time to time during the eighteenth century new landing places were made at the city quays, the most important being "The Mud Dock," at what is known as the "Grove," the wharf along the "Welsh Back," and a new wet dock called the "Merchant's Dock," near the Hotwells. The latter was finished in 1768, and was found to be very convenient for shipping, as vssels could be kept afloat in the dock at al times, there being a lock between it and the river. At the various quays in the city, however, vessels had still to lie on the mud at times of low water, they being built specially for the purpose of bearing the strain. This state of things was admitted to be very unsatisfactory, and various schemes of improvement were proposed. In 1792 Mr. Jessop, C.E., suggested making a dock at the site of the present Cumberland Basin. Nothing was done, however, till 1802, when, after a number of schemes had been discussed, it was decided to apply for powers to make a new course for the river between Rownham and Totterdown, and to turn the old course through the heart of the city for a length of over two and a half miles into a floating harbour, with entrance locks and basin. A company, in which the Corporation and the Society of Merchants were shareholders, was formed, and an Act of Parliament was obtained in 1803, the estimated cost of the works, including land, being £300,000. The works were put in hand in 1805, and completed in 1809, but the difficulties having been unexpectedly great, the total cost reached about £600,000. The work was an unprecedentedly great piece of engineering for the period. It removed the greatest objections to the Port of Bristol—the necessity of grounding vessels, with the consequent liability to injury, and also the danger in case of fire from being unable to move vessels when aground, and provided a commodious wet floating dock of over 71 acres in extent for shipping, 59 acres of which were available for masted craft. Alongside the harbour thus formed, now styled the City Docks or Floating Harbour, many engineering and ship-repairing works, timber yards, offices and warehouses, both public and private, were gradually provided, a good deal of the quay and water space being in the very heart of the city. As years went on the unsatisfactory nature of its control by the company was widely realised. Owing to the high tariff of dues charged and the failure to carry out the new works necessary to accommodate the increasing size of vessels then beginning to be employed in the foreign trade of the United Kingdom, a policy due chiefly to the impecunious state of the company, the trade suffered grieviously, and indeed by 1847 was well nigh stagnant; but after considerable remonstrance, pressure and agitation by the traders and citizens generally, an Act of Parliament was at length obtained in that year, whereby the Corporation obtained possession of the whole floating harbour, but with a compulsory condition to reduce the rates on both vessels and goods, power, however, being given them to supplement any deficiency thereby caused in the dock revenue by levying a rate-in-aid up to 4d. in the pound on the rateable value of the city. The new scale of dock dues came into operation on the 13th of November in that year, and a great demonstration to celebrate the event took place. In order to show the sweeping manner in which the Corporation dealt with the dues after they became possessed of the docks, it may be stated that on the 1st of January, 1849, they decided to abolish the town dues on 325 out of 350 articles scheduled. The dock dues were also lowered from two-thirds to one-half, and during the next few years many improvements carried out, and additional trading facilities afforded. Great strides were made in consequence of this bold policy, in ten years following the foreign tonnage having increased 66 per cent., and in the next ten years a further 62 per cent., the increase by the year 1870 in the foreign tonnage being from 97,106 tons register to 355,921 tons register, and in the coastwise tonnage from 398,673 tons register to 593,130 tons register. Under the Parliamentary powers obtained by the Corporation in 1865, a further large outlay has been made, and very considerable river and harbour improvements gradually effected; several sharp bends which formerly existed in the River Avon having been removed and many barriers of rock in its bed cleared away; larger and deeper locks at Cumberland Basin, and a considerable length of deep water wharf, contiguous to the Great Western Railway system, on the south side of the harbour, have also been constructed, and a complete

system of transit sheds, warehouses, granary, foreign animals' wharves, slaughter-houses, chill rooms, and hydraulic cranes provided. As the result of all this expenditure, and the work still in progress, vessels of 300 to 320 feet length, drawing 20 to 22 feet, with a carrying capacity of 3,000 to 4,000 tons, will shortly be able to come up the Avon without delay from King-road, and enter the City Docks at high water on all ordinary tides throughout the year; and when the whole scheme of improvements is completed, as is anticipated in another eighteen months' time, vessels of even greater length and capacity will be able to safely navigate the Avon, and find accommodation in the City Docks, and there will be far less detention at King-road when such vessels happen to arrive there at low neap tides. Simultaneously with these river improvements, new deep water berths and commodious wharves on both sides of the floating harbour, all connected with the Great Western Railway system, and served also by the Midland Company by means of their extensive system of capacious barges, are being constructed under Parliamentary powers obtained by the Corporation and the Great Western Railway Company respectively in 1897. In addition to the City Docks, as above described, the Corporation are the owners of a dock of 19 acres at Avonmouth on the Gloucestershire bank of the River Avon, and of one of 12 acres (deep water area) at Portishead, on the Somersetshire bank of the river, two miles below Avonmouth. As I have already told you, when the old City Docks were first constructed in 1803, the money was raised by a private company, in which the Corporation of Bristol and the old Guild of the Merchant Adventurers of Bristol, and a number of private traders had shares. That company was bought out by the Corporation of Bristol in the year 1847, and, since then, the old City Docks, and, subsequently to 1884, the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks (which are on the north and south sides of the river respectively), were also taken over by the Corporation from the two private companies who constructed them; and the whole dock estate is now the property of the Corporation of Bristol; that is to say, the whole of the wet docks within the Port of Bristol belong to the Corporation of Bristol. I have here maps on a large scale, which I will hand in.

(*The witness handed in a map of the Avonmouth Dock, and a map showing the City Dock and the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks.*)

4687. In 1847, then, the Corporation became possessed of the whole of the floating harbour?—Yes. The Corporation had from time immemorial been possessed of certain city dues taken in respect of vessels in the shape of water bailiffs', mooring, and other fees; and on the goods in the shape of town dues and wharfage dues.

4688. Now will you go on to tell us about the two docks which were constructed by private companies and taken over by the Corporation in 1884?—These two docks were constructed by private companies and taken over by the Corporation under Parliamentary powers in 1884, the object being the stoppage of the severe competition which then existed between the three different dock concerns, and which, although beneficial no doubt to some traders, entailed great loss to the citizens in the working of their City docks, and little or no pecuniary benefit to the companies themselves. The results aimed at have been attained, inasmuch as that competition has ceased, and it has been found possible to so readjust all the dues and charges as to secure a greatly enhanced revenue from the concerns, under one ownership and control, than could ever have been obtained when worked as three separate companies. Again, those vessels which can physically come up, and which before the amalgamation were being diverted to Avonmouth and Portishead, do now come up to Bristol, thereby adding largely to the indirect advantage of the citizens by better local trade and greater distribution of wages within the city area. Only the very large liners and vessels laden with mineral oils and those required to be discharged with great dispatch are, as a rule, now berthed in the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks. The terms arranged by the Corporation for the purchase of the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks were based on the net revenue which they thought they could, without detriment to the volume of traffic, derive from those concerns when worked as a part of a united dock undertaking, together with a small sum for goodwill. Avonmouth Dock was purchased for about two-thirds and Portishead Dock for about four-fifths of what they had cost their former owners. The funds for purchasing those docks were raised at a rate of interest varying from 2⅞ to 3½ per cent., by the issue under the powers given by the Bristol Dock Act, 1884, of debenture stock on the security of the dock estate revenue and the borough fund, which includes the dock and city dues.

4689. Will you tell us the advantages which you say the Port of Bristol has in having deep water close to the mouth of the Avon?—Owing to the considerable expansion now taking place in the North American trade at Avonmouth, and the greatly increased and increasing size of vessels now employed therein, the Corporation are contemplating the construction, at an estimated cost of about one and three-quarter millions, of another dock at Avonmouth of about 30 acres in extent, with a lock 850ft. in length, having direct access from the sea, with 3,200ft. of quay 200ft. in width, including railway lines, equipped also with commodious transit sheds and a graving dock, and suitable in all respects for the reception and discharge with great dispatch of the largest class of ocean-going vessels afloat or building, and capable of extension, if so required, hereafter. If, as was the case, the opening of Avonmouth and Portishead Docks in 1877 and 1880 respectively, and the carriage of goods therefrom by the railway companies at the same rates to inland places as from Bristol gave a great stimulus to the revenue and traffic of the port, both foreign and coastwise, by reason of the larger and more economically-worked class of vessels which shipowners were thus able to employ, and the cheaper freight and wider area of distribution which merchants thereby secured, the probability is that the further large scheme of dock extension now contemplated at Avonmouth, subject to the co-operation of the railway companies having access thereto, will result similarly. The port is again in the position of being unable to accommodate the greatly increased size of vessel plying in the North American trade, which forms one-half of its whole foreign trade. If it is true, as alleged, that cheaper freights can be secured by this type of vessel, local merchants may be prejudiced if accommodation be not provided for them at this port; hence the desire to obtain powers to build a dock of vastly increased lock and quay proportions, the scheme for which has just been passed by the citizens on a poll by three to one. The Port of Bristol enjoys considerable advantages, inasmuch as there is deep water close to the mouth of the Avon, and a straight lead thereto from the ocean. Vessels of 480ft. and 23ft. draught and of 460ft. length and 20ft. draught can enter the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks (using the caisson at the inner end) respectively towards the time of high water on any neap tide of the year, and of much greater draughts on other tides, and, as regards the City Docks, there are now but few tides on which a vessel drawing 20ft. cannot proceed direct from sea thereto. Another advantage the port possesses is a very central position, and consequent convenient facilities for the distribution of imported cargo to inland towns by canal or railway as far as Birmingham on the north, Reading on the east, Exeter on the south-west, and by coastwise craft to all the ports within and around the Bristol Channel, and the collection of minerals and manufactured goods for export from the Midland districts and South Wales. Avonmouth Dock is chiefly used by the larger Canadian and American liners, also for whole cargoes of grain from South American and United States ports, and for the United States mineral oil trade, which latter is conducted in tank vessels of 5,000 tons capacity. Portishead Dock is almost wholly used for whole cargoes of grain, chiefly from the Black Sea and Argentine ports, and for cargoes of naphtha from the United States. The tariff of dues and labourage charges is moderate, and this and the fact that there are no export dues has of late years given a great impetus to the liner traffic. I should just like to remark here that there are a great many tables given in the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence on the fourth day of the proceedings of this Commission, in which certain figures are given by the London Chamber of Commerce in respect of grain and timber charges at the Port of Bristol. Having gone into these very carefully, I may say that they are exceedingly misleading; in fact, it is quite absurd to state what is stated in one case, namely, Table 20 of Appendix 8 on the 4th day. Talking of boards and board ends under 6in. in width, it says: "An inspection of which shows that on

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this article, as on most others, the charges in London are higher than elsewhere, with the exception of Bristol, which is the dearest port in the United Kingdom." I say that is absolutely incorrect. The comparison is not fair, because at Bristol the rate includes work which, in London, is performed at the cost of the ship. But, notwithstanding this fact, the rates for the better class of wood goods, that is, of more even sizes, are much less than the London rates. The fact is that the compiler has ignored the fact that, whilst in London and Liverpool the ship discharges on to the quay, at the port of Bristol the ship only discharges to the rail. So that, to compare the charges, you must add to the London charge the cost of bringing the cargo from the ship's rail to the quay. But, in the case of grain, the charges are still more inaccurate, and, as far as I can make out—though it is very difficult to follow them—it is because they have taken the wrong weight to the bushel. The weight to the bushel differs very much in the different ports.

4690. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Will you give us the name of the witness whose evidence you are challenging?—It is the evidence of the London Chamber of Commerce, and it is contained in the Appendix No. 8 of the fourth day. I think it was handed in by Mr. Coke. I think it is simply a mistake; I do not think it was done intentionally at all, and I think it arises from those two facts: that the difference between the customs of the ports has not been taken into account, and that the weights per bushel have not been taken properly. That seems to me to be so, as far as I can follow them. At present the Port is very largely an import one, a number of vessels which frequent it resorting after the discharge of their cargoes either at Bristol, Avonmouth, or Portishead Docks to Cardiff, Newport, Barry, or one of the other coal ports in South Wales for outward cargoes. As they can get stemmed at these ports as a rule on the same tide as they leave Bristol, shipowners trading to the Port of Bristol have as a fact advantages over several of the larger purely importing ports. As regards imports Bristol early possessed, and continues to enjoy, a large share of the grain, flour, and provision trade of the United Kingdom with Canada and the east and west coasts of the United States; also of the grain trade with India, South America, and the Black Sea ports. Bristol is also a large importer of wines, spirits, oils, seeds, marble, ores, green and dry fruit, esparto grass, valonia, and general goods from French, Spanish, and Mediterranean ports, timber and wood goods from the Baltic and North American ports, hides and tallow from South America and the Baltic, petroleum oil in bulk and naphtha in casks from the United States, and beet sugar and general goods from French, Belgian, German, and Russian ports. Of late years a considerable general trade by regular liners, chiefly in sugar and manufactured goods booked to inland towns in the United Kingdom on through bills of lading from the Continent, has been developed at the City Docks, and with the increased quay shed and rail accommodation now being provided this traffic may be expected shortly to attain far larger dimensions. The exports, which are chiefly by the large liners from Avonmouth, consist of coal, salt, feldspar, china clay, galvanised iron, tin plates, wire, oils, railway waggons, coarse pottery, hardware, and miscellaneous manufactured goods, the value of which shipped abroad during the year 1899 amounted to £1,355,498. With the numerous regular liners now plying from the Port of Bristol, and with improved inland navigation as proposed between Worcester and the Birmingham and Staffordshire districts, a much larger portion of the heavy goods, such as pottery and hardware, from those districts would, it is thought, be shipped from Avonmouth in preference to Liverpool or London. Up till recent years Bristol, it is believed, was the only dock concern in the United Kingdom owned by a municipality. Other municipal bodies have, however, now been authorised to own docks and provide terminal facilities, or to subscribe from municipal funds towards such works; for instance, Manchester, Boston, and Preston—and, I think, Aberdeen—are now in this category. At the leading Scotch and Irish ports, and at Liverpool and Swansea in this country, the control, as is well known, is in the hands of public trusts, chiefly elected by those who pay dues, which bodies raise their money on the security of the dock and harbour dues only, and without any guarantee from the borough funds.

4691. (*Chairman.*) Have the municipal funds at Bristol invested in dock enterprise resulted advantageously to the citizens?—At Bristol that the municipal funds invested in dock enterprise have resulted very advantageously to the citizens is proved by the additional population, the increased value of the rateable property, and the many new industries started in and around the city, and, indirectly, by the increased labour which has been employed at continually higher rates of pay, and the increased foreign and home trade done through the Port of late years. The commercial advantages given by public ownership over private ownership of docks, wharves, and quays consist, in my opinion, of the rates being fixed alike to all customers under similar circumstances of there being no discounts or rebates allowed—that is, of all dues and charges being levied impartially and maintained at the published tariff, without fear or hindrance, and the absolute refusal to give any rebates, drawbacks, or other reduction from this published tariff. Again, a public authority, being able to raise its money on lower terms than private owners, and having no dividend to pay, has more interest in keeping the docks in an efficient condition and furnishing them either out of borrowed money or often, as at this Port, out of its ordinary dock revenue with the additional appliances and accommodation required from time to time by the ever-changing type of vessels and conditions of working traffic. Private owners seeking only to work the dock for dividends are rather prone to starve the works and to maintain a high scale of charges, which is against the trader's interest. They also hesitate to expend further capital until they are actually forced, either by a threatened loss of traffic or an inability to accommodate the ordinary vessels plying at the time in the different trades. The question of the advantages of ownership by a trust in preference to the municipality of the Bristol Dock Estate has often been the subject of local discussion, some thinking that a more progressive policy would be carried out by a trust constituted like those of some of the northern ports rather than by the Corporation, and for the following reasons: 1st. That competent administration could be elected by the various interests concerned without their being of necessity members of the Town Council. 2nd. That any scheme formulated for the improvement of the port would not run the risk of being rejected—

(a.) By the failure to obtain, as is necessary under the Borough Funds Acts, a statutory majority of two-thirds of the Council; or,

(b.) By a majority of the town's meeting; or,

(c.) In the event of a poll being demanded at that meeting, by the result thereof being a large majority of citizens against proceeding with the Bill in Parliament necessary to carry out the scheme.

As against these objections it may be urged—

(a.) That it is doubtful whether the members serving on a trust would differ much from those members of the Town Council who are now appointed annually to sit on the Docks Committee.

(b.) That by municipal ownership the capital is raised at the lowest market rate by reason of its having as security the Borough Fund, or in other words, the ability to pledge the credit of the city.

And, again, if there should be any deficit on the working of the municipal-owned dock, the same can be made good by a rate-in-aid on the city. The problem of a Dock Trust in Bristol resolves itself, therefore, into one of dock finance. The Corporation cannot divest itself of its responsibilities towards the holders of their debenture stocks, even if a trust was willing to take over their full liabilities on this head, and it does not seem at all reasonable that they should remain responsible for the liabilities, and that an independent body over whom they have no control should possess the property and manage the estate. The capital liabilities of the docks stand at nearly two and a half millions, and the annual interest at about £82,500. The dock estate by itself, that is, without reckoning in the city dues on shipping and goods during the past eight years, shows, without providing for the sinking fund and renewal and depreciation funds, a deficit of about £100,000. That is in the eight years.

4692. In capital value, do you mean?—No, in revenue. That is on the dock estate *per se*. That is on the eight years, and without taking in the city dues. I must

explain with regard to the city dues that only one due, a consolidated due, is charged to the shipowner or to the merchant; but, for the purposes of the borough fund, when that money is received by the Docks Committee, whether from the shipowner or the merchant, that consolidated due is split into the dock portion and the city dues portion, and whereas the dock portion goes into one Committee's pocket, the city dues portion goes into the pocket of the Finance Committee of the Corporation and becomes part of the Borough Fund, and against that we draw a rate-in-aid. But against that, putting the two together on an average of years, if you take out the sinking fund, it will be found that the docks yield a profit to the citizens. That is the result of the united operation.

4693. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are the city dues in the nature of a rate on rateable property?—No, the city dues are a due on all ships and on all goods imported in those ships.

4694. All goods landed?—No, brought into the port, and the port extends 20 miles below the mouth of the river.

4695. The dock property is rated separately as a rateable property, I suppose?—Yes, but the purely dock dues have been constituted tolls in gross, and as such are not rateable to local rates.

4696. What is the point of keeping them separate now?—If the Corporation ever got rid of its dock property it would want to be paid separately for the city dues. Then the city dues are only leviable on the vessels and goods coming to the city docks, not on those entering the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks. For all purposes of the shipowner and the merchant there is only one consolidated due charged. As I say, the merchant and the shipowner know nothing about the city and the dock dues, they just pay the one consolidated dock due. If, however, the total harbour revenue of the Corporation be taken—that is, the revenue of the dock estate, plus the net city dues for the same period and the total expenditure, including the statutory obligation to provide a sinking fund to eventually discharge the capital liabilities—there is a deficit of £50,148. That would be a serious matter for a dock trust, because it is not certain that Parliament would allow a trust to set aside the obligation that the Corporation entered into to provide a sinking fund for liquidating the amount the Corporation was empowered to borrow for dock purposes. But it is not a serious thing for the ratepayers of Bristol to contribute the average sum of less than £6,500 per annum, because they are getting in return a valuable property, built up by the sinking fund, which during the eight years in question has increased about £70,408. The sinking fund is now about £150,000, all invested in gilt-edged securities. It may be argued that the present body of ratepayers are reaping no advantage from this. The reply to that is that the large expenditure of money made in connection with the docks during the last fifteen years has added materially to the prosperity of the city, and that although the present body of ratepayers are providing a good heritage for their children and successors, it should not be forgotten that they in their turn inherited the work which was done by their predecessors in the first half of the century. With reference to the *personnel* of a dock trust and the present members of the Docks Committee, it is not thought that that would be materially improved. Three-fourths of the present members of the Docks Committee would be eligible for sitting on the trust, and they probably would be the men who would be selected by the payers of dues to represent them, and it certainly is not always a disadvantage to have a few men sitting at a board who have no direct pecuniary interest in the proposals that come up for consideration, but whose interests are only those in common with the main body of citizens in whose midst the docks are situated. Even of the difficulties surrounding the financial part of the subject were not so great, there would be the further grave difficulties in getting a trust constituted unless the Corporation was prepared to support the application. At a time like the present, when Parliament is granting to municipal authorities the power to control and manage large commercial undertakings like gas, water, electric lighting, tramways, etc., it would, it is thought, hesitate to deprive the Corporation of the management of the docks unless it was at the solicitation of the Corporation itself, and that is not at all likely to take place. While the present system in Bristol has its disadvantages, those disadvantages are more than counterbalanced by the advantages derived from the use of the borough fund as security in raising capital for dock improvements and developments. That is the general opinion, I think, of the better class of the citizens. It is not quite my own personal opinion. The Dock Estate comprised, as before stated, of the Avonmouth, Portishead, and City Docks, is worked under the direction of a committee of the Town Council, elected annually by that body and consisting of 19 members thereof. In addition to dock management the committee is charged by the Council with the general supervision of the city quays, sheds, and the dues received therefrom, and the expenditure connected therewith, and also of all conservancy matters. The working is regulated by various Acts of Parliament and by bye-laws and regulations made thereunder, and also by resolutions passed from time to time by the Town Council on reports submitted to them by the Docks Committee. The committee is broken up into sub-committees for dealing specially with all matters relating to finance, works, and traffic. These sub-committees investigate with the aid of the officials, the various questions in detail, and submit in due course reports and recommendations thereon to the general committee. The accounts are audited annually by two members of the committee, as well as by a professional firm of auditors, and an epitome thereof is then published in the local newspapers in accordance with the statutory obligations, and any citizen can, if he so wishes, obtain copies of these accounts.

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4697. (*Chairman.*) Now, will you tell us about the principle of working?—The principle of working aimed at is not so much to make a profit as to increase the volume of traffic by keeping the tariff of charges low, giving great dispatch to the vessel, and providing from time to time (largely out of the revenue) such further sheds, cranes, quays, railways, telephones, etc., and other facilities as the ever-changing type of traffic and vessel in which it is conducted seem from time to time to call for. At the Port of Bristol the custom is for the shipowner to raise the cargo to the ship's rail—this is very important—the merchants taking it therefrom and landing it on to quay or into railway wagon, barge, cart, or shed. In the case of bulk grain the merchant has to do a certain amount of work in the hold, namely, trimming and bushelling. Whilst, as before stated, the Corporation, except at the granary berth at the Prince's Wharf, City Docks, do not perform laborage at the City Docks, at Avonmouth they do practically the whole of the operations both for the ship and merchant, and at Portishead Dock the whole of those for the merchant. As regards the operation performed for the shipowner, that is, loading and unloading from and to the ship's rail, the Corporation employ a stevedore, but as regards that for the merchant the work is executed by means of their own staff of clerks, foremen, and workmen. For general labour the pay at present is 6½d. per hour, and for piece work, which applies wholly to grain, the rates paid to the men are shown in this Table, which I will hand in.

(*The Witness handed in a Table showing the rates for discharging grain in the Bristol Docks. See Appendix, 13th Day, No. 3.*)

The efficient staff of officials, foremen, and labourers maintained by the Corporation, the rapid way in which the operations are conducted, the low tariff of charges, and the system of giving Corporation warrants for goods stored, undoubtedly contribute greatly to the success of the Port, and to the favourable view which shipowners and merchants take of it as a convenient and economical centre for importation and distribution of foreign produce. Where the work is performed by the Corporation the rates charged cover, as a fact, little more than the actual cost incurred, including shunting. In addition to the storage provided by the Corporation at each dock, there is extensive private warehouse accommodation in Bristol for grain and all other classes of goods. At the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks the Great Western and Midland Companies' trucks have direct access to the dock quays and vessels lying thereat. At the City docks only the Great Western Railway is directly connected with any of the deep-water berths. The Midland and London and South-Western Companies, however, collect goods by barge and cart to their depôt at St. Phillips free of cost to the trader. This system of barging from ship's side is, as a fact, a great convenience from the dock company's point of view, as it enables goods to be delivered simultaneously from the off-side of the ship to the Midland Company, and on the quayside to the Great Western Company, and so saves quay space, and ensures greater dispatch and economy in handling cargo. The cost of placing it on to the railway truck to either company's system is the same to the consignee, as the Midland Company charge nothing extra for the act of

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barging to their depôt. By this means traders get practically at all three docks equal discharging and trucking facilities, and at equal cost, and this, coupled with the fact that the companies charge only the same rate to inland places from Avonmouth and Portishead as from Bristol, enables a very large "ex ship" trade in grain, flour, timber, and general goods to be conducted at this port. The lines within the dock premises, both at Avonmouth and Portishead, belong to the Corporation, and similarly on certain portions of the deep-water quays owned by the Corporation at Bristol; no railway company's locomotive is allowed on the Corporation lines within the two former docks, the haulage being all done by Corporation locomotives. No tolls in respect of this haulage are levied on the owner of the goods, nor is any payment received from the railway companies. The Corporation some years back sought by an action at law to make the railway companies pay the cost of the services, or, failing this, to supply the locomotive power themselves, but failed in the attempt, the courts ruling that a certain section of the Bristol Docks Act, 1884 (Avonmouth and Portishead Dock Purchase Act) freed the railway companies from all such liabilities. This shunting work entails a very considerable charge on the Corporation as owners of the dock estate. On the other hand, the railway companies claim that they give good value for this, inasmuch as the rates to inland places, as before stated, are the same from Avonmouth and Portishead as from Bristol, though entailing a seven and ten miles extra haul respectively. We handed over to the railway companies last year no less than 420,000 tons of goods, which cost us at least 6d. a ton for moving and shunting, for which we do not get a halfpenny from the companies, notwithstanding the fact that we have provided all the terminal facilities. That applies not only to Bristol, but to many other ports, and it is, no doubt, a great hardship and a very serious loss to the dock companies' revenue, and a very serious obstacle in the way of any independent dock company being able to raise sufficient revenue to provide the enormously increased and expensive works which are necessary to accommodate the modern large liner. It is an increasing factor in the difficulty of finding capital for a dock concern, and one which we in Bristol think the Government ought to look very carefully at, not only with regard to Bristol, but other docks in the kingdom. I see the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce are moving in the same direction that we are, namely, to get Parliament to recognise that dock companies ought to get a certain portion of the terminals which are taken by the railway companies from the traders. The Corporation own several large lighters and hulks, and use them chiefly for the purpose of giving dispatch to the liners discharging at Avonmouth Dock. There is no public system of lighterage. The lighters and barges plying in the port are owned by private firms, but are obtainable at moderate rates. There is, as a fact, great competition for all such work. The charge varies according to distance and bulk from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. per ton, less being charged for large quantities and continuous business. The principal revenue of the docks and quays comes from dues on vessels and their cargoes taken in respect of entry to the port, and not for the use of any particular quay; also dues on animals from foreign and coastwise, transit shed rates, license fees on barges and boats, dues on vessels lying up, rates for use of the feeder canal (which connects the dock system with that of the Kennett and Avon Canal), for use of gridiron, patent slip and pontoon dock, also rents of properties and ferries. A considerable revenue is also derived in the traffic department from working the foreign animals' wharves, from performance of labourage for shipowners and merchants, for use of sacks, cranes, and miscellaneous plant and gear, from fines for goods left beyond the statutory period of 72 hours on the quays or in the transit sheds, and also from rents on goods stored in the warehouses and labourage performed thereon. In addition to the revenue from the dock estate, the city from time immemorial has had the right to charge certain city dues on vessels and goods resorting to the city docks; and out of these dues considerable sums have during the last 50 years been expended in improving the city quays, erecting sheds and cranes thereon, and providing other trading facilities. For purposes of collection one consolidated due only is charged to the shipowner or merchant, the separation into dock and city dues being made subsequently, and the shares apportioned accordingly to the Dock Estate and Borough Fund respectively. Here it may be pointed out that whilst for the first 30 years subsequent to 1848 (the date of their taking over the city docks from private owners) the citizens had to contribute £8,000 to £14,360 a year towards the revenues of the dock estate by rates in aid, yet, on the other hand, very large sums were during this time paid in to the credit of the borough fund in the shape of the said city dues, and there were also expended out of the dock revenue so supplemented large amounts on new works and improvements, which, besides enormously increasing the trade and prosperity of the city, have also had the effect of increasing those city dues from £8,232 in 1849 to £22,819 in 1900. In addition a sinking fund wholly invested in gilt-edged securities, amounting now to about £150,000, has been built up. By means of this the citizens between 50 to 60 years hence will possess a very valuable dock estate practically unencumbered by debt. In regard to the financial results of the Bristol Dock Estate it is not possible to form a correct opinion without taking into account the whole revenue of the Port, that is, the revenue of the dock estate plus that from the city dues, which latter, though collected by the Docks Committee, are paid in to the credit of the Borough Fund. Joint accounts to show these results are made up annually and appended to those which are submitted to the Town Council of the dock estate only. Treating the account in this way, and which is really on the basis of a commercial undertaking, it is maintained that much of the capital expenditure made on the city quays and necessary to earn the ancient city dues has really been charged to the capital account of the dock estate, and as the city dues, which arise largely out of the grain imported in large modern steamers could not possibly have been earned unless this expenditure had been made, the income in city dues arising therefrom is, it is held, correctly credited to the revenue account of the dock estate. Stating the accounts, therefore, of the docks in the form in which they would appear if the concern was a company, and accepting the figures as they occur in the published accounts, the following results appear:—

	For the five years ended April 1895.	For the five years ended April 1900.
	£	£
Total revenue	895,394	1,055,407
Total expenses	551,936	646,318
Net profit available for payment of interest on capital	343,458	409,089
Interest actually paid on whole of the capital invested in the Bristol Docks	349,695	381,627
Surplus after paying interest on capital	—	27,462
Loss after paying interest on capital	6,237	—
Profit for 10 years	£21,225	

In the financial statement of a company the revenue account would end here and the profits shown would also be much greater, because the Docks Committee have annually charged their revenue with many thousands of pounds which in a trading company would have been charged to capital. These accounts clearly prove that in ten years the Docks Committee but for the Sinking Fund would not have had any need to ask the citizens to make good any deficiency on revenue account, for, after paying all their interest, and after maintaining their property in an effective state of repair and making an extraordinary expenditure on works of £100,755, a large part of which would have been charged to capital account in a trading company, they had £21,225 in hand. This amount went towards covering the sum of £85,174 invested during these ten years on behalf of the citizens in trustees' securities on account of the Sinking Fund, the balance thereof, viz., £63,949, being the net sum which the citizens had to contribute during that period towards the dock and harbour funds. With reference to the general question of regarding the city dues as distinct from the dock property, it is interesting to note that for over 260 years the anchorage,

cannage, and plankage rates, and later the wharfage dues, which were created in 1606, were leased to the Society of Merchant Venturers. Prior to September, 1764, the society paid to the Corporation as a rent for those rates and dues £3 6s. 8d. per annum. In 1764 a new lease for 99 years was granted of all those rates and dues for a rent of £10 per annum. This lease lapsed in 1863, since which time the Corporation has collected them. When granting the leases it was in consideration of the society constructing new wharves and providing facilities for accommodating the traffic. Four of the most important modern wharves in the City Docks, viz., the Prince's, the Bathurst, the Dean's, and Canon's Marsh wharves, have, however, been built and charged to the capital account of the Dock Estate, whilst the city dues earned there have been paid into the Borough Fund, and it is only as a matter of procedure that the Docks Committee have had to ask for a rate-in-aid to pay the interest upon the capital outlay. But for the large expenditure charged since 1873 to the capital of the Dock Estate for making those wharves and for widening, straightening, and deepening the river and carrying out improvements at Cumberland Basin for giving access to the docks for larger vessels, the amount received for city dues to-day would undoubtedly be considerably smaller. The total tonnage of the port inwards in 1899 attained the respectable figure of 1,611,730 tons—a striking commentary on the wisdom of the policy adopted in 1847, and again in 1884, of purchase by the citizens of all private rights in the dock property within their port, and of their consent to bear additional taxation in the shape of city rates in the event of the revenue from dock sources proving inadequate after lowering the tariff of dues to meet the dock expenditure, including interest on the outstanding capital. There are two other matters I should just like to call the attention of the Commission to in regard to revenue. The first is that the present system of measurement of tonnage has led, and is leading still more than formerly, to great anomalies in regard to the weight of goods carried in the ship. The modern liner now brings 2 to 2½, sometimes even 3, tons per register ton, which is the unit of taxation in regard to the vessel. The consequence is, as regards the Port of Bristol, that as compared with the measurement in force in 1888 we are losing £6,282 per annum by the clever way in which shipbuilders manage to build vessels of small registered tonnage, but tremendous carrying capacity. I can submit figures to the Commission illustrating this matter so far as Bristol is concerned, but it is a very serious matter for all ports, because the modern vessel requires an enormous expenditure, a bigger lock, a deeper sill, and prodigiously increased shed accommodation as compared with the vessel which was in vogue ten or twelve years ago. All the dock revenues of the country are suffering from this system of measurement. The dock authorities have to keep continually putting their hands into their pockets to provide for this bigger class of vessel, which is a proportionately much cheaper vessel for the shipowner to work. That is to say, the shipowner carries an enormously increased cargo at practically the same rate of cost for management, yet, notwithstanding his having this advantage, we, the dock authorities, are getting less and less revenue.

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4698. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Have you ever raised that question in an action?—We have raised it before the Board of Trade many times.

4699. (*Chairman.*) It does not exclusively apply to Bristol?—No, it applies to all the ports of the kingdom, but I should think it affects London very much indeed.

Recalled, 4704.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning, March 26th, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

Tuesday, 26th March, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. MILES KIRK BURTON re-called and further examined.

Mr. M. K. Burton.
26 Mar. 1901.
See 4603-13.

4700. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You desire, I think, to add a figure to that which you gave yesterday?—If you please.

4701. You told us that £1,500,000 had been paid by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to the Corporation to cover the rights and privileges that were taken over?—Quite so.

4702. Then, I think, there was some other matter you wished to speak about?—The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board (Section 281 of their Consolidation Act, 1858) took over the whole of the debt, £6,134,000, borrowed by the old Liverpool Dock Trustees on the security of the dock rates. This was the consideration for the transfer of the dock undertaking under the Board's Act of 1857. The Corporation and the Dock Trustees having no beneficial enjoyment of the estate under the old Acts, and the Dock Board holding the estate under similar terms by their Acts, the consideration for the transfer was the taking over of their existing dock debt. The only assets the Corporation could enjoy beneficially were the town dues, and to acquire these, as explained yesterday, the Board gave £1,500,000, but the Board can only apply town dues for dock purposes.

4703. Then the Port started on its enterprise with a capital sum in round figures of £7,600,000?—That is so, in round figures.

Mr. FRANCIS BROOKE GIRDLESTONE re-called and further examined.

Mr. F. B. Girdlestone.

4704. (*Chairman.*) Are you personally convinced, from your twenty-five years' experience, that there is an advantage in the municipal management of docks?—There is one great advantage, and I think there are a great many disadvantages. That is my personal opinion. I think that the advantage is that a municipal body owns a dock and borrows its money at the very lowest rates, having the security of the Borough Fund. I think also a municipal body gives no concessions or anything of that sort with regard to rates; that is to say, that the rates are fixed, and absolutely adhered to as regards both dues on ships and on goods. Then I think as the municipality is not working for a dividend, they are more anxious perhaps than a private company to maintain the dock concern in a high state of efficiency. Even if the dock revenue has to be supplemented by the town rates, that is perhaps better for the general community, because by low dues and the provision of plenty of facilities, greater traffic is attracted to the Port, leading to the greater employment of labour and more retail customers. From all this I should say that benefit is derived by every class of the citizens. On the other hand there are disadvantages, which I put as follows: There is a difficulty in managing a commercial concern efficiently when tied up by the Borough Funds Act, the powers of that Act not being sufficiently elastic to enable the money for new works to be easily obtained. You have to have town meetings, and meetings of the Statutory Committee of the Council, and generally a poll is demanded by some factious part of the Town Council. I do not think the powers under the Borough Funds Act are elastic enough in regard to the development of new traffic, new liners, for instance, or for the manipulation sometimes of the rates necessary nowadays to get goods on the system of through rates which is generally coming into vogue in connection with the American and Canadian trades. Then the Committee's proceedings often meet with factious opposition in the Town Council. Occasionally, notwithstanding great consideration and a great amount of time spent by the committee, who, of course, know more of the wants of the dock estate than the other members of the Town Council, notwithstanding that they have often given very great consideration to questions and a great deal of trouble and care, those proceedings are annulled by the Town Council, for the committee, of course, on every important matter, after forming its own opinion, has to report to the Town Council and get its sanction for any new measures or any considerable change in policy. Again, I do not think in regard to labour, that a municipality gets as much work out of the men as a private employer would. Then I think there is very often a want of continuity of policy in a dock concern managed by a municipal body, the Board being constantly changed, and many of the men elected to the Town Council having no great stake in the city property. I think there is occasionally timidity on the part of Town Councillors to act for the real interest of the dock concern against public opinion. They are rather inclined to listen to public clamour, because, of course, they have to seek their seats every three years, and sometimes the fear of losing a seat makes them give way too readily to public opinion. Then there is a tendency in a rate-aided concern to extravagance in capital expenditure in order to meet public clamour for the provision of works in some cases not absolutely necessary from a dock point of view, or capable of proof as being likely to produce revenue. Those are, in my opinion, some of the disadvantages of a municipal working of a dock concern.

4705. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You have been rather contrasting the Corporation management against the management of a private company?—That is so.

4706. You have not contrasted it with a trust representing the shipping interest and the trading interest of the place?—I think that a trust, members of which are elected by those who pay the dues on the vessels, and the dues on the goods, is really the best form of dock management. I think you get a higher stamp of men to sit on that Board. It is considered a great honour to sit on a Board, for instance, like the Mersey Trust or the Clyde Trust. I know that there you do get men of the highest stamp.

4707. Ad also men with a special knowledge?—Yes, men with a special knowledge of the requirements of shipping and dock traffic.

4708. I suppose there is very little barge traffic at Bristol?—We have a considerable barge traffic, but nothing like that of London. We get a small licence fee on every barge according to its carrying capacity. We do not get any dues on the goods conveyed in the barge, but as I said yesterday, in the Port of Bristol there is a due on every article brought into the port, whether it is landed on the quay or not. So that the goods that are conveyed in the barges from ships to a private or a public warehouse, or from one portion of the dock estate to another, as, for instance, between the City Docks and Avonmouth, or between Avonmouth and Portishead, have already paid dues, whereas in London there are millions of tons that do not pay anything to the dock concern at all.

4709. Does carted traffic pay the same?—Yes; everything that comes into the port pays dues. In fact, I think it ought to be a cardinal principle of a dock concern, that whatever gets the use of the docks, whether it is a ship or a ton of goods, ought to pay something to the docks.

4710. The history of Bristol is that there were two private companies competing with the Corporation?—That is so.

4711. And the Corporation elected to buy them up rather than face the competition?—They did face the competition for a considerable time, and lost very heavily. As many of the leading citizens had really promoted these two private docks because the Corporation would not then take the matter up, I think it was the general desire that these peoples' interest should be taken over. The outside docks were not in a very flourishing condition.

4712. Was the traffic of the port increasing during the time the competition was going on?—Yes; I think the competition did a great deal for the Port of Bristol. Just before the docks were actually taken over, practically there were no dues being charged, and in addition we were doing the labourage free. Then an injunction was granted against the Corporation to stop that. I think all that reduced the price we had to pay.

4713. You have said that the increase of tonnage to 1,611,736 tons is a striking commentary on the wisdom of the policy adopted in 1847, and again in 1884, of purchase by the citizens of all private rights in the dock property within their port. It does not follow that that increase is due to purchase by the Corporation at all, does it?—The purchase in the first case was followed by an enormous reduction of dues. The old company in 1847 were practically starving the trade, owing to the enormous dues they charged. The moment the Corporation bought the old City Docks, dues were reduced from 3s. to 1s. or thereabouts.

4714. I thought you said the traffic was increasing very much before the purchase?—Now, I am talking of the 1847 purchase. The traffic was stagnant then; it was practically going back really, but as the result of the purchase of the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks in 1884 there was a great stimulus to the traffic. I could show it to you in figures.

4715. Can you put in the annual rate of interest?—I have sent all those tables already. My present evidence only supplements the enormous mass of information which has been given previously. The foreign tonnage, for instance, in 1879, was 474,000 tons; in the year 1886 it had risen to 638,000 tons; in 1892 it was 700,000 tons; in 1897 it had risen to 818,000 tons, and last year we had 847,000 tons. The fact that before these two outside docks, Avonmouth and Portishead, were built, there was no accommodation for the bigger class of vessel that was coming into vogue. They could not get up the river, because the river was not then improved as it has been since, and practically the limit of size, before those docks were opened, was 1,200 tons for a sailing ship and 800 tons for a steamer.

4716. Those increases are due to increased facilities in the docks?—Yes, we should never have got anything like this volume of trade had not the outside docks been built.

4717. Because they are suitable for modern shipping?—Yes, they are suitable for modern shipping.

4718. They were built by private enterprise?—Yes, one by the Conservative party and the other by the Liberal party, as is generally done in Bristol.

4719. I do not quite understand how you trace this rise to the purchase by the citizens of all the private rights in the docks?—I do not think it is entirely due to the purchase by the citizens.

4720. It is due, I suppose, to the development of the port in consequence of increased facilities?—Yes, I think the competition led to a great stimulus to the trade, and made Bristol more known in North America and Canada. Then, I think the purchase by the Corporation has led to good provision of facilities, far greater, probably, than a private company would have been able to give.

4721. From their having rates to fall back upon?—Yes. As a matter of fact, the Corporation has spent half a million of money on the Avonmouth Dock alone since the purchase in 1884.

4722. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have been good enough to let us have a copy of your accounts?—Those are the annual accounts.

4723. Turning to page 4 of the accounts for 1900, you had at the end of April, 1900, which was the time of the closing of the account, a capital sum of £2,544,267?—That is so.

4724. Of which, £144,540 was added during the last financial year?—Yes, that is right.

4725. Turning to the other side of the account, you have a debt of £2,120,726 under one heading?—Yes, 3½ per cent. debenture stock.

4726. And under the other heading, 2½ per cent. debenture stock £375,583?—That is correct.

4727. And premiums on debenture stock are entered in the capital account as £51,123?—Yes.

4728. Then you have a contribution from the City Treasurer of £33,885. Where does that come from?—A few years back a portion of the old Dock Estate was closed up. There used to be a ovable bridge in the very middle of the city called St. Augustine's Bridge. That movable bridge was over the Frome River, which forms a part of the floating harbour in Bristol. That portion east, or above the bridge, was closed up, and to compensate the Dock Estate for the loss of room and the loss of revenue, this sum was paid out of the Borough Fund to the Docks Committee, and went partly to cover the cost of other dock improvements near St. Augustine's wharf. It was only from one pocket of the Corporation to another pocket of the Corporation; it was to provide an additional wharf in substitution for that which had been taken from the Dock Estate by reason of this movable bridge being changed to a fixed bridge.

4729. A public advantage was carried out which, in justice to the docks part of the Corporation, required a transfer of money really?—Yes; there was great opposition on the part of the Docks Committee to this policy of closing a portion of the floating harbour. I think their opposition was got over to some extent by the promise that the borough fund should recoup the dock estate to a certain extent.

4730. When you use the words "borough fund," do you mean any additional rate was imposed during that year in respect of this £33,885?—Well, it came out of the rates; I do not know whether there was an increase that year, but it came out of the rates.

4731. That is a considerable sum?—Yes. It may have been spread over two or three years. I think very probably it was spread over two or three years.

4732. But you do not know?—I am not certain about that. Or it may have been that some land had been sold, and the money put into Consols, as occasionally happens, and that the Consols were sold and the money handed over to the dock estate.

4733. At all events that leaves the capital account with a balance to the good of £40,549?—That is so.

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4734. Now, turning to the revenue and expenditure account. Is all the sum that was spent during the year in this revenue and expenditure account, whether it is on capital or revenue account?—There is a capital expenditure shown on page 4 of the accounts, and the expenditure charged to revenue on pages 5 and 6.

4735. What I really mean is, is there anything that you consider in the nature of capital expenditure included in the revenue expenditure account?—Yes; extraordinary expenditure.

4736. On ordinary expenditure you have £26,369?—Yes. That is for the dock estate only, not the dock estate plus the city dues.

4737. Then you have extraordinary capital, which you considered in the nature of capital account?—Some of it was for reconstruction of river walls, but as it was not likely to produce any increased revenue it was charged against revenue rather than against capital.

4738. Your general expenses appear to be £13,260?—Yes.

4739. Your traffic department, £73,419?—Yes, the Corporation do all the labourage practically at the outside docks, and a considerable portion at the City Docks in connection with the granary.

4740. The total expenditure amounts to £137,915?—Yes.

4741. Leaving a balance available to meet interest, etc., carried to net revenue account of £70,221?—That is so.

4742. Now will you turn to the revenue account? You have from dues on vessels entering the port £51,420?—Yes.

4743. On rates on goods from foreign ports and coastwise ports, rates on animals from foreign ports and coastwise ports, £43,883?—Yes.

4744. And there are various other amounts which go to make up a total, including the two sums I have mentioned, of £108,796?—Yes.

4745. In the traffic department, discharging and loading vessels, etc., and shunting, you have £82,815?—Yes.

4746. The warehouse department, £16,524?—Yes.

4747. Making a total revenue of £208,137?—That is correct.

4748. Then you have about 6s. in the £ on your gross income net revenue according to that?—That is so.

4749. Now turning to page 7, the net revenue account. You had an adverse balance at the beginning of the year?—Yes; we carried forward a debit balance of £1,903.

4750. Then you pay interest on stock, there are debenture stock expenses, sinking fund, and sinking fund dividends?—You will notice that the sinking fund is a very large item, £10,823.

4751. You take the interest on stocks and debenture stock expenses?—Yes.

4752. That amounts to £81,972?—Yes.

4753. The sinking fund is £10,823?—Yes. And in addition there are the dividends which have accrued on the accumulated sinking fund. The sinking fund is invested in gilt-edged securities. We set a certain sum aside according to the total to reproduce the capital in sixty years; and in addition to that, under the Act we have to add to it each year the dividends which have already accrued on the accumulated funds. How the accumulated fund is invested you will find on page 9.

4754. The total on the debtor side of the account is £99,537?—Yes.

4755. Including the adverse balance brought forward?—Yes.

4756. On the credit side you have the balance of revenue account £70,221?—Yes.

4757. Then there is some money at the bankers which produces interest amounting to £1,385?—Yes.

4758. Sinking fund dividends £4,174, balancing the amount on the other side?—Yes.

4759. And the borough rate £26,000?—Yes, that is a rate in aid.

4760. That is the charge that came upon the ratepayers of Bristol during the financial year ending 30th April, 1900, in respect of this property?—Yes; but against that, as you will see on the joint account on page 17, there is a large amount of city dues paid in.

4761. This borough rate, of course, comes out of what you call the Borough Fund?—Yes.

4762. Is that a rate levied *ad hoc*?—Yes, it is a dock rate.

4763. When a householder or ratepayer of Bristol gets his demand note, it is specified what that is for, as in the case of a poor rate?—Exactly; so much poor rate, so much dock rate.

4764. That amounted to £26,000?—Yes.

4765. Can you tell us how much that is in the £?—Yes; on the rateable value of the City 1d. in the £ produces £5,800.

4766. Roughly speaking, then, it is between 4d. and 5d. in the £?—Yes, about 4½d.

4767. Then the ratepayers of Bristol paid a rate of about 4½d. in the £ during that financial year in respect of the dock?—Yes, in respect of the dock estate.

4768. With the qualification that I am coming to in a moment. To go back to the capital account, did you issue any particular stock in respect of that £144,540 that you spent on capital account during that financial year?—It is part of the 2½ per cent. debentures—part of the £375,583.

4769. The last of which you issued in 1897, apparently; is that so?—It was issued in pursuance of the powers of the British Dock Act, 1897.

4770. When was the last issued?—We have just issued the very last sum that we have powers for.

4771. Can you tell me the terms on which it was issued?—The last money (£28,000) was the balance which we issued at £82 for 2½ per cent. stock.

4772. You obtained it without difficulty?—Without any difficulty; but, of course, gilt-edged securities had fallen considerably in value then. I have issued a great deal at £88.

4773. (*Chairman.*) Was this last £28,000 a public issue?—No; that was taken privately. It is generally taken by solicitors in Bristol.

4774. Was it advertised?—We did advertise. There was a balance of £46,000 which we advertised to the highest bidder. We did not put any minimum price on it. The prices that came in were considered unsatisfactory, and we did not take them.

4775. How did you sell that £28,000? Did you sell it by private treaty?—I go round to some of the leading firms of solicitors or make it known that I have a small balance to issue. There are some trust estates that have money already invested in the stock, and the trustees often have sums to add thereto.

4776. (*Mr. Ellis.*) May we take it that those are about the terms, always having regard to the state of the market, on which you have no doubt you could raise money?—I have not the slightest doubt that I could get as much money as I wanted to-morrow at 2½ per cent. interest about £82, or, at all events, a considerable sum of money.

4777. Now perhaps you would like to turn to page 17, and explain that?—Page 17 you will find is headed "A statement showing the working of the docks estate, combined with the ancient city dues, port conservancy, and other matters connected therewith, for the year ended 30th April, 1900." On the right-hand side, taking the revenue first, there is the revenue which you have already referred to from the docks estate of £208,137.

4778. Your revenue of £208,137 is contrasted with the expenditure of £133,672, leaving a balance of £74,464?—That is so, for the docks estate.

4779. What do you do with that £74,464?—It is carried down below to net revenue No. 3 account.

4780. Now, will you go to No. 2 account?—No. 2 account is the city dues, etc., revenue, £23,023 from the city dues and £373 from pilotage fees. Against that there is an expenditure of £8,345, leaving a balance of £15,051 which is carried to No. 3 net revenue account.

4781. Now let us deal with No. 3 net revenue account?—First of all there is a balance from No. 1 account docks estate as above giving £74,464; and from No. 2 account city dues £15,051. Then interest on

balances at bankers, £1,385; dividends on sinking fund investments, £4,174. Then on the other side there is interest on the 3½ per cent. debenture stock, £74,346; and on the 2½ per cent. debenture stock, £7,626; debenture stock expenses, £663; renewal and depreciation funds, £4,243; sinking fund, £10,823; investment of sinking fund dividends, £4,174; making a total net revenue of £101,877.

4782. Then the result of the net revenue account No. 3, as I gather, is that the expenditure exceeds the receipts by a sum of £6,801?—That is so, and that is caused by the sinking fund. But for the sinking fund the dock estate plus the city dues yields a profit to the city. You cannot eat your cake and have it.

4783. The demand on the ratepayers of Bristol practically arises from the policy they have to carry on, as a public body, of extinguishing the debt?—That is so; in 50 years time they will have the whole of the dock estate practically free from debt, or I might say less than that—about 48 years. I would like to say a word about raising the interest. Taking it from the very beginning of the issue of this stock I reckon we have got our money for the dock estate on an average at about 2⅞ per cent.

4784. Are you a ratepayer of Bristol?—I am.

4785. I will ask you *qua* ratepayer now, and not as having any connection with the docks. Are you perfectly satisfied as a ratepayer of Bristol with the financial condition of this part of the Corporation's enterprise?—I am. I think it is a first-class investment on the part of the citizens, and one which has tended more than anything else to increase the importance of Bristol both as a manufacturing and a trading city.

4786. Do you think it is improving your property, as a ratepayer?—Most certainly, and even if there were a loss each year—that is to say, that the rates really had to be called upon for a subscription to the dock estate—I still think it would be a very wise investment, because it brings more trade, it brings more customers to the shops. There is more necessity for doctors and lawyers and insurance companies and so on.

4787. To use a term which we hear sometimes in Parliament, do you think that it is a profitable municipal trading?—I do think so. Of course, a great many people will not think so because they do not admit that the city dues are a portion of the dock funds. They say those belong to the Corporation irrespective of the dock estate. But they could not be earned at all but for this vast expenditure for facilities for big ships which the Corporation in another capacity have spent on the docks.

4788. I gather from you that one part of the docks is much more profitable than another?—Yes, that is so. The trade in big ships is really the most profitable part.

4789. Then you agree with this perhaps: That your reply with respect to this profitable municipal trading would be qualified entirely if the policy of the Corporation were an unwise one commercially?—I do not quite follow that question.

4790. If part of the enterprise is profitable and part is not profitable there exists an element of danger financially?—Yes, I think so.

4791. If an unprofitable extension were made by the Corporation your answer, as a ratepayer of Bristol, might be qualified?—It might. It requires, of course, very great caution in spending capital.

4792. It depends, in fact, upon what all commercial undertakings depend upon, namely, a proper policy?—Yes; but, of course, in a dock estate you cannot close the capital account. Ships are continually changing in type, and if you do not expend capital in order to accommodate that changed type of vessel bang goes your trade, or the profitable part of it. That would be the case with us if we had not made up our minds to embark upon a further capital expenditure of nearly £2,000,000.

4793. Everything, in fact, depends upon management?—It does.

4794. Is that the reason why you think that a trust is better than a corporation?—Yes, I do.

4795. That is the root of it?—It is.

4796. With regard to the Borough Fund, I understood you to say that you would like more elasticity *qua* Bristol?—Yes.

4797. But it is only *qua* Bristol, is it?—No, I think it is *qua* everywhere. The theory of the Borough Funds Act is that everything in the shape of dues must be paid into the Borough Fund; whereas in order to coax a new trade we should sometimes like to keep in hand something that ought to go into the Borough Fund. We might be inclined, for instance, to give some concession to a new set of liners, but under the working of the Borough Funds Act, we are prohibited from doing that. The dues must be paid into the city coffers.

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4798. Then, side by side with this valuable sinking fund you are building up, is the City of Bristol increasing its other debts?—Yes; but not extravagantly. They are not the owners of the gasworks, or the waterworks, or the tramways, as other cities are.

4799. Some of those undertakings are very valuable?—Yes, and I think in not acquiring these properties we have made a very great mistake in Bristol. I think it was, perhaps, the dock debt that frightened them from incurring a further very large capital expenditure; but I think if they had purchased the waterworks and tramways a few years back they would have done very wisely.

4800. (*Mr. Peel.*) You said that the principle of working was to increase the volume of traffic by keeping the tariff of charges low, and giving good dispatch?—Yes.

4801. That is a very far-seeing policy. You told us further that the play of parties in the Corporation sometimes affected your policy; but it has not affected the general policy which you have described to us, has it?—No; although I might say this: but for politics I think one very unremunerative portion of the Dock Estate would probably not have been built. That is Portishead. I think if there had been no politics we should have been spared an expenditure of that kind. We manage things rather politically in Bristol. When the Avonmouth Dock was started by the Liberals, the Conservatives immediately set to work to build Portishead.

4802. You say that the question of the ownership by a trust in preference to a municipality has been much discussed, and that some think a more progressive policy might have been carried out?—Some people have thought so.

4803. What policy could be more progressive than that which you have just discussed? Is there any strong point on which there is a feeling that a more progressive policy might have been carried out?—There has been a great outcry for a scheme called "Dockisation," for actually damming the river up and making a huge dock between the mouth of the river and the old city, and I think the Progressive Party think that if the dock concern had been managed by a trust rather than by the municipality that scheme would have been carried out.

4804. You do not think so yourself?—No, I do not think so at all. In fact, I think they would have been more loth to carry it out than the municipality. I think a good many things might be advocated by a municipality, because they know the rates are behind them. As I said just now, I think it is one of the defects of a municipality trading that the capital expenditure is not quite so closely looked into as it would be by a trust. A trust is very cautious about spending capital if it does not see its way to earning the interest on that capital.

4805. On the other hand, the municipality has more authority, as it represents all the citizens?—Yes. But again in the case of a trust the members are more prominent than in the case of a municipal body. A municipal body changes every three years. Fortunately, we have had some very strong members of the Town Council on the Dock Committee for a good number of years. The strongest members of the Town Council have been on the Dock Committee, which has been a very merciful thing for the dock estate and for the citizens.

4806. (*Chairman.*) You say that the railway companies charge only the same rate to inland places from Avonmouth and Portishead as from Bristol?—Yes. We have a group rate, the same as in the case of Birkenhead and Liverpool.

4807. How is that done? Is it done by arrangement with the railway companies or among themselves?—It is among themselves. We had nothing to do with it. It is, of course, a great convenience to traders because they know exactly what the charge is from

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either dock. They can order a cargo into Avonmouth, Portishead, or the city dock, according as the accommodation is plentiful or not.

4808. Is it a great advantage to you or not?—Yes, it is a great advantage to us.

4809. Then you said there was a contention on the part of the railway companies that this was a kind of consideration for your doing the shunting work within your estate?—I do not agree with them in that contention, and I do not think my committee agree. I think they did it very much for their own convenience.

4810. You say it is the railway companies who put forward that contention?—Yes.

4811. (*Mr. Ellis.*) We have not had any documents from the railway companies saying that?—No.

4812. (*Mr. Peel.*) I presume that was contended before Parliament?—It was contended in a court of law.

4813. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have told us that at the ort of Bristol the custom is for the shipowner to raise the cargo to the ship's rail. Are you acquainted with the way in which the cargo is handled in the Port of London?—In London it is delivered on to the quay by the ship.

4814. Which method do you prefer?—I think the delivery on to the quay by the ship is the best. That throws less expense on the consignee, but I suppose in the end it works back into the price of the goods. It makes it exceedingly difficult to compare the charges at one port with another. The custom of the port has always to be taken into consideration, and that, as I said yesterday, has I think been ignored in the statements compiled by the London Chamber of Commerce. They are not correct. Of course, it makes a great difference. The cost in Bristol between the ship's rail and the quay has to be borne by the merchant, whereas that in London has to be borne by the ship. That makes a great difference in the rates to be charged.

4815. But the facilities are much greater for sorting cargoes really in the Liverpool and Bristol manner?—Yes. This is only a matter of cost. The consignee takes from the rail in Bristol, and sorts on the quay. I suppose the ship sorts the goods in London.

4816. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With regard to the city dues and the dock rates, the city dues, I understand, go into the general fund of the Corporation?—That is so.

4817. But you levy a dock rate in order to go into the special account of the docks?—To supplement the dock revenue we have to call for a rate-in-aid from the citizens. Against that we pay in a considerable sum in city dues.

4818. But is not the effect of that that the dock rate so called is really levied in order to meet the general expenses of the Corporation?—No; the rate-in-aid is levied in order to supplement the revenue of the dock estate, not any other expenditure. I say that the money taken in city dues really belongs to the harbour. It ought not to be used for washhouses and libraries and that sort of thing. It ought to be used for the benefit of the ship and the benefit of the goods on the ship; but the effect is as you state.

4819. The so-called Dock Rate is a sum of about £25,000, levied practically for the general purposes of the Corporation?—That is how you look at it, but it is not the way I look at it.

4820. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Is your argument in respect of these City dues based on any Act of Parliament or on a custom. You say the City dues ought not to be used for wash-houses. On what do you base that. Is it a mere general argument, or do you refer to some section in an Act of Parliament or some custom or charter?—No. From time immemorial the citizens have owned those City dues.

4821. I am speaking of the ear-marking of the funds. That is your own opinion?—Yes, that is my own opinion.

4822. There is no charter?—No.

Mr. ALFRED LEWIS JONES called and examined.

Mr. A. L Jones.

4823. (*Chairman.*) You are nominated by the Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee of the London Chamber of Commerce to give evidence before this Commission?—Yes, I am.

4824. You are senior partner in the firm of Elder, Dempster and Co., shipowners and merchants, carrying on business at Liverpool, London, Bristol, and elsewhere?—Yes.

4825. You are president of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool, late chairman of the Liverpool Steam Ship Owners' Association, and a member of the London Chamber of Commerce?—Yes.

4826. Will you tell us how big a fleet your firm own and control?—At present we have running 116 steamers. I hand in a card showing their movements.

(*The witness handed in a card, dated 23rd March, 1901, showing the movements of steamers owned and controlled by Messrs. Elder, Dempster and Co.*)

4827. What is the total gross tonnage?—Over 374,000 tons. These steamers trade regularly between London, Liverpool, Bristol, some Continental ports, Canada, the United States, the West Indies, the Mediterranean, and the West African coast. I am well acquainted with the steamer requirements, facilities provided, and the port charges at London, Liverpool, Bristol, Hamburg, Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Bremerhaven. The business of London is, to a great extent an overside one; that is to say, cargo is delivered from vessels, either direct or viâ the quay, into lighters, which convey it to riverside wharves, up the canals, or into other docks. In the case of large steamers with a general cargo this leads to great delay either in the steamer or to the consignee in receiving his goods, as if the goods are sorted on deck and delivered overside into lighters the steamer is delayed; and if the steamer discharges all the cargo on the quay (paying for the use of the quay for sorting and delivering of the cargo to lighters) and departs, the berth is frequently required for another steamer, and the barges have often to wait a considerable time before they can get near that portion of the quay on which the goods are stowed, entailing delay to the steamers. The Dock Companies have complained that lighters and barges take away a large proportion of imported goods, which would otherwise be landed on the quay and form a source of revenue to the docks; but I am of the opinion that the Dock Company are unable to handle any more of the imported goods than they do now. I am speaking with reference to the Millwall Dock, in which the steamers of my firm unload. At the present time, there are some dozens of barges in the dock loaded with grain and lumber on behalf of the Dock Company which they can apparently neither deliver to the consignee nor find suitable warehouse accommodation for. The complaint that barges lying about in the dock hinder the movements of steamers is undoubtedly true, but it will be seen that the Dock Company contributes in some part to this themselves. The following remarks refer to the steamers of my firm discharging at Millwall Dock from Canada. Owing to the continual breakdown of hydaulic cranes considerable loss of time and expense is incurred. I hand in a statement showing delays to steamers. See 6905. See 7040

(*The witness handed in a table showing the detention to certain steamers belonging to Messrs. Elder, Dempster, and Co., through breaking down of cranes and waiting for Dock Company's craft at Millwall Dock. See Appendix, 14th Day, No. 1.*)

The grain porters employed by the Dock Company to discharge grain work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and will not work after 6 p.m. (though they would be paid overtime) excepting they can finish the steamer on the same evening. If these men would work overtime, the same as the stevedores do, considerable saving of time to the steamer would result. Dock Company's men on quays receiving cargo from, and delivering to, steamers commence work at 8 a.m. and finish at 6 p.m., but stevedores commence at 7 a.m. and finish at 5 p.m.; consequently the Dock Company levies a charge of 10s. 6d. per hour from 7 to 8 a.m. (see their regulations), as we must have the men on the quay to take delivery of cargo. This is a charge which ought not to be made. In my opinion the Dock Company's men should commence work at 7 a.m. the same as the stevedores. I hand in a statement showing the hours worked at various ports, which may be of interest. See 7041–3.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the hours of labour worked at various ports in England and on the Continent. See Appendix, 14th Day, No. 2.*)

There is very inadequate accommodation for storing and piling deals and lumber at the dock, and hardly any quay space for receiving same from the steamers. The wood for storing has, therefore, to be discharged into barges, which in busy times are often not unloaded and the wood piled away by the Dock Company until several months after the departure of the steamer bringing it, causing loss through delay to owners and consignees, who are naturally unable to obtain their goods until the barges are unloaded, and the wood sorted out ready for delivery. The inability to dock vessels drawing, say, 25ft. to 26ft. of water, except on top of spring tides, is a very serious matter. The steamers have either to wait at Gravesend until there is sufficient water or to lighten. Both operations are very expensive to owners. At neap tides it is only possible for steamers drawing about 20ft. to dock.

4828. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Are you still speaking of Millwall Dock here?—Yes. Whereas at Avonmouth vessels drawing 24ft. can dock at the lowest neap tide, at spring tides there is a depth of 41ft. At Bremerhaven there will shortly be 23ft. of water available irrespective of tide. Hamburg entrance channel has a depth of 23ft. It was 14ft. in the seventies. Rotterdam has an entrance channel with a depth of 25ft. At Liverpool vessels drawing up to 24ft. can dock on an 11ft. 2in. neap tide. Another cause of delay to steamers discharging wood and other cargoes is the fact that in very many cases the stevedores have to bring the barges receiving same alongside the steamer. Lightermen are supposed to put those barges alongside the steamer, but it is a very common thing for those men to be absent when their craft is required. While those barges are being put alongside the work aboard the steamer is not going on. The complete lighting of the dock is a matter which should be rapidly pushed on. At the present moment it is only partially lighted, and it is, in my opinion, impossible to work expeditiously under such circumstances. It is only quite recently that the Company have commenced the lighting of the dock. The reason why the steamers of my firm go to the Millwall Dock in the face of the above drawbacks is that there is no other suitable dock in London where steamers loaded with similar cargo can be accommodated. Many of those steamers are 470ft. long by 56ft. beam, and carry 18,000 tons measurement. The steamer's cargoes consist of cattle, grain, wood (deals), and general cargo, a considerable portion consisting of deals which shippers will only send to a dock that has accommodation for storing same, and the only docks that take deals in any quantity for storing are the Millwall and Surrey Commercial Docks. Tilbury Dock is too far away from town for the purpose. The only other dock that could accommodate these vessels as to size is the Royal Albert Dock (controlled by the London and India Dock Company), which is fully appropriated to other lines, and, even if it were not there is no accommodation there for storing a portion of the cargo (namely, deals) brought by these vessels.

4829. (*Chairman.*) Will you be kind enough to tell us any particulars that may occur to you as to the want of dock accommodation in London?—To illustrate the want of accommodation in London, I would point out that early in 1900, when one of my firm's vessels ("Lycia"), chartered to the Government to load stores to the Cape, was in the Joint Committee's Victoria Dock she was unable to obtain proper accommodation, and the Admiralty shipping agents afterwards arranged for all boats loading stores for the Cape to go to Millwall Dock, and the latter, bad as it is, has done much better for them. Then there is the case of the "Montreal." She arrived on August the 6th, and she sailed on the 24th August. Then the next arrival is the 25th September, and she sailed on the 9th October. That ship has been here two voyages; she discharged some 6,000 or 7,000 tons of deadweight, which, with her cattle and other space, would be equal to about 18,000 tons, and the quickest we could get that done in was about 14 days.

4830. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What do you say would be reasonable?—We could do the same work in Liverpool in five or six days. To show exactly what we do in Liverpool the "Lake Champlain" arrived on the Sunday, and commenced to discharge at one o'clock; she put out about 8,000 tons of cargo, and loaded about 2,000 tons of coal, or something like that, and sailed on Tuesday at mid-day with Strathcona's Horse. I hand in a statement showing the time taken to discharge vessels in London during the last year, and also charges connected therewith. *Mr. A. L. Jones.*

(*The witness handed in a table showing the time taken to discharge certain vessels belonging to Messrs. Elder, Dempster, and Co., in the Millwall and Surrey Commercial Docks during the year 1900. See Appendix 14th day. No. 3.*) 26 Mar. 1901.

4831. (*Chairman.*) Have you prepared a memorandum showing the cost of discharging cargo vessels at different ports?—Yes. I will hand in Tables which will show that the proportion of time that vessels are able to work in London is small compared with the time they are detained in the docks. In Avonmouth, or in Liverpool we should discharge about 3,500 tons a day; in London we should discharge about 500 or 600 tons a day.

(*The witness handed in a Table showing the comparative port charges, and the time occupied in discharging a modern cargo steamer of a tonnage of 3,388 tons gross and 2,202 net, at various ports in England and on the Continent. See Appendix 14th day. No. 4.*)

(*The witness also handed in a Table showing the comparative port charges and the time occupied in discharging a modern cargo steamer of a tonnage of 9,040·77 gross and 5,146 net, at various ports in England and on the Continent. See Appendix, 14th Day, No. 5.*)

4832. These days in the Table are the time it takes to discharge, are they; three days as against 14?—Yes. Our port charges in London would be practically the same as they are at Avonmouth and Liverpool, but we should lose eleven days on working the ship, and all the expenses of the cargo and other expenses are going on. See 5628.

4833. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You take about as much time at Hamburg and Rotterdam as you do at London?—Yes, but our expenses are very much less there. At Hamburg our expenses would be £850.

4834. (*Chairman.*) To what expenses are you referring?—The port charges, and the cost of handling the cargo.

4835. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) At Hamburg it is £853 as against £961 in London?—Yes, that is so.

4836. And the chief difference is not in the port dues but in the stevedoring?—Principally. The conditions affecting the various ports are so different that it is almost impossible to usefully compare them, but, with a view of showing the disadvantages from which shipowners suffer in visiting London, I have prepared the tables showing the cost of handling two modern cargo vessels at Liverpool, Avonmouth, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Bremerhaven, and London, which I have handed in. It will be seen that London costs about double as much as such a port as Rotterdam, and that, while London costs about the same as Liverpool and Avonmouth, the dispatch is about five times as bad in the case of a large vessel at London.

4837. (*Chairman.*) Now, will you tell us anything you have to state with regard to port dues?—As regards port dues, one point of material difference between British and Continental ports is, that while British harbours, docks, and wharves are administered on the basis of cost, or even profit by the municipality, public or private companies, trusts, etc., in the case of foreign ports they are subsidised by the community, so that the ship pays directly almost nothing for their use, which largely accounts for their largely increased transit trade of recent years. Then, again, no light dues are charged at Continental ports which tells against the home port where shipowners have to pay, not only 2¾d. per ton general lights, but also in the case of a port like Liverpool, local lights in addition. But besides this, at British ports, vessels carrying cargo above the tonnage deck (whether in the shelter deck or above it) pay dock, tonnage, and light dues, on the cargo so carried. That is a very material point. This is a very important consideration in the case of vessels carrying 1,000 or 1,500 tons of so-called deck cargo. A Continental ports the ship is charged merely on her registered tonnage, irrespective of what deck cargo she may have. As regards port dues, in some cases port dues for the use of the harbour or river are charged separately, as in the case of London, from dock dues, whereas at other ports, for instance, Liverpool, they are charged at an inclusive rate of 1s. 4d. per ton. I have had a good deal of difficulty in arriving at an estimate, because I have not had both types of vessel at all the

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ports mentioned, but the estimates are accurate enough for purposes of comparison. They have been submitted to my agents at the various ports, and agreed by them. As regards pilotage, the most expensive pilotage in England is certainly that of London. I have never been able to understand why we should have to employ two pilots to assist a vessel during her run from Dungeness to London, whereas at Liverpool we have only one. No doubt this accounts for the pilotage at London costing double what it does at Liverpool. I draw special attention to the fact that at Liverpool no charge is made for the use of the steam pilot boats, whereas at Dungeness we have to pay £2 15s. 0d. for putting a pilot on board a comparatively small vessel of 2,000 tons net register. Now, this is a question with regard to cattle. To illustrate one disadvantage from which the Thames suffers, I may mention that if a ship lands her cattle at a Liverpool wharf without going into dock she pays 4d. per ton wharfage, but at London she would pay ½d. to ¾d. per ton. Thus Liverpool, with a 14-mile channel to the bar to be dredged, obtains 3d. per ton more than London, with a 20-mile channel to Gravesend. A further illustration is to be found in the case of a vessel with a cargo consisting of live stock, cheese, and timber, visiting the two ports. At London a ship must wait for the tide to make Tilbury or Thames Haven, go up to Deptford (perhaps on a succeeding tide), and, finally, perhaps wait for a third tide to make the dock. At Liverpool she can go right alongside the cattle wharf at low water, putting in the time until high water by landing her stock, and dock at high water, thereby perhaps saving two tides. At Hamburg goods are discharged in the stream, or in the middle of the dock, for distribution by means of coasting vessels to other North European ports, vessels also receive cargo from lighters. For instance, in 1899, over 600,000 tons of sugar were shipped from Germany to England, of which the greater part was transhipped at Hamburg from lighters into the export steamers. At Rotterdam goods are discharged into large lighters or small steamers for distribution over the canal system of Holland and up the Rhine; also to United Kingdom ports. At Avonmouth Dock (situated at the mouth of the Severn, about seven miles from Bristol) the custom is to deliver general goods either direct into railway truck or temporarily into warehouse, awaiting delivery by rail or water, to Bristol and district, while bulk goods, such as timber, are delivered into barges and sent up to Bristol or Gloucester. A new dock is in contemplation at Avonmouth, and the hope has been expressed that the Port of Bristol may, by means of the railways, supply London. As regards stevedoring, elevators in London are only used to a limited extent, while at Liverpool we would never think of using anything else for bulk grain. This, of course, makes an immense difference in the time necessary for landing grain cargo. Elevators have not been adopted at Avonmouth or at either of the foreign ports mentioned. The cost of stevedore work depends largely upon the conditions of labour. Where there is free labour and where the men are more or less in their rustic condition (as at Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Bremen) rates and also overtime are comparatively low. Where Unions have arisen and restricted the conditions as at London, Avonmouth, and, to a certain extent, Liverpool, the lumpers and porters do not work in harmony, and the cost is naturally much increased and the efficiency not correspondingly greater. As regards the handling of cargo, the systems are entirely different at the various ports. At Avonmouth the Dock Company insists upon taking charge of any cargo landed, and charging for it at tariff rates. After the cargo passes the vessel's rail goods are handled at the expense of the consignee. At Liverpool, after the cargo passes the vessel's rail, it is taken charge of by the master porter, who delivers it to the consignee to the order of the shipowner, charging tariff rates for handling which consignees pay. At Hamburg cargo may be discharged free from quay charges overside, but, where the vessel is placed alongside a quay, and the cargo is discharged on to the quay, the municipality levies dues upon the registered tonnage of the ship, and also upon the cargo, which it takes charge of and delivers. In my figures I have included the cost of these quay dues, less what is recoverable from the consignees by customs of the port. This, of course, I have deducted in order to place Hamburg on the same basis as other quay discharge ports. At Rotterdam, cargo is discharged both on the quay and overside, the charges on the cargo, after leaving the ship's rail being for account of the consignee. At Antwerp the condition of affairs is almost exactly similar, only that of recent years the quay accommodation having become altogether inadequate, the consignees have insisted upon cargo being lightered—a much slower operation than quay discharging—with a view to saving demurrage on the ships, which, of course, involves worse dispatch for the shipowner, and has much prejudiced the Port of Antwerp. At Bremen—or rather Bremerhaven, where the dock for large vessels is situated—the cargo is all sent away, mainly up to Bremen and the interior by means of the railway. Dispatch is usually a question of getting the railway company to provide facilities for rapid removal, or allow piling. The following figures are interesting as illustrating the ability of the various ports to deal with the big ship of to-day, which will be even larger in future:—

See 8470.

See 5628

London	There is accommodation in the Millwall Docks, where we are compelled to take our cargo, for 6 steamers of 470 feet long, 56 feet beam, and 18,000·40 cubic feet tons, whereas at other Ports the whole range of the docks is open to us.
Liverpool	31 steamers (12 in the Langton Dock alone) of this size can be accommodated.
Bremerhaven	Can or will shortly be able to accommodate 9 steamers, Avonmouth 9, of 400 feet, Hamburg 48, Rotterdam 30, Antwerp 21.

4838. You tell me you have been speaking with reference to the Millwall Dock, at which the steamers of your firm unload?—Yes.

4839. Why do you use these docks exclusively?—Because we cannot get any other. The nature of our cargo is such that the other docks will not take us.

4840. Have you ever asked them to do so?—Yes.

4841. I trust you will appreciate that we understand that you make these statements from your own experience?—Yes.

4842. There is a very large amount of capital concerned, and we are therefore anxious not to have anything said which is not very deliberate. You will understand that?—Quite right.

4843. For instance, you refer here to the continued breakdown of hydraulic cranes, by which you tell us considerable time is lost and considerable expense is incurred?—Yes.

See 5666.

4844. Why did you not use your own cranes?—It is not an easy thing to use our own cranes. We have these hydraulic cranes alongside the quay.

4845. But you say they break down?—Yes.

4846. Why do you not use your own cranes?—We should not be able to land as easily with the cranes on the ship as with hydraulic cranes. At Hamburg you will see a whole forest of hydraulic cranes all along the quay.

4847. You have to use your own cranes in other British ports, have you not?—We do, if necessary, but if we can get a better appliance than our own winch to use we take the hydraulic crane.

4848. Do you suggest that London is at a disadvantage, as compared with other British ports, in the matter of hydraulic machinery?—I think it is.

See 5665.

4849. With reference to the grain porters, to whose hours of work you make reference, that is a labour question, is it not?—Yes.

4852. That has nothing to do with the regulations of poration?—No; it has reference to the dock regulations. They have their own regulations. I do not know how far they would be able to get the men to fall in with them, but according to their own dock regulations themselves the hours start at an unsuitable time.

4851. That remark also refers to the lightermen, who are supposed to put their barges alongside the steamers, but are very often absent when they are required, as you have told us?—Yes.

4852. That has nothing to do with the regulations of the dock, I suppose?—I am not speaking so much about the regulations of the dock as endeavouring to give you all the information I can as to the defects of the Port of London.

4853. But you have told us that one inconvenience to which you are put is caused by the hours of labour of the grain porters?—Yes.

4854. Then you refer, later on, to the men?—One gang commences at 7 o'clock and the other com-

mences at 8 o'clock; and the one finishes at 6 o'clock and the other finishes at 5 o'clock.

4855. Then, later on, you told us that the reason why the steamers of your firm go to the Millwall Dock, in the face of the drawbacks, is that there is no other suitable dock in London where steamers of similar character can be accommodated. Why should you not go, for instance, to Tilbury?—The consignees would not take delivery of the cargo there.

4856. Then it is the consignee, really, who obliges you to go to Millwall?—It is the custom of the trade.

4857. But it is the consignee?—It is the consignee who is the man that I have to study.

4858. I am asking you as a question of fact. It is the consignee, really, who obliges you to go to Millwall?—It is the consignee, of course, because, if I did not go to where he wants me, he would not give me the goods to carry.

4859. He tells you to go to Millwall?—I have to go where I am sent.

4860. That being the case, how does it come about that, as you have told us just now, you have asked other docks to accommodate you?—We have tried to get into other docks.

4861. But you have told us the consignees wanted you to go to Millwall?—But they might take a dock further down the river.

4862. You have referred to the only other dock which could accommodate vessels of the size, which you say is the Royal Albert Dock, which is fully appropriated to other lines?—Yes.

4863. You say you have asked to go there?—We have asked to get into other docks.

4864. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What would be the good of your getting into the other docks if the consignee insists on your going to Millwall?—But the consignee might take another dock lower down. Even in Liverpool, where really we have enormous quay space, we fill up one place and go to another.

4865. But, if I have appreciated the answers which you have given to the Chairman, your consignee insists on your going to Millwall unless he can get you further up the river?—Yes.

4866. Then I do not quite see how it becomes material for you to enter the Albert Dock, which is lower?—We think we should get better accommodation in the Albert Dock. We would rather go to the Albert Dock if we could get there; but we cannot get there.

4867. (*Chairman.*) But you say you have asked?—Yes.

4868. Have you officially asked?—Yes.

4869. You have officially asked, and been refused?—Yes, that is so.

4870. You have handed in a table, which you say shows the time taken to discharge vessels in the present year?—Yes.

4871. I suppose it would not be unfair to suggest that part of this delay is owing to the lightermen's strike. Would it not be last year?—I think there was a lighterman's strike. I am not sure about that.

4872. With reference to the port dues and light dues, I suppose that is a matter for the Trinity House?—A portion of it. In Liverpool we have the Trinity lights to deal with, and the local lights. In London, I think they are all Trinity.

4873. Do you find it more expensive in London or not?—Liverpool is more expensive than London by about 2d. a ton, because we have the two lights to pay there; we have the Trinity light and the local light.

4874. Then, as illustrating one disadvantage from which you say the Thames suffers, you mentioned that if a ship lands her cattle at a Liverpool wharf without going into dock, she pays 4d. a ton wharfage, but at London she would only pay ½d. to ⅝d. per ton. That seems to be a little contradictory?—In Liverpool we come straight in on the one tide. We drop alongside the cattle wharf, and in an hour or an hour and a-half we put our cattle out; but here you have to cruise all about the river. Then, if you miss your tide you have to lie at Gravesend. Then you go to Deptford, and put the cattle out. Then you may have to wait another tide before you can get to the dock, whereas we do the whole operation on one tide in Liverpool.

4875. Then you went on to tell us that Liverpool with a 14-mile channel to the bar to be dredged obtains 3d. per ton more than London, with a 20-mile channel to Gravesend. That is the channel above Gravesend?—Yes.

4876. What about the 30 miles below Gravesend; do not they want dredging?—Gravesend is where we should be blocked. I am quite sure that if the Liverpool men had to do with the London river, the London river would have more water.

4877. In your statement you have omitted any mention of the 30 miles below Gravesend?—Yes.

4878. But those 30 miles, I think you will admit, are not without want of dredging?—The first block we get is Gravesend.

4879. Is not that perhaps owing to the care which is taken of your interests below. Do you not think your illustration, as it stands, is a little bit unfair to London? You talk of London as if it had a 20-mile channel above Gravesend?—I do not pretend to deal with the channel below Gravesend, but I am very strong on this. I do not think it is to the credit of London that she has not dredged this river. It is a tremendously important thing to me. The loss to me on the "Montreal's" two voyages would be something like £1,000 if I lost ten days. That ship is worth £100 a day at least.

4880. And the principal complaint is want of prompt dispatch?—Yes, that is the great thing.

4881. That is the head and front of your complaint, is it not?—Yes, in Liverpool, I could do it in three or four or five days. I could do it in three in Bristol or Avonmouth, of which we all complain a great deal, and which we are trying to set right. I was amused at the previous witness's statement that they are going to have a tremendous trade there, and I think we may claim to have made a good deal of it. It is because we cannot get facilities in London that we are obliged to go to the next best port.

4882. Do you prefer going to Bristol to coming to London?—Yes—Avonmouth. Why should I not prefer to go to Avonmouth? My port charges are the same, and I get dealt with in three days, and I get my coal about 4s. a ton cheaper.

4883. You told us that a ship must wait for the tide to make Tilbury, and go up to Deptford on a succeeding tide?—Yes.

4884. Of course it is impossible to land cattle at Tilbury?—Yes, we have to land our cattle at Deptford.

4885. Are you aware that an application was made to the Board of Trade some time ago with reference to a proposal to land cattle at Tilbury?—No, but tI should not be at all surprised to hear it.

4886. With reference to the accommodation in London, you gave us particulars of the accommodation in the Millwall Docks. Will you tell me how in your opinion the equipment of these docks compares with that of the other London docks?—Unfortunately, I cannot get any other London dock to have any experience of.

4887. You have not any personal experience of any other dock?—Not much. We had a little experience with one of our ships, the "Lycia." To illustrate the want of accommodation in London I have pointed out that early in the present year when the "Lycia," which was chartered to the Government to load stores to the Cape, was in the Joint Committee's Victoria Dock, she was unable to obtain proper accommodation, and the Admiralty shipping agents afterwards arranged for all boats loading stores for the Cape to go to Millwall Dock.

4888. Then I may take it that what you want to convey to us, and what you have conveyed by oral evidence as a prominent shipowner in England, is that your principal complaint is want of proper dispatch?—And general accommodation.

4889. You say the general accommodation is bad?—I think the progress made by our foreign competitors is very largely owing to the want of accommodation given by these London docks. London is a very great port, and if London is restricted in the depth and size of her ships, and Hamburg and Rotterdam—those two ports in particular which are going ahead tremendously—are able to get facilities which we cannot get, it is a tremendous drawback to the British shipowners and British commerce altogether. I might go further, because you may look with certainty to the future producing very much larger ships. The economical ship is the large ship, and unless you can provide for the large ship you cannot compete for the carrying trade. The carrying trade is not protected like a railway. Anybody can come into it

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who can produce a machine cheaper than his neighbour, and his neighbour is always looking for something that can do it cheaper. Then, again, the Englishman does not care what he ships his goods in, whether under the German flag or the French flag. You do not find that feeling with a German or a Frenchman; he will endeavour as far as he can to ship his goods under his own flag.

4890. You have told us about the want of accommodation and the want of proper dispatch. Now do you complain of the dredging?—Yes.

4891. And about the dues; do you complain of them?—The dues are not so important as dispatch. That is the first thing. Deal with your cargo first of all. What does it matter what you charge me if I cannot come to you?

4892. I take it from what you tell me that you would be willing to pay in reason for prompt dispatch?—Certainly.

4893. You have big vessels, and you want them to be able to turn round and get off?—Yes. Take the "Montreal," for instance. Supposing I save half what I lost—£500—and supposing you put 1d. or 2d. or 3d. on the tonnage dues, it would be nothing compared with getting that ship turned round. And when you are running in a regular trade and a ship got out of her turn for two or three days, she would lose her turn altogether. I hope you will not think that I am endeavouring to give evidence except as to what really impresses me as useful in the interests of the nation. I think it is a national question. I have no interest in any docks.

4894. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to ask you with reference to your statement that the charges at British ports are increased when deck cargoes are carried, that you have to pay dues on a larger tonnage of the ship than if such cargoes were not carried. Is that a very material point with reference to the trade of this country and foreign ports? Are those cargoes carried to such an extent as to make a material difference?—Yes. It is a very serious thing.

4895. Then it would be very unsafe for us to take a comparison of tonnage dues say at Hamburg or Rotterdam, and tonnage dues at ports in this country—I mean the rates that are charged—without knowing that they are all liable to be qualified by this consideration which you have just put before us?—I think so.

4896. I merely wanted to know how far this was a material and important thing for us to bear in mind when we are dealing with quoted rates?—And there is another thing that I should like to add as a large shipowner. I am not only interested in trying to put London to the front, but I want the same thing to apply to all our British ports. I want Liverpool to go ahead. Liverpool is spending six millions of money, and she is not doing it too soon. Then, again, Bristol is going to spend some millions, after about two years discussion, and she would have been better off if she had done it earlier. The ships of the present day are changing very rapidly, and will presently change again to something bigger, and the dock companies—and, in our opinion, especially in London—have made no effort to deal with the changed circumstances.

4897. Is the number of foreign ports which can take in big ships or send away big ships increasing materially?—I do not think that is so. I think the ports that I have named are the ports that are competing closely with us. I think the chairman referred to our going to Tilbury. It might be better for me if I went to Tilbury, as I have only one particular trade to compete for, but I had better go across to Hamburg. I can bring my cargo from Hamburg to the London Dock almost as cheaply as I could from Tilbury. Then I should have two strings to my bow. I should have the German trade and the English trade.

4898. Then, in that case, you want not only big docks to take your ships, but big docks close to the centre from which you distribute your goods?—Yes.

4899. So that a big dock at Tilbury is not so important as a big dock where the Albert Dock is?—No. Take the cargo of one of our steamers discharging at Tilbury; supposing half the cargo might be a transit cargo to go into other ships at other London docks, if I have to lighter from Tilbury I am almost as bad as a man at Hamburg. When you get your cargo on board the ship it does not matter much whether you go 100 miles or 150. It is the cost of handling the cargo.

4900. Then the chief foreign ports from which big ships come are New York, and one or two more. Is not that so?—There are Montreal, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and many other places.

4901. Have you the very largest ships coming from Montreal?—I do not know what we shall do with it, but we hope to run a weekly line to London of 18,000 ton steamers from Montreal. We run a weekly line to Avonmouth and a weekly line to Liverpool.

4902. (*Chairman.*) Is that timber?—A large quantity of timber. We use the timber for filling up. We have cheese, butter, lard, bacon, peas, and corn—everything you can think of.

4903. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Does that apply to South American ports as well?—No, we do not get the big ships from there at present. The River Plate, and Monte Video, and those ports, cannot take big ships at present. They are limited to draught of water, and they are limited to markets.

4904. And as regards ports east of the Suez Canal, as to the size of the ships they are limited to the depth of water in the canal?—It is just a question whether you could not go round the Cape. The canal dues are so heavy, and if it is a big ship the coal difference is so very small that you might go round the Cape. It is a toss up round the Cape or through the Canal.

4905. What we wish to arive at is the extent to which the big ships will go?—The big ship would work round the Cape, and beat the ship through the Canal.

4906. And you think that is a development to which we may look forward?—Certainly.

4907. Now, I wish to ask one or two questions with regard to the tables which you handed in at Question 4831. Are you quite sure that the light dues are included?—They are not included because it would not be fair to the foreign port.

4908. You mentioned in the course of your evidence that the light dues were very important?—I have taken considerable trouble in preparing these tables, because I am exceedingly anxious to give this Commission every possible information I can. If there is anything more I can get for the Commission I shall be delighted to get it.

4909. (*Chairman.*) You have told us that the hydraulic cranes and electric appliances abroad are far better than those in London?—Certainly.

4910. Then that being the case and presuming from what you have told us that it is one of the reasons for delay in discharge, will you explain to us why it takes you 14 days to discharge in Rotterdam, Hamburg, and Bremerhaven as well as in London?—Because the cargo is not handled in the same way. In Liverpool the great object is dispatch, and you bundle all the cargo on to the quay. In Hamburg the merchant will have his cargo sorted, and he gives you a lot of trouble, and the result is a lot of delay.

4911. Is that the reason of the great difference in time?—Yes.

4912. So that really it has not very much to do with hydraulic cranes?—No, but it would have if you were able to put your stuff on the quay; many of the German liners put their stuff alongside the quay.

4913. Then to obtain the prompt dispatch which you want in common with all the other shipowners, you want to be able to put your stuff on the quay?—Yes, quay space, lighting, and draught of water; and you must not be altogether too much in the hands of your labour unions.

4914. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is the great expense of stevedoring in London entirely connected with the labour unions?—Yes.

4915. Not in any way arising from the higher wages that are paid in London?—Your labour union gives the men the higher wages, and he works fewer hours. In Hamburg the rate is 4s. 8d. a day, and in London it is 6s. to 7s. a day.

4916. But still that is a question generally affecting the labour market, and there may be other causes for keeping up the wages in London, as they are much higher in everything else, I believe?—Yes, but in discussing the Port of London I think it is only fair that I should put the difficulties that we experience.

4917. (*Mr. Peel.*) What is the largest ship that you have?—About 19,000 or 20,000 tons measurement. That is about 10,500 to 11,000 tons dead weight.

4918. Is the size of your vessels determined by the amount of water in the Thames, and the difficulty of getting into the Millwall Dock?—Yes. If I were not afraid of the ports I would certainly have very much larger ships.

4919. When you say "ports" you mean London?—London especially.

4920. But when you are actually considering the size of a new vessel, that is what you would consider—Millwall?—Not Millwall. First of all the draught of water in London; that is a very serious thing; you want more water.

4921. (*Chairman.*) You qualify your statement by saying it is not only in London, you think, but it is the general ports of the world as well. It is not only the River Thames, is it?—I was asked when I was building a ship whether the fact that the River Thames being defective in draught and general working, would limit my idea with regard to the ship, and I say I think it would.

4922. (*Mr. Peel.*) You have told us that it was largely the question of the consignees that determined you to go to Millwall, but you said that besides that, this was the only dock that gave you proper facilities?—It is the only dock that I can get into at all, bar Tilbury.

4923. When you talk about facilities, do you mean enough warehouse or shed accommodation, or quay accommodation?—Any man with any experience of docks, would shudder to bring a big ship into any one of these London docks.

4924. I am talking of the Millwall Dock now?—The Millwall Dock is not at all the dock that it should be.

See 6905. 4925. Could you give me that information rather more specifically?—It has not the quay space.

4926. I suppose the great thing that you want is depth of quay?—Yes.

4927. You told us, I think, that you sometimes put out a certain amount of cargo on the quay, and then moved on to another berth, and then on to another berth?—Yes.

4928. That really means that there is not sufficient depth of quay to accommodate the whole of the cargo at one berth?—I think that one of these modern ships with her thirteen steam winches working, and her hydraulic power, would block any quay in twelve or thirteen hours, if you could not get any other quay to go to, you would have to stay where you were, until you got your stuff out.

4929. At Millwall is the ground floor of the warehouse used as part of the quay space?—Yes, but it is ridiculously small in these days for anything in the way of modern working.

4930. Have you, as shipowner, any particular preference for the jetty system in the dock, as opposed to the quay side?—I think the jetty system is a very good one, but I do not care what the system is as long as it gives me quay space to discharge my ship. With modern appliances for working, I do not care whether it is a jetty or a quay.

4931. Has the proportion of the goods that you bring to London for transhipment varied much in the last few years?—We get very little transhipment stuff at all now. I think that London is losing its transit trade.

4932. In your own line is the amount of transhipping trade you do less, as compared with the other trade that you do at the present time?—I think that the amount of transit trade is less. In Bristol we are doing a very large transit trade, and in Liverpool also, but not so much in London.

4933. As regards the figures shown in your table, taking a ship of 5,146 net tonnage, the time for discharging is just the same at Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Bremerhaven, and London?—Yes.

4934. But when you turn to the case of the steamer of a net tonnage of 2,202, it is seven days at Hamburg, five at Rotterdam, six at Antwerp, four at Bremerhaven, and six at London. It seems so very different at those ports for a vessel of that size. What is the explanation of that?—The explanation is that in London you may deal fairly well with a small cargo when you cannot deal with a big ship. You may deal with a 2,000-ton ship, but not with a 10,000-ton ship.

4935. Does that apply to those other ports as well; they vary just as much among themselves as London does?—The time is much the same in comparison. In Hamburg and Rotterdam they are seven and five days, and at London six, and Liverpool three.

4936. Bremerhaven is four?—Yes.

4937. That is a considerable difference with a comparatively very small vessel?—Bremerhaven is a better port to work at; it has very good docks.

4938. If you take the larger vessel, it is exactly the same as the others, fourteen days?—Then you come to the larger ship again with your quay blocked. I must say on behalf of the dock companies it is only fair to tell you again that the present ship, which is the ship of the future, has developed very quickly. In my time I remember when 2,000 bales of American cotton was considered a fair cargo for a ship; now we are struggling because we cannot get more than 30,000 bales in a ship.

4939. Supposing you were much less limited than you are by the difficulties of ports and so on, you, yourself, would be strongly in favour of vastly increasing the size of the ship?—Certainly. I do not think there is any limit to the size of ships, excepting the port.

4940. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have gone over the drawbacks and the difficulties of the river, and the want of facilties in the docks. I want to ask you a few specific questions, and then a few broad and general questions. With regard to the channel, one can quite understand; you want a deeper channel?—Certainly.

4941. Now, with regard to navigation. You complain that you should have two pilots instead of one?—Yes.

4942. Have you any other complaint as to the navigation?—No.

4943. Have you anything to say about lighting and buoying?—No, not at present.

4944. With regard to jurisdiction and control, have you read Sir Thomas Sutherland's evidence?—I have not read it.

4945. You are a large shipowner?—I am about the largest, I think.

4946. Sir Thomas Sutherland was very distinct in his opinion that the questions of buoying and lighting, which are now partly under the Thames Conservancy, and partly under Government, should be both under one Board. Do you agree with that?—Certainly. I am on the Advisory Committee of Trinity House; I may tell you we do not quite agree with the system of charging the lights; we disagree with it altogether.

4947. I am going rather to the point of unification?—Certainly. I would be very strong on unification. I would be very strong on undivided responsibility.

4948. Then you do agree with Sir Thomas Sutherland?—Certainly.

4949. It is a very important point?—It is. I think that where you have divided responsibility, you do not get the same working; that is to say, that one-man concerns do generally a great deal better than others.

4950. I raise the point because you have not dealt with it?—No.

4951. Do you consider that in respect of the channel and navigation relatively to the increasing size of the steamers, the river of London is deteriorating?—I really could not answer that question, but certainly it is not improving according to the necessities of the case.

4952. In your opinion it ought to be?—Certainly, from a national point of view.

4953. Is it relatively deteriorating?—I should think it is deteriorating if it is not going ahead, if the necessities are going ahead. The demands of the port are not being met, so that what might have been of value yesterday would be of no value to-morrow.

4954. Then with regard to the docks and wharves, you have given your various wants of facilities under a number of different heads. I put to you the same question with regard to this:—Is London *qua* docks and wharves and that want of facilities deteriorating or standing still or improving?—Standing still, and it is getting worse because it is not keeping pace with the demands. Unless you keep pace with the demands you are going to the bad.

4955. Then have you anything in your mind with regard to the remedy for all this?—I would endeavour to take example from places where they have succeeded. Liverpool has fairly well succeeded with her trust. It seems to me that in London you have a sort of thing like a draper's auction to offer to the public. You have a lot of odds and ends. You want to put

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them altogether under one management. Whether you have the County Council or what you have I would leave with somebody better able to judge, but I think the docks would be far better managed under one management than under the different managements you have got. For instance, in Liverpool if we want a berth for a ship we go to the harbour master. He has all the berths appropriated, and if you are not going to use a berth you will get somebody else's ship in your berth. The harbour master assembles all his dock masters in the morning and allots a berth to you. In London you cannot do that.

4956. (*Chairman.*) In short, the subdivision of authority is what you complain of?—I do. I think it is a mistake.

4957. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you any opinion with regard to the division of the river into two districts, the upper and the lower. I will read you the motion of Sir Thomas Sutherland, made on the third reading of the Thames Conservancy Bill in respect of this, and then I will ask you if you agree with it: "That the Bill be re-committed to the former Committee, and that it be an instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill for establishing distinct statutory Committees of the Conservancy Board to manage the upper river and the lower river (including the port and harbour), to define the limits within which the jurisdiction of such Committee should respectively extend, and to provide for allocating to purposes of the lower river, port, and harbour, the income arising therefrom." It divides the thing into two compartments?—Yes, all under one Board, with statutory Committees of that Board. I know Sir Thomas Sutherland very well, and have the highest opinion of his judgment, and perhaps he might be better able to judge of that than I can be; but I distinctly object, so far as I am concerned, to any divided responsibility.

4958. Sir Thomas Sutherland mentioned the upper part of the river?—Yes.

4959. By undivided responsibility and unity of management I apprehend that you mean all that concerns the port and trade of London?—I think so.

4960. You would put that all under one authority?—I would do exactly what you have at Liverpool with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. That has answered admirably. You have a body of men there that are beyond doubt very able and are doing very successfully with a very difficult time in the age of ports. It is a very hard thing to see our magnificent ports, built most expensively, being knocked to pieces because they are useless, owing to their size, but that is what is taking place. I think that the port which has common sense will face the difficulty at once, as a man would face a ship that is of no use when she ceases to pay—let somebody else buy her; but you cannot get somebody else to take your docks; you have to condemn them.

4961. Speaking with the authority that attaches to you, and with the experience you have behind you, you desire to put before this Commission your opinion that a Bill should be brought before Parliament dealing with these matters?—That is the case.

4962. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I suppose the evils you have been speaking of you know to be recognised by the docks in London?—I have a sort of sympathy for the docks because they get bullied by everybody and paid by nobody. I do not know that they deserve either. I do not know that they deserve the bullying, and I was going to say I am sure they do not deserve the paying, because they have not provided what the public want. It is a very serious thing for us as English people to see our dock system going back.

4963. It is not a matter of controversy, is it, that larger quays and better appliances are desirable at the docks? That is admitted on all sides, is it not?—Not only desirable, but essential.

4964. The difficulty is the difficulty of finance, is it not?—I know of no difficulty of finance where the port wants docks for these ships.

4965. Under the existing system?—I do not care what the cost is. I would say whatever the cost is, bring your port up to date. I suppose, of course, you will not pay too much.

4966. In the existing financial state of the docks the obstacle is the question of money, is it not?—I think the dock companies have found that out.

4967. I do not know whether you are making a recommendation, but of course we should like your opinion. Is your recommendation to place the docks under one management, a trust or a municipality?—The Port of London as regards its docks. If you have divided responsibility in the way in which Sir Thomas Sutherland mentions, I do not think you will get the same sort of working as you would get by putting it under one control. Whenever I take a man to do anything I let him have control of it, and when I find he is not able to do it I get somebody else, and I would do the same with this. I should think it would not take very much to buy up the docks. I do not know what the face value of them would be to-day, but I knew what it will be to-morrow.

4968. That is what you wish to advocate?—Certainly. I think you should modernise yourselves.

4969. What do you say as to the wharves?—Take them in. If you have the wharves loose I do not think you will get what you want.

4970. Have you considered the cost?—I do not consider the cost. I think the matter is so vital to London that the cost is a small thing. I do not think that you would pay too much, as I said before; I take it you will have some powers by which you will get what you want without paying too much.

4971. You have complained of the system of double pilotage?—I think it is a pity to change the pilot.

4972. The pilot comes in at the opening of the estuary and comes up to Gravesend and then another comes aboard?—Yes.

4973. Is that the custom?—It has been the custom.

4974. Do you know what the origin of that custom was?—No, but it is the custom to-day, and I think it is necessary that one pilot should bring the ship from Dungeness to where she is going to. You have to stop to get the pilot over the side and get the other pilot on board, and it all means a waste of time.

4975. With reference to the custom of Liverpool and London as regards unloading upon the quay it is natural that the shipowner should have his views upon that as a shipowner, but I wish you for a moment to speak divested of your character as a shipowner. Do you think the custom of Liverpool, that the ship's responsibility should end when she brings the goods up to the ship's rail, is the better one?—It does not end in that way at Liverpool. The ship lands cargo on the quay, and then the master porter takes it.

4976. When the cargo is landed on the quay all the sorting is done by the merchant, is it not?—No. In Liverpool we have an independent man called a master porter.

4977. But he represents the consignee?—Yes.

4978. And the consignee pays him?—Yes; he is a sort of man between the shipowner and the consignee.

4979. Practically the charge of sorting falls upon the consignee?—It does.

4980. You approve of that, I understand?—I think the system in Liverpool works very well. I have worked there for 40 years, and I have never had any difficulty with it.

4981. Provided you had sufficient quay space in London, would you wish that custom to prevail here?—That is the custom in Liverpool, but there again I do not believe in divided charges. I would rather have one charge to do the whole work, freight, master porterage, and everything else. A man should pay, say, 40s. a ton, and have nothing more to do with it. That is what I would prefer, but that would not be popular in Liverpool. I do that with some trades that I work in West Africa. We bring our cargo there; it is a very divided cargo; it has to go to a great many places. A man who ships 50 casks of palm oil by our steamer pays his freight on the bill of lading, and after that pays nothing more; I carry it without further charge. For instance, I bring my ocean freights free to Liverpool, and I make my local traffic pay for my through traffic; thereby I get a lot of through traffic, and I have brought the whole of the West African traffic to Liverpool. There used to be West African traffic to London.

4982. You have drawn a sharp contrast between the custom which prevails in London and the custom which prevails in Liverpool, that in one case the ship could sort the goods on the quay at her expense, and in the other case the consignee, through the master porter, sorts the goods on the quay at his expense. I want to know which system you approve of, and on what

grounds?—I think the Liverpool system is better, because the master porter is an independent man; of course, he is liable to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board under a licence.

4983. Is that your only reason?—I do not think that it makes very much difference. I would rather have the through and through charge.

4984. Does it not make any difference with regard to the more speedy release of the ship?—I do not think it does.

4985. As you have laid almost the whole weight of your evidence on the question of despatch, and you have illustrated the matter of despatch by the unloading, I thought you would probably think the question of unloading on the quay had a relation to the question of despatch?—Neither system would help you much in despatch. Give me the quay space and I will make the master porter place the cargo, as far as he is concerned, if he has got the space on the quay. But no system can deal with the cargo if you have not space to put it.

4986. Given ample quay accommodation you think it immaterial whether the sorting is done by the ship or by the consignee, is that it?—I think it is immaterial.

4987. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I gather you think that the extremely costly vessel, the cost of which is increasing, is too costly a storehouse to be kept lying idle with goods in it?—Certainly. I get so much a ton for taking my cargo from New York to London. The sooner I get rid of it the better. If I stay in London 14 days I do not get any more for it.

4988. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) We have had proposals of wharves on the River Thames. Which do you advocate, as a great shipowner—docks or wharves?—Would the wharf be accessible at all states of the tide?

4989. Just so?—That would be a very great point. If you can give me a quay in the river where the ship can lie alongside safely, and approach it at any state of the tide, that would be a better system than dock gates, where you have to wait for the tide. If you can get a jetty in the river that is approachable for the consignee and the consignee will take his cargo there, that is better.

4990. I am putting the main question: Would you as a shipowner prefer discharging and unloading in a dock or alongside a quay?—I do not object to it if there is sufficient space for the ship to lie. I would rather have a jetty, because you say I can go to it at any state of the tide.

4991. Have you calculated the cost and trouble of mooring the vessel, slackening the chains, and the wear and tear and danger of lying alongside a quay with a heavy rise and fall of the tide?—I do not think there is so much in that. With equal facilities I would rather go into smooth water in a dock, but the jetty system might be very useful. As regards slacking of chains and all that kind of thing, I could get to that jetty at any state of the tide.

4992. I want to get from you quite clearly whether you, as a shipowner owning large vessels, would prefer in the Thames a system of wharves or a system of docks?—They both have advantages.

4993. But I ask you which you would prefer?—Of course we work at jetties at other places. We work at a jetty in Hamburg, we work at a jetty in Rotterdam, and in all those places which are tidal harbours. We are working at a jetty in the Scheldt at Antwerp. *Mr. A. E. Jones.* 26 Mar. 1901.

4994. I simply ask you which you prefer?—I think certainly the Antwerp system is very good. I have been there very often, and seen the steamers come up at all states of the tide.

4995. (*Chairman.*) Antwerp you do not speak so well of in your evidence?—At Antwerp, owing to the large cargoes and the quay space, the consignee tries to protect himself by overside delivery. In that case you do not get your cargo away so quickly.

4996. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Why has not Liverpool developed more quays instead of going in for large docks?—Liverpool is rather difficult to work. There is very little water at low water. I do not think you could work in the river.

4997. Do you prefer docks or do you prefer jetties?—I think that the Mersey at Liverpool is a much more open river than the Thames. I do not think you could put a jetty in the Mersey as you could put a jetty in the Thames.

4998. It is a rather important case, and we wanted to get shipowners' opinions about wharves or jetties, therefore I wanted a decided answer?—I do not object to wharves at all. We work at wharves at all those places, and there is no difficulty. I do not think there would be any difficulty in London in working at wharves.

4999. (*Chairman.*) We may take it, to sum up the questions that have just been put to you, that from a practical business point of view your opinion is that apart from the question of cost, into which you naturally do not go, you are convinced that something ought to be done to the Port of London?—Most decidedly.

5000. Both as regards docks and wharves?—Most decidedly.

5001. And that, further, dealing only with what I may call the seagoing portion of the Thames, that is, the portion which is used by sea-going ships, your opinion is that the whole control ought to be in the hands of one authority?—I think so.

5002. That is to say, the Thames Conservancy, the Trinity House, or whoever they may be—vestries and so on—ought all to be grouped together under one head?—I would rather qualify that. I would not give the control to some incompetent body.

5003. I did not suggest that?—You said it might go to any particular body.

5004. I ask you whether it should be centralised really?—Yes. I think it should, but in Liverpool we get a very good class of men on the board. We have shipowners, or merchants, and leading citizens, who sit there for nothing. They give their time, and do not get anything for it.

5005. We must presuppose that the people are good people; but your evidence is that it ought to be under one authority?—I think so.

Mr. Thomas Riach Mackenzie called and examined.

5006. (*Chairman.*) You are general manager and secretary of the Clyde Navigation?—Yes. *Mr. T. R. Mackenzie.*

5007. How long have you held that position?—I have been secretary for eleven years. I was appointed general manager as well quite recently. There was no general manager in the early part of my connection with the Trust.

5008. You have already been good enough to supply us with answers to certain questions which were put to the Clyde Navigation?—Yes.

5009. We should like to hear from you a general statement with regard to the Clyde navigation?—A body of 25 gratuitous trustees, incorporated by Act of Parliament, manage the undertaking. The trustees are partly nominated and partly elected. The trust is not worked for profit. The Clyde trustees are the only navigation authority within their territory. Their powers include:—(a) Deepening, widening, and straightening the river; (b) its lighting and buoying; (c) the construction of docks; (d) the borrowing of money for works; and (e) the levying of rates on all vessels and goods. There have never been any municipal or other guarantee rates of any kind. The undertaking consists chiefly of (1) the improved waterway of the river Clyde, from Albert Bridge, about the centre of Glasgow, down to Newark Castle, near Port Glasgow, a distance of 18 miles, with the riverside quays, mostly in the city, over four miles in length, including both sides; (2) three tidal docks, namely, Kingston, the earliest, Queen's, the next, and Prince's the latest—having a total water area of 74 acres, a land area of 66 acres, and 4½ miles of quayage. There are no wet docks; (3) three modern graving docks, the most recently constructed being one of the largest in the kingdom; and (4) fully 200 acres of riverside land, owned and held by the trustees for dock extension, partly authorised, and in contemplation. The use of the waterway, quayage, and sheds is given by the trustees in return for the rates on the vessels and goods.

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Cranes, tramways, etc., are charged for at prescribed rates. The loading and discharging is not done by the trustees; nor are they storekeepers. The sheds are only for goods in transit. Glasgow is mainly a general port, but a considerable and developing mineral trade is also done. Last year the tonnage of vessels arriving at the harbour was 4,361,597, and of goods imported and exported 7,215,368. The Port of Glasgow, except for the competition of Greenock, 20 miles from Glasgow, and the Ayrshire ports, chiefly Ardrossan, has hitherto enjoyed immunity from competition. To this it may be largely ascribed that the trustees have been able to increase accommodation and reduce rates, and so make the port a success. The amount expended on capital account is £7,430,702. Of this £5,790,187 is borrowed from the public at fixed moderate rates of interest. Of the considerable balance of £1,640,515 nearly a million and a-half has been provided out of the savings of revenue. The revenue last year was £441,419, there being on the year's transactions a surplus of £42,237. With regard to the present constitution, this was created by the Clyde Navigation Consolidation Act, 1858. That Act vests the undertaking in 25 trustees as a body corporate. They are:—The Lord Provost of Glasgow, *ex officio*; 9 Town Councillors of Glasgow; and 15 members, "representative of the shipping, mercantile, and trading interests of Glasgow," namely, 2 chosen by the Chamber of Commerce, 2 chosen by the Merchants' House, 2 chosen by the Trades' House, and 9 chosen by the shipowners and harbour ratepayers. Sixteen are nominated trustees, that is, chosen by the Town Council, and the three bodies respectively; and the remaining elective trustees, that is, elected by qualified shipowners and harbour ratepayers. The term of office of the Lord Provost and Councillors is so long as they remain in office as such; of the shipowners and ratepayers' representatives three years; and of the six representatives of the three houses two years. All the trustees are eligible for re-election. The Lord Provost and Councillors are elected to the Town Council for three years at a time. Three of the nine shipowners and ratepayers representatives retire annually, and one each from the three houses; but there are year by year few changes—the members continuing in office for considerable periods. Last year it happened there were no changes at all. As regard the elective trustees, the qualifications of shipowners and ratepayers' trustees are:—(1) Ownership of 250 tons of shipping registered at Glasgow, or (2) payment of £25 a year of Clyde dues on ships or goods. The qualifications of an elector of such trustees are:—(1) Ownership of 100 tons of shipping registered at Glasgow, or (2) payment of £10 a year of Clyde dues on ship or goods. Trustees and electors must reside or have their place of business within three miles of the Parliamentary boundary of Glasgow. Agents within these limits paying the requisite amount of dues for principals outside are qualified as electors or for election as trustees. The poll at contested elections, which do not occur often, is taken under the Ballot Act, like a Parliamentary or municipal election, the voting being all in person, and not by proxy. The constitution of the trust prior to 1858 was as follows:—Down to 1808 the operations, commencing as far back as 1611, to form a navigable river and harbour were carried out exclusively by the magistrates and Town Council as the municipality. They had obtained an Act of Parliament in 1758, and another in 1770. In 1809 an Act was passed creating the magistrates and town councillors statutory trustees of the navigation, and authorising the transfer to them of the river and the then existing quay or harbour. The price paid was £17,115. The transfer was duly carried out, and the financial responsibility of the Town Council as the municipality then ceased. The magistrates and town councillors continued to be the sole statutory trustees from 1809 to 1825. Under an Act in the latter year the first change took place by "five other persons interested in the trade and navigation of the river and Firth of Clyde," being added to the statutory trustees, and directed to be appointed annually by the Town Council. This was the constitution from 1825 to 1840. The next change was made by an Act in the latter year. That Act altered the constitution by appointing to be the sole trustees for carrying into execution the Acts of 1758, 1770, 1809, and 1840, the Lord Provost and five Bailies of the city, the Dean of Guild, and Deacon Convener of the city, fifteen members of the Town Council, and the ten following persons who it was declared should not be members of the Town Council of Glasgow, namely: the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce of the city, three persons to be appointed by the Merchants' House of Glasgow, two to be appointed by the Trades' House, two by the Bailies and Birley men of the Barony of Gorbals, one by the magistrates and Council of the Burgh of Calton, and one by the magistrates and Council of the Burgh of Anderston, making the number of trustees 33. This remained the constitution till the passing of the Act of 1858. That Act admitted for the first time the shipowners and harbour ratepayers to direct representation. The subject of further changes on the constitution is being brought before Parliament this Session by a Provisional Order promoted by the Clyde trustees. It is proposed to admit six additional shipowners' and ratepayers' representatives, and the Provost and a Town Councillor of Renfrew. This will raise the present number of trustees from 25 to 33, as it stood from 1840 to 1858. This proposal is put forward by the trustees as the result of prolonged negotiations proceeding on a demand of the shipowners' and ratepayers' electors for additional representation, and under an agreement for taking over Renfrew Harbour. The Corporation of Glasgow have lodged a petition strongly objecting to any change on the constitution. The burghs of Govan and Partick, both closely adjoining Glasgow, the County Council of Lanark, and the Glasgow Trades' Council, all petition for representation. What the outcome of all this may be it is, of course, impossible to say. The Provisional Order proposes to extend the three mile limit, within which electors must have their place of business to a radius of 17½ miles from Albert Bridge, Glasgow; that is, reaching downwards in a straight line as far as the western limit of the Trustees' jurisdiction. This extended radius embraces the environs of Glasgow.

The Lord Provost is Chairman, *ex officio*. He alone, or in his absence, the chairman of a meeting of Trustees has a casting as well as a deliberative vote. The Deputy-Chairman is appointed by the Trustees annually. Ex-Lord Provost Ure, the present Deputy-Chairman, has held that position for the last fifteen years. The administration by the Trustees is mainly carried out through committees. Standing committees are appointed annually. They are the Committee of Management, being all the members of the Trust, and the Committees on Finance, Law and Parliamentary Bills, Works, Harbour, Ferries, Rates, and Stores. The Deputy-Chairman of the Trust is always appointed the Chairman of the Committee of Management. There are conveners of all the other committees. The Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Trust and of the Committee of Management are *ex officio* members of all committees. Committees are, as occasion arises, appointed by the Trustees for special purposes, and the standing committees appoint sub-committees from time to time. The whole Trust is, of course, the fountain of authority. The duties of the various committees are not prescribed in detail, but are indicated by their names. The Secretary brings the various items of business before the respective committees. The powers of the Committees are, in the main, deliberative and recommendatory, but their conclusions are almost always adopted by the Trustees. The Committee of Management meets as often as necessary, not always once a month. The other standing committees meet all, at least, once a month, and mostly twice and sometimes oftener. The quorum of the Trustees and Committee of Management is nine, of the committees three. An ordinary meeting of the Trustees is held monthly, at which newspaper reporters are present, when the business of the various committees during the month comes up for approval, and other competent business is transacted. The executive staff is composed of the following chieff officials: General Manager and Secretary, Treasurer, Engineer, Harbour Master, Collector, Traffic Superintendent, and Mechanical Engineer. The officer who is General Manager and Secretary attends all meetings. The Treasurer is attached to the Finance Committee; the Engineer and Mechanical Engineer to the Works Committee; the Harbour Master and Traffic Superintendent to the Harbour Committee; and the Collector to the Rates Committee; the Traffic Superintendent is also attached to the Ferries Committee. The Law and Parliamentary Bills Committee is attended, as required, by the solicitor, who is not an official of the Trust, but a lawyer in private practice. The General Manager has the oversight of all the officials and departments, and of all the affairs of the Trust. The officials work in co-operation with him. The chief duties of the

various officials are defined. Their work consists in carrying on the ordinary business of their departments, and such special work as the Committees have in hand from time to time. The initiative in important matters is taken by the Trustees, but the General Manager may, of his own accord, bring up any subject for their consideration, or that of Committees; the officials report to the General Manager on any questions arising in or affecting their departments. The whole head office, or indoor staff, numbers 60. There are about 1,700 out-door employees connected with the various departments, casual workmen employed in the construction of new works being carried out by the Trustees not included. As to powers of the Trustees, these have been obtained from time to time under numerous Acts of Parliament. Briefly stated, these powers are: (a.) Works. (1) The deepening, widening, and straightening of the river until a depth of at least 17ft. at neap tides is obtained. (2) The buoying and lighting of the navigation. (3) The construction of riverside quayage, tidal basins, and graving docks. (4) The equipment of the harbour with sheds, cranes and other appliances, and tramways. (5) The maintenance of the whole undertaking. (b.) Borrowing of money for works. By the Act of 1858, £1,504,000 was the maximum at that time authorised, and it has been increased from time to time till it is now seven and a quarter millions. (c.) Rating. The levying of dues on all vessels and goods, and for the use of cranes, tramways, graving docks, and ferries not exceeding prescribed maxima.

The tidal range of the river, taking the six summer months, averages about 11ft. 4in. at springs and 8ft. 11in. at neaps. The greater part of the navigable channel of the river has a depth on the centre line of not less than 22½ft. at average low water of ordinary spring tides, corresponding with one of 32½ft. at Port Glasgow, and 33½ at Glasgow, both at high water of spring tides. There is not less than 19ft. at any part of the centre line. The existing width at bottom of the navigable channel varies from 300ft. at the Port Glasgow or sea end, with a depth of 20ft. at low water, to 170ft. at the Glasgow or upper end, with a depth of 19ft. As showing the capacity of the access from the sea, and dealing with the year ending 30th June last, the tonnage of the largest vessel that entered the port was 6,725 tons nett, or over 10,000 tons gross. The maximum draught inwards was 26ft. 6in., and outwards 25ft. 8in.. I would like to qualify that a little. That was not a trading vessel. She was built on the Clyde, and came up to our graving docks, and went out again, but she was not a trader. However, I have looked into this matter a little further, and I can tell you of a vessel called the "Enrique," which entered, drawing 27ft. 6in. That was a trading vessel. No vessel of any description up to the maximum draught grounded or was detained over the tide for want of water in the river. We have liners trading to America, the gross tonnage of which is 4,686. These generally require from 25ft. to 26ft. of water, and we are able to give it. The number of vessels piloted drawing 22ft. and upwards was:—

INWARDS.

	feet.	*feet.*	*feet.*	*feet.*	*feet.*	*ft. in.*
Draught - -	22	23	24	25	26	26 6
Number - -	100	90	73	31	3	3 0

OUTWARDS.

	feet.	*feet.*	*feet.*	*feet.*	*ft. in.*
Draught - -	22	23	24	25	25 8
Number - -	136	69	28	3	3 0

With regard to the intended depth and width, the depth is being improved so as to have a navigable channel of not less than 22½ft. throughout at low water of ordinary spring tides. The bottom width in course of formation ranges from 500ft. at the sea end, gradually narrowing to 120ft. towards the upper end of the navigation. As to the past progressive improvement, in 1755 the river was in a state of nature, there being in the 5½ miles from Glasgow downwards to Renfrew 12 shoals, four of them with each only 18in. at low water and one with only 15in. The first Parliamentary authority for deepening the river was obtained in 1770, empowering the Town Council to make the river from Glasgow to Dunbuck Ford, a distance of about 12 miles, at least 7ft. deep at neap tides. The work was begun in 1772. The next step towards further deepening was taken under the Act of 1809, authorising at least 9ft. at neap tides from Glasgow to Dumbarton Castle, a distance of about 14 miles. The third advance in deepening was authorised by the Act of 1825, sanctioning at least 13ft. at neap tides from Glasgow seaward to Port Glasgow, a distance of about 18 miles. The next Act dealing with the improvement of the river was that of 1840, authorising the deepening of the harbour and river throughout to at least 17ft. at neap tides, and laying down lines for future widening. With the exception of the Acts of 1857 and 1873, sanctioning special widenings at detached places, the Act of 1840, as continued by the Act of 1858, contains the authority under which all deepenings and widenings have since taken place, and is still being carried out. It appears from what has been stated that the first deepening authorised was 7ft., the second 9ft., the third 13ft., and the fourth and last 17ft., and that under these powers the navigable channel of the river has been mostly, and is in course of being altogether, deepened to 22½ft. The progressive deepening of the river and harbour may be seen from the following figures:—

In 1821 the greatest draught of any vessel was 13½ feet.

,, 1831	,,	,,	,,	,,	14	,,
,, 1841	,,	,,	,,	,,	17	,,
,, 1851	,,	,,	,,	,,	18	,,
,, 1861	,,	,,	,,	,,	19	,,
,, 1871	,,	,,	,,	,,	21	,,
,, 1881	,,	,,	,,	,,	22	,,
,, 1891	,,	,,	,,	,,	23	,,
,, 1900	,,	,,	,,	,,	26½	,,

In the beginning of the nineteenth century high water took place about two hours later at Glasgow than it did at Port Glasgow. By the improvements up to 1837 this interval was reduced to one hour twenty-three minutes, and by the continued operations on the river the interval is now only one hour. Since 1755 the low water line has fallen at Glasgow the astonishing amount of about 8½ft., all due to the deepening and improvement of the river, this amount diminishing in a seaward direction. Since 1755 the bed of the river has been lowered as follows:—

At Glasgow - - -	20 to 29	feet.
,, River Kelvin - -	29	,,
,, Renfrew - - -	28	,,
,, Newshot Isle - -	27	,,
,, Erskine Ferry - -	24	,,
,, Dunglass Castle - -	29	,,
,, Dumbuck Ford - -	27	,,

and the general result is that the bed of the river from Glasgow to Port Glasgow is now practically level. With regard to the sea channel; from the lower end of the Clyde Navigation to the lower end of Greenock Harbour, a distance of four miles, a navigable channel has been dredged by the Clyde Lighthouses Trustees, with a depth of 23ft. at low water of spring tides, a minimum width on bottom of 300ft., and side slopes varying from 23ft. in depth for a minimum width of 100ft. on either side.

As to the harbour and docks: The limits of the harbour embrace about two and a-half miles of the river extending from Albert Bridge to the River Kelvin, with its quayage, and Kingston and Prince's Docks entering off the south side, and Queen's Dock off the north side. The harbour is divided into upper and lower. The upper harbour is the part between Albert Bridge and Glasgow Bridge, a distance of 800 yards. It has a quay 500 yards in length on a part only on the north side. The depth at low water is only about 10ft.; the headway of the centre arch of Glasgow Bridge is 18ft. at high water and 28ft. at low water. Thus the upper harbour is only available for small vessels. Still, there was a gross revenue derived from it last year of £3,164. The lower harbour embraces the river between Glasgow Bridge and the Kelvin, with the three docks: (a) The

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riverside quayage, occupying the whole of the north and most of the south side, extends to 6,284 lineal yards. The earliest record of the length of quay is in 1792, when 120 yards were added to the then existing length of 262 yards, making 382 yards. In the extension from time to time of the riverside quayage, four shipbuilding yards had to be acquired at considerable cost. The gross revenue from the riverside quayage last year was £149,030. (b) Kingston Dock. Although the extension of the quays along the riverside sufficed for the development of trade for many years, the idea of a dock was early entertained; for so far back as 1806 Telford reported on the subject, which continued to be discussed from time to time, until in 1840 an Act was passed authorising the construction of Kingston Dock. I should here explain that this and the other two docks are really tidal basins, there being no gates or locks, and that the question of gates or no gates was carefully discussed many years ago, when the conclusion come to was that tidal basins were preferable, which has been the form of construction deliberately adhered to since. Although the Act was passed in 1840, Kingston Dock was not constructed and opened till 1867. It has 5½ acres of water space, 830 yards of quays, and has a depth of about 10ft. along the face of quays and 14ft. at centre of dock, both below low water. The quays are formed of timber wharfing; but the entrance, 60ft. wide, is built with masonry, and is spanned by a single leafed passenger and vehicular swing bridge, worked by steam power, for which no toll is charged. The gross revenue from the dock last year was £9,138. (c) Queen's Dock. The Act for Queen's Dock was passed in 1870, but it was 1877 before it was opened for partial use, and in 1880 it was wholly available. This dock is on the north side of the river; it has a water area of 33¾ acres, 3,334 yards of quays, and has 20ft. depth at low water. The entrance is 100ft. wide; spanned by a single-leafed passenger and vehicular swing bridge, worked by hydraulic power, for which no toll is charged. There is an outer or canting basin 1,000ft. long by 695ft. wide, and two inner basins, the one 1,866ft. long by 270ft. wide, and the other 1,647ft. long by 230ft. wide, with a pier between them 195ft. wide. The quays are all of masonry, the greater portion being founded on concrete cylinders. The revenue from this dock last year was £107,434. (d) Prince's Dock. The Prince's Dock was authorised by the Act of 1883; but its form, before more than the entrance was partly constructed was materially altered by the Act of 1890. It was utilised in sections as completed, the first portion being occupied by shipping in 1892 and the last portion being ready for traffic early in 1900. This dock, which is on the south side of the river, has 35 acres of water and 3,737 yards of quays. In arrangement it consists of an outer or canting basin 1,450ft. in length by a width of from 500 to 680ft., and three basins each 200ft. in width and 1,200, 1,460, and 1,500ft. in length respectively. The north basin has a depth of 20ft., the centre and south basins 25ft., and in the outer basin the depth varies from 20 to 28ft., all below low water, the latter depth being given along west quay, which is devoted partly to the fitting out of the largest class of vessels, and accordingly is provided with a steam pillar crane capable of lifting 130 tons. The entrance is bell-mouthed in shape, with a minimum width of 156ft., and it is not crossed by a bridge. The quay walls are of masonry and concrete, all founded on concrete cylinders. This dock is being rapidly occupied. The gross revenue from it already last year was £100,293. When the dock is fully utilised I expect on a moderate estimate that we will get at least another £60,000 a year out of it. Except where open quays are necessary and more convenient, all the quays are provided with modern sheds. They are almost all single-storied sheds and 60ft. wide; but at Prince's Dock there are five two-storey sheds, one 1,664ft. long and 70ft. wide, and four of 1,152ft., 1,252ft., 1,442ft., and 1,476ft. long respectively and 75ft. wide. The sheds are usually placed 15 to 20ft. back from the face of the quay. The total floor area of the single storey sheds is 24 acres, and of the two-storey sheds at Prince's Dock 22½ acres, together 46½ acres. The quays are well provided with cranes. There are five steam cranes chiefly for lifting engines and boilers in fitting out new vessels, two of 130 tons lifting capacity, one of 75 tons, one of 60 tons, and one of 50 tons. For coal shipping there are four 20-ton hydraulic and two 25-ton steam cranes, and a 20-ton hydraulic hoist is about to be placed at Prince's Dock. At the General Terminus Quay the Caledonian Railway Company have five steam cranes for this purpose. For the ore trade there are 23 steam and seven hydraulic cranes. For general traffic there are, besides those above mentioned, nine steam cranes and 24 hydraulic, ranging in lifting capacity from 15 tons to 35cwt. In some cases of appropriated berthage firms had been allowed by the trustees to provide and use their own cranes, which are all steam portable. Stevedores are allowed to use their own steam winches on the quays, and in many instances vessels' own gear is used. At the two-storey sheds, Prince's Dock, the trustees have provided shoots and lowering appliances for transferring goods from upper floors. The shoots are more in favour. They are very admirable appliances, I can assure you. I was in Liverpool the other day, and I mentioned to my friends there how popular the shoots are for lowering goods from the upper storey.

5010. Do you happen to know whether they are in use at Liverpool too?—I do not think so. At any rate, not to any extent if they are. For the weighing of goods, weighing machines are placed by the trustees around the harbour, and of the 30 machines 19 of them are suitable for railway wagons also. All the quays are provided by the trustees with water-supply pipes, the water passing through meters from the city mains; and the trustees have men in attendance to supply water to vessels at prescribed charges. The quays are equipped with hydraulic capstans where necessary, and planks, stages, and rhones also are supplied at prescribed charges. The harbour and dock tramway system, which belongs wholly to the trustees, is connected with the Caledonian, North British, and Glasgow and South Western Railways.

5011. With regard to the tramway system, I suppose you refer only to the dock tramways?—Yes, it is not the Corporation tramways. When I speak of tramways, these are our own tramways. Haulage is not done by the dock authorities. The railway companies run over and use the tramways, at a fixed uniform rate of toll of one halfpenny per ton, irrespective of description of goods or distance. The railway companies fix the charge to the public for the whole distance, including terminals.

5012. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you had any difficulty at all in working or allowing tramways to be used by the railway companies?—None whatever. The Clyde Trustees, do no haulage of any sort. Railway companies come on with the trains and work under regulations.

5013. Is that all under one superintendent?—Yes.

5014. And is the superintendent employed by you or by the railway companies?—By us; within our own territory we are the authority.

5015. And the railway companies come into your territory, but obey the orders of your authority?—Yes.

5016. Have they running powers?—Yes.

5017. But they do not control?—They do not control.

5018. And there is no friction?—No. I would like to explain here that the very moderate sum of one halfpenny per ton was introduced by the trustees in order to encourage railway traffic. We have very considerable powers under the Acts of Parliament to charge higher rates; but, in order to encourage railway traffic, we reduced it to this low figure. The harbour is provided with three graving docks alongside of each other on the south side of the river. Two of them enter off the harbour, and the third one is entered from Prince's Dock. The first dock was authorised in 1868, and opened in 1875, the second dock authorised in 1873, opened in 1886; the third authorised in 1890, opened in 1898. The leading dimensions of the docks are as follows:—

	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.
	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.
Length of floor - - - -	551 0	575 0	880 0
Width of entrance at top - -	72 0	67 0	83 0
Depth of water on sill at high water springs.	22 10	22 10	26 6

No. 3 dock has a pair of inside gates, whereby it can be divided, and so form an outer division 460ft. in length, and an inner of 420ft. The timber trade is specially provided for at two places. At Yorkhill, on

the north side, there are 285⅔ lineal yards of quayage, and 14 acres of storage ground. At Shieldhall, on the south side of the river, there is a wharf 381 yards long, and 22 acres of storage ground. Deals are frequently discharged at the ordinary berths, but not for storage there. With regard to cattle lairage; the foreign animal trade is provided for at Yorkhill. There are 177 lineal yards of quayage, and an area of 23,596 square yards leased to the Corporation of Glasgow, who are the local authority under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts. The local authority have erected there extensive lairage and other buildings. Irish cattle are landed at the ordinary berths of the Channel steamers. As to maintenance; for the maintenance and repair of the undertakings, there is a large staff of artizans and labourers. The trustees have a workshop on the riverside seven miles below Glasgow, in charge of the mechanical engineer, for the repair mainly of the dredging plant and ferry boats. From 300 to 400 men are employed there. There are also harbour workshops, under the engineer and mechanical engineer, with a staff of about 250 men, for the repair of cranes, capstans, sheds, wharves, etc. Several classes of material are provided under annual contracts, fixed after public competition, and other things are ordered from time to time after offers have been invited from the leading firms dealing in the material required. With regard to the dredging department; the dredging and maintenance of the navigable channel and of the harbour and docks is undertaken by the Trustees. They have a dredging department, under the engineer, with plant and employees. The cost of the dredging, so far as applicable to new works, is paid out of capital, and, so far as applicable to maintenance, which is the chief dredging expenditure year by year out of revenue. You can easily see that dredging expenditure is a very large item in the expenditure of the Clyde Trustees year by year. The river is practically altogether canalised the whole length of our jurisdiction, so that it always has to be kept up artificially. It really has been created.

5019. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) How far does that go?—To Garrochhead, near Arran, on the way from Millport, going towards Arran.

5020. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Quite out to sea?—Quite out to sea. There is a great depth of water there. There was a good deal of agitation before that site was fixed. Until this change was effected we used to put our dredging into Loch Long, quite in the upper regions of the Firth, with villa residences on either side. The result of that agitation was that we were taken out of there, and we have now gone to Garrochhead; but we have introduced very much larger hopper barges, with the result that, although they go a longer journey, it practically comes out about the same.

5021. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) It is not any more expense?—It does not turn out to be any more expense.

5022. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) What do the larger ones carry?—1,250 tons. I will hand in particulars of the dredging for the last 10 years, giving the quantities of silt and new material, and of dredging for third parties, and the total cost per annum.

(*The Witness handed in a Table giving particulars of the dredgers belonging to the Trustees of the Clyde Navigation. See Appendix, 14th day. No. 6.*)

(*The Witness also handed in a Table of the quantities and cost of dredging and depositing by the Clyde Navigation Trustees' Plant during ten years ended 30th June, 1899. See Appendix, 14th day. No. 7.*)

The schemes of the city for the purification of the river, which are well advanced, are expected to considerably reduce the amount of dredging required. The dredgings, since 1893, have been deposited at sea, at a site arranged with the Board of Trade, 46 miles from Glasgow Bridge.

(*The Witness handed in a Map showing the old and new depositing places.*)

As to workshops, the Trustees have repairing workshops on the riverside at Dalmuir, about seven miles from Glasgow, occupying about seven acres, and employing about 350 men. A chief part of the work there is the repair of the dredging plant. With regard to finance, down to the present time the Trustees have been authorised to borrow for capital purposes seven and a quarter million pounds, of which, after deducting the capitalised value of feu duties and sinking fund, one million is unexhausted. Of the five and three-quarter millions borrowed, nearly two millions are permanent funded debt, bearing interest at rates varying from four per cent., the maximum allowed by Statute, to three per cent.—the greater part being at the latter rate—or an average overhead rate of £3 6s. 9½d. per cent. The other three and three-quarter millions are on terminable loans for periods of years, bearing interest at an average overhead rate of £3 4s. 2d. per cent. The funded debt and the terminable loan are thrown together. We borrow at an average rate of 3¼ per cent. Under the Statute the trustees may fund all or any part of the whole money borrowed or authorised to be borrowed, and the practice has been to fund debt when rates of interest were easy. All borrowed money, whether funded or repayable, irrespective of date of borrowing, ranks *pari passu*. The security is the rates, works, lands, and property of the trustees. As regards the sinking fund, it did not come into operation until 1884, all savings of income prior to that date being applied direct for new works. The rate of the sinking fund in any year is the average of the annual surpluses of the preceding ten years if there is as much surplus, and if not, the amount of such surplus. No sum exceeding £5,000 is allowed to remain invested or deposited longer than six months without being applied in paying off debt. By the sinking fund £311,600 has been applied in extinguishing debt since 1884. The total revenue last year was £441,419, the expenditure £399,182, and the surplus £42,237. I should like to explain with regard to the revenue. When we are adjusting our surplus we invariably give capital the benefit of the doubt. We do not charge capital excessively. We had rather put it to revenue than otherwise. That applies very specially to dredging. The leading sources of the revenue may be grouped as follows:—(1) Dues on vessels; (2) dues on goods; (3) miscellaneous. Of the total revenue from vessels and goods about one-third is derived from vessels and two-thirds from goods. The main items of ordinary expenditure are:—Interest and feu duties, £200,000; harbour maintenance and miscellaneous, £160,000; dredging, about £37,000. An auditor of the accounts is under the Statute appointed annually by the Sheriff. The progressive financial position of the Trust at each decade since 1850 was:—

Year.	Total Debt.	Revenue.	Ordinary Expenditure.	Surplus.
	£	£	£	£
1850	678,659	68,875	51,301	17,574
1860	1,195,655	97,983	83,974	14,009
1870	1,834,667	164,093	124,106	39,987
1880	3,802,456	223,709	215,126	8,583
1890	4,614,748	356,202	326,787	29,415
1900	5,790,187	441,419	399,182	42,237

The annual accounts, with balance-sheet, are available to the public.

5023. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) In this comparative table does the "ordinary expenditure" include what you set aside for the sinking fund?—No. The surpluses that you find noted in the last column are the surpluses struck before the sinking fund is paid.

5024. (*Mr. Peel.*) Is that all applied to the extinction of the debt?—No; I will give you an illustration. In the year ending 30th June, 1900, the surplus was £42,236, and that was applied in this way: £35,238 went to the sinking fund, and the balance of £6,900 was carried to revenue reserve account. Then I will also hand in a table giving particulars of the gross revenue and expenditure for each of the last ten years in the form of the Harbour return (No. 30), in Local Taxation Returns 302 III., 1899.

(*The Witness handed in a Table showing the gross revenue and expenditure of the Clyde Navigation Trustees for the ten years ending 1899. See Appendix, 14th day. No. 8.*)

The capital expenditure on works, lands, plant, etc., stands at nearly seven and a half millions. The difference between that sum and the amount borrowed, namely, nearly one and three-quarter millions, has almost all been provided out of surplus revenues. The principal items of capital expenditure will be found in the balance-sheet. Then as to rating, the existing rating powers of the trustees on vessels and goods are those conferred by the Act of 1858.

5025. (*Chairman.*) Are all vessels liable for dues?—Yes; all vessels of every description are liable for due.

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The tonnage on which the dues are based is the net register tonnage. A separate rate is levied inwards and outwards. The rate is the same whether the vessel is loaded or in ballast. The geographical divisions are foreign, coastwise, and local. (1) Foreign:—The rate on a vessel arriving from or departing to any place out of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is 4d. per ton each way. (2) Coastwise:—The rate on a vessel arriving from or departing to any place in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is 1½d. per ton each way. (3) Local:—The rate on a steam vessel arriving from or departing to any place within a line on the Firth of Clyde between Ayr and Campbeltown is ¾d. per ton each way. Then as to launching rate, the rate on all vessels coming into the river or harbour from any shipbuilding yard eastward of the western limit of the trustees' jurisdiction is also ¾d. per ton. For the various rates mentioned a vessel may remain in the harbour 24 lawful days; but for every week thereafter an extra charge is made of 1d. per ton. All these rates are maximum rates, and are the rates actually levied since 1858 and at present. In addition to the above rates on vessels, power was given by the 1858 Act to levy a wet dock or tidal basin rate of 6d. per ton each way. This rate by the Act of 1868 was, as regards the tidal basins, reduced to 3d., and authority was also given to wholly remit the charge. This left untouched the rate for wet docks, but there is, as yet, no such dock. A discretionary power of exemption was conferred by the Act of 1899 in the case of vessels coming in with cargo and leaving again without having discharged any part of the cargo. A few such instances have occurred, and the dues on the vessels outwards have been remitted, the inwards rate on the vessels being levied. Vessels between the sea and places on the river above the trustees' jurisdiction, merely passing through, are under the Act of 1858 exempt from rates. In actual fact, this exemption had never much significance. Such instances were limited, by the depth of the upper reaches, to vessels of not more than a few feet draught. They were never frequent, and have ceased now. From what has been stated it will have been seen that all vessels of every description and size are liable for, and pay, Clyde dues. The exemptions are a trifle in money. They are quite nominal. Then as to goods. All goods conveyed upon or shipped or unshipped in the river or at the harbour are liable for dues. It will be observed that these words are notable, inasmuch as they cover goods not only shipped or unshipped, but also "conveyed upon." The dues are those specified in the detailed schedule annexed to the Act of 1858. They range from 3d. per ton to 1s. 6d. coastwise, and from 4d. to 2s. foreign. Coastwise and foreign are the only classifications. Unenumerated articles are by the 1858 Act put at 1s. 6d. coastwise and 2s. foreign; but the Act of 1868 provides that such articles are to be rated in accordance with the rate in the schedule on the articles nearest in description and value. The rates actually levied are in many instances considerably below the statutory maximum rates. The statutory rates and the actual rates levied at present are shown in contrast in a comparative rates book. No reduction or increase on existing rates can be made unless special notice of the proposed change is given to the trustees, and unless the resolution to make the change is carried by a majority of two-thirds of the trustees present at the public meeting of the Trust at which the business comes up. Notwithstanding the wide powers of rating goods just described, there are certain exemptions, viz.: (1) Goods not unshipped contained in a vessel coming to complete its loading; (2) goods not unshipped contained in a vessel coming to partially discharge; (3) goods not unshipped contained in a vessel coming to and departing from the harbour without breaking bulk; (4) goods transhipped either directly or after lying on the quay, but without having been removed therefrom, the rate one way only (always the higher) being charged; (5) goods in vessels using the upper harbour, which is the small portion between Glasgow Bridge and Albert Bridge, available for small vessels only, may in the discretion of the trustees be allowed to pass for half dues, provided the vessels ply only inside the cloch, which is about seven miles below the trustees' jurisdiction, and in actual practice only half rates are charged. Under Section 37 of the Clyde Act of 1825, total exemption from rates on both vessels and goods in all time coming between the Forth and Clyde Canal, and the lowest stage was given by payment to the trustees by the canal proprietors of a redemption price of £2,061. Under Section 108 of the Clyde Act of 1858 the trustees paid the magistrates and Town Council of Dumbarton £5,000 as the price for the extinction of the right of exemption from payment of harbour rates at Glasgow enjoyed by the resident burgesses of Dumbarton. Although in detailing them, the exemptions on goods look somewhat formidable, they are not so in fact, as they amount to a very small percentage of the rates levied. Of course, there is the universal exemption at all British ports of Government vessels and Government stores.

5026. Now will you tell us about the stages of the river?—There is a provision in connection with the levying of dues on both vessels and goods, contained in the Act of 1858, dividing the river into three stages, viz.:—First stage:—From the upper limit of the navigation down to Renfrew. Second stage:—From Renfrew to Dalmuir Burn. Third stage:—From Dalmuir Burn to the lower limit of the navigation. The corresponding rates are:—First stage: Two-thirds of the full rates. Second stage: One-sixth of the full rates. Third stage: One-sixth of the full rates. The stages are shown on the map of the river. The practical operation of the stage rate is this:—The most of the traffic is between Glasgow Harbour, which is in the first or upper stage and the sea; hence the full rates are incurred and levied. Between the second or middle stage and the sea, the traffic is not of much account, being, in fact, confined to rafted timber for the shipbuilding yards and lightered traffic to Paisley. The Clyde Trust Revenue for the middle stage last year was £744. Between the third or lower stage and the sea the traffic is to and from Bowling and to and from Dumbarton, and the revenue last year for it was £864. Traffic arising and terminating in a stage is practically nil, and between the one stage and the other is infinitesimal. This is a very important point. Although the trustees' authorised dock at Clydebank is in the middle stage the levying of the full Glasgow rates is sanctioned by Parliament. The miscellaneous rates are not of much account. They are the usual things that are found at all harbours—graving docks, cranes, tramways, and so on. As to the collection of rates, the dues on vessels are paid by the shipowners or agents. The dues on goods imported and exported are sometimes paid by the shipping agent and sometimes by the owner of the goods, as may be arranged, but, in practice, mostly by the consignees, except in the case of the channel trades, where the goods are carried on through freight inclusive of Clyde dues. The tonnage of goods is checked by a staff of weighers in the service of the trustees, and where the goods are handled by licensed weighers and measurers, they supply returns. In practice no difficulty is experienced in the prompt collection of the dues on vessels and goods and all other rates, and scarcely any bad debts are made.

5027. Have you anything to tell us about reductions of rates?—The trustees have never during the last 40 years increased the rates on any article, but have from time to time made reductions. Special reductions were made during the last four years on the rates on iron, coal, grain, timber, cement, etc., representing to traders on the goods imported and exported last year a saving of over £28,000.

5028. Do you find that those reductions have benefited your trade?—Yes, very much.

5029. Will you give us the number and tonnage of vessels entering and leaving your port last year?—The number and tonnage of vessels entering and leaving the port last year are as follows:—

	Number.			Tonnage.		
	Coastwise.	Foreign.	Total.	Coastwise.	Foreign.	Total.
Inwards:						
Sailing Vessels -	473	74	547	56,640	69,125	125,765
Steam Vessels -	14,159	1,193	15,352	2,659,601	1,576,231	4,235,832
Total - - -	14,632	1,267	15,899	2,716,241	1,645,356	4,361,597
Outwards:						
Sailing Vessels -	444	102	546	33,725	82,730	116,455
Steam Vessels -	13,518	1,592	15,110	1,979,288	2,303,853	4,283,141
Total - - -	13,962	1,694	15,656	2,013,013	2,386,583	4,399,596
Grand Total -	28,594	2,961	31,555	4,729,254	4,031,939	8,761,193

5030. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Do these ships include all vessels, both foreign and coastwise?—Yes. These vessels include everything that uses our navigation. The passenger traffic now from, say, Broomielaw navigating our river is very limited indeed. Most of the railway steamers ply from the lower ports; they do not come from Glasgow. We still have the "Columba," the "Lord of the Isles," and so on.

5031. And the boats going to the West Highlands?—Yes. I will hand in a table of the number and tonnage, on the graded scale, of vessels entering the harbour during the past five years.

(*The Witness handed in a Table of Statistics of vessels entering Glasgow Harbour for five years ending* 1900. *See Appendix, 14th day, No.* 9.)

5032. (*Chairman.*) Now, will you tell us with regard to the goods?—The goods dealt with at the Port are of a very miscellaneous nature, the principal, according to the revenue therefrom, being fine goods, iron and steel, grain, timber, coal, ores, provisions, oils, and fruits. I will hand in an account showing the quantities of the various articles imported and exported for the last two years.

(*The Witness handed in a specific account of the quantities of the various articles imported and exported at the Port of Glasgow for the two years ending 30th June,* 1900. *See Appendix, 14th Day, No.* 10.)

I will also hand in a statement showing the progress of the harbour from 1860 to 1900, giving the length of quays in each year, the tonnage of vessels and goods, and the total revenues.

(*The Witness handed in a statement showing the progress of Glasgow Harbour from* 1860 *to* 1900. *See Appendix, 14th Day, No.* 11.)

Now I come to the question of the conduct of traffic, and will deal first with traffic under the Harbour Department. The Harbour Department is under the charge of the Harbour Master, who has 25 outdoor deputies stationed at various places. The berthing of vessels and the laying down of cargo for export is regulated by this department, and also the use of the graving docks. A special feature of the working of the harbour is that established regular lines, both foreign and coastwise, have berthage, with corresponding shed accommodation, specially allotted to them for exclusive use. Thus when, from the nature of their business, regular lines require and are able to occupy, berthage all the year round, they apply for and receive during the pleasure of the trustees, an allotment of berthage specially for themselves. The giving of appropriated berthage is authorised by statute, and is found to be a convenient arrangement in conducting the business of the Port. These allotted berths yield large revenues from the ordinary dues on vessels and goods, but no special rent or other charge is made for the accommodation. In this manner there are allotted berths as follows:—

Channel trades	-	-	2,565 lineal yards.
American lines	-	-	2,895 ,, ,,
Other oversea lines	-	-	1,999 ,, ,,

The coal and ore trades are specially accommodated on the south side of the harbour at the general terminus and Prince's Dock, and on the north side at Queen's Dock, about 2,686 lineal yards of quayage in all. The timber trade, both as regards berthage and storage, is specially accommodated at Yorkhill and Shieldhall, the total warfage being 667 yards. The foreign animals traffic is specially accommodated at Yorkhill, where the local authority (the Town Council of Glasgow) have lairage buildings. For casual traders nearly one-half of the whole quayage, measuring about 6,944 lineal yards, is left unappropriated. Then I will next deal with the conduct of traffic under the traffic superintendent's department. The traffic superintendent and his staff see to the timeous removal of the goods from his quays. That is always a delicate operation. The statutory time cargo may remain on the quay is 48 hours after discharge, four days being allowed for discharging; but on application by the consignees this time may, at the option of the trustees, be, and is in practice, extended as follows, namely:—

Above 100 tons, and not exceeding				200 tons,		48	hours.
,,	200	,,	,,	,,	350	,, 72	,,
,,	350	,,	,,	,,	500	,, 96	,,
,,	500	,,	,,	,,	650	,, 120	,,
,,	650	,,	,,	,,	800	,, 144	,,
,,	800	,,				168	,,

If more than four days are taken to discharge a corresponding deduction is made from the scale of extended time for removal of the cargo. No charge is made till the extended time is exceeded, when what is known as quay rent is incurred till removal. The quay rent is a penal statutory charge of 2s. 6d. per hour for the first 24 hours, and 5s. for every hour thereafter, be the quantity large or small. The statutory charge is really 5s. per hour for the first 24 hours, and 10s. for every hour thereafter, but in point of practice the charge that we have created under a bye-law is what I have stated. Then I qualify that again by saying that the charge is invariably largely modified, on application, in every case by the Rates Committee, so that becomes really a nominal levy. For export cargo six days is the time for laying down goods before shipment. Although limited storage in sheds and on the open quays is sometimes allowed, and for short periods in special circumstances, the trustees have no warehouses in the ordinary sense, nor do private parties have them on the quays, the sheds being only intended for goods in course of import or export. The department has charge of the timber yards, the assignment and use of the cranes, and the regulating of the traffic on the tramway.

5033. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you much timber?—We have a considerable trade in timber. We have a large yard at a place called Yorkhill, and we have a very special yard at Shieldhall, which is exclusively devoted to the timber trade. It is rather lower down the river, perhaps about two miles from Glasgow Bridge. Then with regard to the loading and unloading of vessels, no labour for loading or unloading vessels is undertaken by the dock authority, except cranemen and coal porters attending the coaling cranes. The shipowner acts as master porter, making his own arrangements and charges. Stevedores, measurers, and weighers are licensed by the trustees under the statute, and no one is allowed to act as such without a licence unless he is in the regular employment of the shipowners in any of these capacities. The charges for the work are not regulated by the trustees. Under this method ample free competition exists. The work of loading and discharging at the harbour proceeds day and night as may be found necessary. It may be mentioned that a vessel was loaded with 8,400 tons of cargo and bunker coal in 56 hours by one appliance, an average of 150 tons per hour. There are instances of steamers in the American trade carrying 4,000 to 5,000 tons of grain and general cargo discharging in from 36 to 48 hours; and of steamers carrying the same quantity of ore discharging in 30 hours. Then, going to the question of policing, lighting, and cleansing, the harbour is policed by the marine division of the City of Glasgow. The total number of constables engaged at the harbour is 150. The lighting and cleansing of the harbour are done at the expense of the trustees. The trustees in respect of doing these services are allowed, under the Glasgow Police Act, 1866, an abatement of 4d. per £ on the gross annual valuation. Gas is still the chief illuminant at the harbour, but electric lighting is being gradually introduced, and is already provided at Prince's Dock and general terminus for the mineral quays by an installation belonging to the Trustees, and at Queen's Dock mineral quays by current purchased from the city. The cleansing is done by the city cleansing department, under arrangement with the trustees, at cost price. As to ferries and harbour steamers, below Glasgow Bridge cross-river communication is by means of ferries. These are both passenger and vehicular, and belong to and are worked by the trustees, with the exception of a vehicular ferry at Renfrew belonging to the Renfrew Town Council, and one at Erskine belonging to the late Lord Blantyre's successor. The charges for the trustees' ferries are considerably below the maximum authorised by statute, and are very moderate. In 1883 the trustees instituted, under statute, a system of harbour passengers steamers; known as "Cluthas." These cluthas carry from 235 to 360 passengers, and ply between Victoria Bridge and Whiteinch, a distance of three miles. There is a uniform charge of 1d. for the whole or any part of the distance. These systems of cross ferries and harbour passenger steamers are endeavoured to be conducted so as to meet their own expense. With regard to pilotage, pilotage of all vessels exceeding 60 tons net register is compulsory within the 18 miles of Clyde Trust jurisdiction, but is non-compulsory below that limit. The pilotage authority is called the Pilot Board. It is composed of 16 members, namely: Eight chosen by the Clyde trustees, of whom the Lord Provost of Glasgow for the time being is one; five chosen by the Greenock Harbour Trustees, of whom the Provost of Greenock for the time being is one; and the remain-

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ing three are the Provosts of Port Glasgow, Dumbarton, and Rothesay, *ex officio*. The full extent of the Board's jurisdiction is the river and Firth of Clyde within a straight line drawn due east and west from the southernmost point of the island of Little Cumbrae, about 45 miles from Glasgow. The constitution and powers of the Board are contained in the Clyde Navigation Act, 1858 (138-143), and the Merchant Shipping Acts. They license pilots and grant pilotage certificates, and have a separate code of bye-laws relative to pilots and pilotage. The pilots are of two classes, namely, river pilots and deep-sea pilots. The river pilots are for the compulsory district, the deep-sea for the non-compulsory. The business of the Board is conducted by committees of management at Glasgow and Greenock, each dealing fully and exclusively with its own district, that of Glasgow being the compulsory and of Greenock the non-compulsory waters. There is a pilot master at Glasgow, with a deputy at Greenock, for the river pilots, and a pilot master at Greenock for the deep-sea pilots. There are fixed rates of pilotage. Ten per cent. of the river pilots' earnings is retained, out of which the expense of administration is defrayed, and the balance goes to the river pilots' superannuation fund. The good government and proper navigation of vessels between the western limits of the Clyde Navigation Trustees' jurisdiction and the western limits of their own jurisdiction is within the scope of the Board's powers; and under power granted by the Clyde Navigation Act of 1887 they have a separate code of bye-laws regulating the approach of steamers to the passenger piers on the Firth. The Board is in every respect a pilotage authority within the meaning of the Merchant Shipping Acts. The secretary of the Clyde Trust is by usage secretary of the Pilot Board. A copy of the bye-laws of the Board, including the pilotage rates, has been forwarded to the Commission. As to towage, the harbour authority does not provide towage. The tugs belong to private companies, who make their own charges, the harbour authority not interfering. These charges are shown on the card of towage rates, also forwarded. I understand that regular traders get considerable reductions on these rates, but that is a matter of private arrangement between them and the towing companies. Then I come to the harbour extension schemes. At present a new dock is in course of construction at Clydebank, for the accommodation, mainly, of the coal and ore trades, which will relieve the harbour further up, and set the mineral quays there free for general traffic. This dock, sanctioned in 1899, is on the north side of the river, about six miles below Glasgow Bridge, and will have about 17 acres of water area, and 1800 lineal yards of quayage. The entrance will be 200ft. wide; the outer basin 600ft. by 600ft.; the inner basin 1,700ft. long by 300ft. to 200ft. wide; the total area, including land and water, will be 60 acres. The Parliamentary estimate, including land, is £515,000 odd. In all, 60 acres of land are held by the Trustees in connection with the dock. In the present Session of Parliament, the Trustees ask sanction for the transference to them, of powers obtained by the Renfrew Town Council in 1899, to make a dock there about 5½ miles from Glasgow Bridge, on the south side of the river. In the first instance, about 50 acres of land will be utilised for this dock, and my Trustees have the option for three years of taking 60 acres additional riverside ground for extending the dock. Besides the areas at Clydebank, other riverside lands have been purchased by my Trustees, and are held in reserve for dock and wharf purposes. On the south side there are 134 acres at Shieldhall and Shiels, and on the north side there are 21 acres at Merklands, a little below the harbour.

5034. (*Chairman.*) Have you any remarks to make with relation to the specific account that you have put in?—No, except that it gives all the details, if anybody likes to look over it.

5035. We should like to know if you are of opinion that public ownership of docks is preferable to private ownership?—I should fancy that depends very much on the circumstances of the particular locality.

5036. As far as your own experience goes?—Glasgow, I think, is an instance of a successful harbour authority, originally exclusively municipal and then gradually modernised by the admission of other interests—shipping and ratepaying interests.

5037. Would you say that the Clyde is a case of a dock ownership transferred from a municipality to a Trust?—That is so.

5038. And that Trust has been found beneficial?—Very. It is not at all for profit. All that the Clyde Trustees have to do is this: they have to provide facilities for the business, and make sure that they get sufficient revenue to pay the interest on the capital borrowed; and they have always been able to do that very successfully.

5039. The navigation of the River Clyde by this Trust has been based solely on its own credit, has it not?—That is so. That is its special feature. There is no guarantee rate or municipal rate, or anything of that sort. But when you mention that, I may say as an illustration of the benefit that would accrue to a Trust like the Clyde Trust if there were a guarantee rate, in the first place that would make a Trust investment, and, in the next place, the Trust would be able to borrow more favourably. A case in point at the moment in Glasgow is this: the Municipality is advertising for loans for four years at three per cent., and in all probability they will get the money. We are advertising for money which we require at the term, and we have to offer 3½ per cent. So that, if you have a guarantee rate behind you it is always an advantage.

5040. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Even if there is a good margin you think it is an advantage to have it because of the possibility of your falling back upon it?—Yes. Mind you, I am not suggesting for a moment that Glasgow needs to make, or ought to make, any move in the direction of getting a guarantee rate, because we have always had such ample surpluses, and always been able to pay our way so thoroughly that we have never really seriously entertained the idea.

5041. (*Chairman.*) Will you describe to us the system of lighterage which is in force?—We have extremely little lighterage on the Clyde—almost none at all.

5042. Are any charges levied upon the lighters?—Yes; we have no dumb barges. We have nothing of that kind.

5043. Are any charges levied on the goods delivered into lighters?—Yes; but you will observe that when goods come in if they are put into lighters and taken away, then the dues are not charged on the goods both ways. They get exemption one way, whichever pays us best. If they come in foreign we charge the foreign rate, and when they go out by lighter the goods are exempt; but the lighter always has to pay.

5044. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Where do the lighters go?—There are almost none of them. They go, for instance from Glasgow to Greenock, or they might go to Paisley.

5045. There is no lighterage above Glasgow Bridge, is there?—No, there is no traffic at all above Glasgow Bridge.

5046. It is quite unlike London in that way?—Yes, it is altogether different.

5047. And you have no canals coming into Glasgow like the Regent's Canal in London?—No, there is nothing of that sort. Of course, there is the Firth of Clyde Canal, but it is down low, at Bowling.

5048. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you light the Clyde and its estuary up to the limits you have given in your statement?—Yes.

5048A. Down to Little Cumbrae?—No. The Clyde Navigation Trustees' jurisdiction ends at Newark Castle, that is just immediately above Port Glasgow. Our pilotage is quite a different thing altogether.

5049. You light and buoy for the whole of your territory?—Yes, for the whole of our jurisdiction of 18½ miles.

5050. And outside in the Firth of Clyde?—The Clyde Lighthouse Trustees come in. They come in immediately below us.

5051. Are they a separate body?—Yes. They are a body very much like the Clyde Trustees. They are both elective and nominated.

5052. At any rate, they are two separate authorities?—Yes.

5053. And outside that again comes the jurisdiction of the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners?—Yes.

5054. Is there any inconvenience from having two authorities for lighting and buoying?—Not in our circumstances. Greenock and Port Glasgow and all the other different bodies on the Firth would be required to be represented on any Board dealing with the navi-

gation below our own jurisdiction, and that is why you have this separate trust, the Clyde Lighthouse Trust.

5055. Are the Clyde trustees represented on the Trust?—Not officially. For Glasgow, for instance, on that Board there are six elective trustees. These gentlemen are really shipowners, as I see by the list. Then for Greenock you have three elective trustees; for Port Glasgow you have two of that class; then you have trustees appointed by public bodies, for instance the Merchants' House at Glasgow one; he is nominated. The Glasgow Chamber of Commerce appoints two, and the Greenock Chamber of Commerce appoints two. Then you have a third class, trustees *ex officio*: the Lord Provost of Glasgow, he is chairman of the trustees of the Clyde Navigation; the Provost of Greenock, as chairman of the Port and Harbour of Greenock; the Provost of Port Glasgow as chairman of the Port Glasgow Harbour Trust, and Sir Michael Robert Shaw Stuart, of Argowan House; that is a proprietary interest.

5056. That body deals with the lights below your jurisdiction, does it?—Yes, the buoys, the removal of wrecks, and the dredging. They made the deep-water channel right along the front of Greenock so far as it is necessary, and they are bound to maintain it.

5057. Are they bound by statute?—Yes. They levy dues, but the dues, owing to the tremendous tonnage of shipping passing there, are extremely light. They are only ¾d. a ton on foreign shipping, and the half of that for Glasgow, and so well off is this body that they have been able from the beginning of this year to make a further reduction of 25 per cent. So that in no sense does lighting become in any way burdensome.

5058. To what depth do they dredge their channel within that jurisdiction?—23ft.

5059. Not more than 23ft.?—No; that channel was imposed by Parliament; it is several years ago, and people were not looking forward then to the great size and draught of vessels that we now know we have to provide for. I would like to say, so far as the Clyde Trustees are concerned, that although they have not formulated any special scheme of widening and deepening beyond what I have mentioned here, they are certainly keeping their minds on this—that they must look forward wherever they can to making a navigation from bank to bank of 600ft. and a depth greater than what we are proposing, of 22ft.

5060. Do you mean the bottom width?—No; 355ft. at the bottom and 600ft. at the top.

5061. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is there any authority that has to do with the navigation below Greenock?—It is open firth; it is what we call a pilot board. The pilot board is exclusively the navigation board; it licenses the pilots.

5062. But parts of the channel require to be attended to, do they not?—No; not below Greenock. They require lighting and buoying, but the Lighthouse Trust goes down as far as Cumbrae.

5063. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) In order to carry this out, you will not only have to deal with your own authority, but the authority lower down?—It would be of no use our doing a thing of that sort without getting an improved arrangement for the lower reach as well.

5064. Are the charges made by these authorities separately?—The Lighthouse Trust collect their dues and expend them.

5065. They are not made into a consolidated rate?—Nothing of that kind.

5066. You said that the Clyde trustees did not warehouse goods?—That is so.

5067. Are the goods taken by cart and lorry to private warehouses in and about Glasgow?—Wherever they require to be stored they are.

5068. I suppose a great deal goes away by train?—No; the great proportion of our traffic is cart traffic; the rail traffic is not very large.

5069. Where is it carted to—for consumption in Glasgow?—Largely, I think.

5070. Or for warehousing?—There are warehouses owned by public companies in Glasgow, but I do not think a great deal of it is warehoused. Of course, grain is warehoused, and things of that sort. These are the figures:—Irrespective of minerals and pig-iron, the proportions of general goods dealt with by rail and cart are—by rail 272,380 tons, that is 5·9 per cent; by cart 4,341,814 tons, or 94·1 per cent., showing that it is really a cart traffic.

5071. Is that inward and outward traffic?—Yes, traffic of all classes.

5072. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But the railway would have a larger share of the mineral traffic?—Yes; all the mineral traffic is done by rail over those tramways.

5073. When the transfer took place from the Corporation to the Trust, was the Corporation in the enjoyment of an income from the docks which was sufficient for all purposes?—Yes.

5074. Were the rates at all called upon?—The rates were never called upon.

5075. Never in the history of Glasgow?—Never in the whole history of the Trust.

5076. But in the history of the Corporation?—No; the Common Good, as it is called in Glasgow, was responsible if there had been any shortage, but there never was.

5077. As they proceeded with these important dredging operations, they only proceeded at a rate having regard to the traffic, that it was not to be a burden which they could not bear?—Quite so.

5078. It was in proportion to the traffic of the port?—It was very gradual.

5079. They had the rates behind them at the time they started?—Oh, no.

5080. Were the rates of the Corporation never chargeable?—Never, from start to finish.

5081. Or the Common Good?—That is merely some estate or means that the city have which they can devote to general purposes; it was merely a security. The rates of the city were never at any time pledged for the Clyde Navigation Trust, and I think from the very beginning the Trust was called the "Parliamentary Trustees of the Clyde Navigation." It was always to that extent separate from the municipality.

5082. At some time or other, was not the Corporation responsible? Were not they the undertakers?—To the extent which I have said—the Common Good of the City.

5083. But nothing further than that?—Nothing further than that.

5084. Is there any borough rate in Glasgow—a rate for the benefit of the Corporation?—Of course, all taxes in Glasgow are to carry on the Municipality of Glasgow in its different aspects.

5085. That would be the Common Good?—No; the Common Good is a very peculiar thing. It is a Scotch estate, as it were. Our Royal Burghs had given to them grants of land in the olden time, and these became very valuable, and were feued out, and income was derived from them. That is the Common Good, something of that kind. That is an illustration of what the Common Good is; it is nothing derived from taxation. Would the Chairman allow me to say that, while I have said what I have said about there being no financial obligation on the part of the Corporation of Glasgow with regard to the Clyde Trust, all honour is due to the early pioneers of the Trust, who were the Corporation of Glasgow, and who to this day take the deepest possible interest in it, and are still largely represented on it, and who would be extremely sorry to see themselves deprived of that representation.

5086. (*Mr. Ellis.*) With reference to your evidence as to the constitution of the Clyde Navigation, let us get this clearly. When the Corporation of Glasgow obtained this representation of nine out of 25 no responsibility with regard to the property of the Corporation of Glasgow was carried over to the new body?—None whatever.

5087. You are going for some changes in the constitution. Are we to take it that from 1858 to the present time there has been no application made to Parliament for any changes in the constitution?—That is so, and, as far as I am aware, no agitation either. The agitation has been quite a recent thing.

5088. Has it been perfectly satisfactory?—Yes.

5089. The Trust have had full powers?—Yes.

5090. Have the outside public been satisfied?—There has been no notice, at any rate, of dissatisfaction.

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5091. The procedure adopted is by Provisional Order. Is that under the new Scotch Procedure Act of 1899?—Yes.

5092. You prefer that to a Private Bill Committee?—I would not like to express any opinion on that point. We have had no experience of it yet.

5093. For reasons sufficient to yourselves you have chosen to go under that?—No, we had no choice in the matter.

5094. I will drop that point if that is your view?—We allowed the Chairmen of the Houses to do just exactly as they liked. We made no representation either one way or the other with regard to whether the inquiry should proceed in London or Glasgow.

5095. Has the Inquiry been opened?—Not yet.

5096. You referred a moment ago to outside agitation. Has that application arisen in consequence of something outside—some desire of other localities, for instance?—No, not localities—shipowners and ratepayers, who provide the income of the Trust, claim that they should have a larger representation than they have at present. They have nine out of 25. As to the outcome of the agitation and negotiations, the Clyde Trustees by a majority vote decided to agree to the admission of six extra shipowners and ratepayers.

5097. Then the Burghs of Govan and Partick, the County Council of Lanark, and the Glasgow Trades Council all petition for representation?—They all want to get inside the Clyde Trust.

5098. One can understand outside bodies. What is the Glasgow Trades Council exactly; is that what we understand in London as an association of trades' unions?—I do not think it is a corporate body.

5099. Is it, if I may use the term, capital or labour?—Labour.

5100. The Clyde Navigation Trust proposes to extend the three-mile limit for electors. Does it make any other proposal?—In what respect?

5101. As to further powers of any kind?—I think not.

5102. It is merely to extend the area?—At present it is a very limited area; it is only three miles outside the Parliamentary boundary, and in order to take people in directly who really do business with the port, and not to compel them to be represented by the agency vote, it has been thought to be a very wise arrangement to take the limits of our own territory and a circle round.

5103. It is very much like Glasgow extending its borders for this purpose?—Yes, the Port of Glasgow is doing so.

5104. It is a question of area; it is not a question of further powers?—It is not a question of powers at all; it allows a man within that area to be his own representative.

5105. Is the Provisional Order confined to that simple matter of extending the area?—No; the Provisional Order deals in the main with the transfer of the dock to the Clyde Trustees, and with the constitution of the Clyde Trustees in so far as the admission of additional members is concerned. This extension of the circle within which the electorate is to exist is incidental to the constitutional change.

5106. What I want to get at is this:—Is the body being recognised in any way as regards powers?—No; nothing of that kind.

5107. It would be merely added to it if that were carried?—With regard to the extension, I should like to make it clear that the only point is this. A man who at present is outside the three-mile limit, can only be represented as an elector by means of an agency vote. This enables all people residing or having business within the extended area to be their own direct representatives.

5108. Now passing for a moment to the accounts. I think your capital expenditure up to the present time is £7,430,702?—Yes.

5109. £126,772 of which has been spent within the year?—That is so.

5110. You made a remark a little while ago about charging the dredging to revenue rather than capital. I see in the sum of capital expenditure for last year there appears to have been a sum of £7,000 only for dredging?—Yes.

5111. Is that all that goes to capital account for dredging?—In that year.

5112. In the revenue account you appear to have charged for dredging £36,956?—Yes, the difference of the whole account.

5113. Therefore all that justifies your remark that you rather load revenue than capital?—Yes.

5114. Those two amounts added together make the whole of what you have spent in dredging during the year?—That is so.

5115. There is an amount in your revenue account on the credit side for water, which I do not quite understand. It is £7,284; what does that mean?—We get water from the Corporation of Glasgow, and we sell it out again to the vessels; this is the income for that.

5116. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You make a modest profit?—A modest profit.

5117. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Speaking generally, the accounts show a very healthy state of things financially?—That is what we think in Glasgow, at any rate.

5118. I am putting that to you as a question?—Yes, I think so.

5119. You have no difficulty in raising money?—None.

5120. (*Mr. Peel.*) With reference to the Traffic Superintendent's Department, you say that if more than four days are taken in discharging the corresponding deduction is made from the scale of extended time for removal of the cargo. The shipowner, you said, later on, acts as Master Porter and attends to the discharging of the vessel?—Yes.

5121. Therefore if he takes more than a certain time, the consignee is penalised; he has less time for taking cargo away?—As a rule you never find any delay on the part of the shipowner in discharging his vessel; he is very prompt.

5122. He might, perhaps, be unable to get the labour or something of that kind; there might be some difficulty, might there not?—I do not think so. We try to equalise matters as fairly as possible between the shipowner and consignee.

5123. Then for export cargo, you say six days is the limit of time for laying down goods. What charge is made for that?—Nothing. Supposing you know a vessel is coming in, the charterer goes to the Harbour Master and says such and such a vessel will be in to load up on such and such a date, and the cargo is allowed to be put down six days in advance, by degrees, and she gets her berth as soon as she arrives.

5124. And if it is longer than six days it is charged for?—No, we simply do not allow it in the working of the harbour.

5125. Is that for laying down on the quay?—Yes, for export.

5126. In sheds, too?—Yes.

5127. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) What distance do your dredging operations extend to?—18½ miles.

5128. Do you dredge for the whole of that 18½ miles?—Yes, the whole of it.

Mr. Douglas Owen called and examined.

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5129. (*Chairman.*) You are Secretary of the Alliance Marine and General Assurance Company, Limited?—Yes.

5130. You have written several works, I believe, upon shipping, dock and port facilities?—Yes.

5131. And you have given considerable attention to the subject-matter of the present Inquiry?—That is so.

5132. You have also, at the request of Lord Rothschild, visited and reported upon the dock facilities at various foreign ports?—Yes.

5133. You have visited Liverpool, Bristol, Antwerp, Bremerhaven, Bremen, Hamburg, and Copenhagen?—That is so.

5134. Will you tell us what your opinion of the

position of London as a port is; do you think that it has arrived at a state when some remedy ought to be taken?—I think so, decidedly.

5135. Your opinion is that the conditions have changed?—The conditions have changed very rapidly of late, and will change more.

5136. Do you point out that the convenience of situation remains the same?—Yes.

5137. While the absence of competition and the fitness of the river and docks are no longer what they were?—That is so. The permanence of the convenience of situation will not of itself suffice. It must go in conjunction with the absence of competition and the fitness of the river and docks. As regards absence of competition, it is out of our power to prevent the new competition which has arisen out of altered conditions which London has been, and must be, powerless to influence or, at any rate, to control. The fact, looked in the face, is very grave for London. It is therefore doubly necessary that, as regards the fitness of river and docks, London should be beyond criticism. As regards absence of competition, formerly ships used to come to London, the principal market, and discharge there. Then their cargoes were sent across to Antwerp, Rotterdam, Hamburg, etc. As regards Antwerp, the abolition of the Scheldt dues at once made the port a competitor of London. Steamers went to Antwerp to discharge instead of to London. At Hamburg, Rotterdam, etc., competition set in with Antwerp, and now all are competing one against the other, and all with London. Vessels go direct to these ports, huge German cargo vessels, an entirely modern creation, and also British ships. These foreign ports are bursting with prosperity. Antwerp is turning the trade from her doors, and is about to add 1½ miles of new quay frontage. The same story is true as regards Hamburg, etc. They have stolen the trade which should have come to London. They are spending lavishly to improve their harbours; they are dredging feverishly and adding dock upon dock, getting bigger quay frontage.

5138. Is that a fact undisputed?—That is a fact.

5139. Could you enlarge on it, and produce any proofs?—Yes; I can produce some proof, I think. I will make a note to do so, but, in what I have said, I really have not done the subject full justice. They are going to add to the quays and make new docks, I believe.

See 5181.

5140. You say that Antwerp and Hamburg have taken trade which would otherwise come to London?—Undoubtedly.

5141. You tell us that the big ships now dread London?—Yes, they do dread London. I think, perhaps, that what I am saying rather relates to the future when ships will get bigger, than to the immediate present. I do not think that the condition of London has done any harm to big ships at this stage.

5142. You tell us there is competition going on at Liverpool and Southampton?—Yes.

5143. Your suggestion being that the trade, in the future, will be carried on by big ships?—Yes; and that London is becoming unfit for big ships.

5144. Will you give us your idea as to the general fitness of the ports?—This question of fitness divides itself under two heads. First of all, the fitness of river approach, and then the fitness of dock accommodation and of the dock system generally. I do not think I need say more than this, the tendency is to build ships bigger and bigger, and they inevitably will be built bigger and bigger until they are restricted by the size of the port that they have to visit. No doubt, if London is not made sufficiently deep, it will check these big ships that would come here, and there will be a tendency for them to go elsewhere.

5145. You do not go so far as to say that the mischief has already been done?—No, I do not; I do not think it.

5146. You tell us that you complain of nothing practical having been done to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission of 1894?—I feel very strongly on that; it is a very discreditable state of things.

5147. Have you any theory or proposals as to the raising of the necessary funds?—I suggest that the funds should be provided by those who will most benefit by their outlay. Principally and first come the consumers; next the shipowners, and finally the nation at large. The whole nation is interested in the maintenance of the Port of London.

5148. Would you prove that so as to make, for instance, Southampton and Liverpool agree? You say the whole nation is interested in the maintenance of the Port of London?—Yes; surely, whether people of the nation live at Southampton or Liverpool, London has always been the great port of the Kingdom; and it is in the interest of every Englishman that London should maintain its pre-eminence; I only mean it in that sense. As regards the nation, a lump sum or an annual contribution could be paid out of the national purse. As regards consumers, a toll or tax could be levied on the value of all goods coming to the port. It could be easily collected by a special Customs entry Stamp, to be affixed to every entry form. Taking 1,000 farthings to the £, and the London imports at £160,000,000, £160,000 would be raised by a stamp at a farthing in the £ on imports. Such a tax would be practically costless to collect, and would be absolutely unfelt by consumers. Similarly this would be the case with exports. In case of need, direct transshipment goods could be exempt.

5149. You have perhaps heard the evidence of Mr. A. L. Jones?—Yes; I was present, and I listened to it all.

5150. Would you agree with what he told us as to what we might call the "big ship" question?—Yes.

5151. Are ships relatively cheaper the bigger they get?—Yes. This means the cutting out of the smaller ships.

5152. How is that, will not the smaller ships remain for coasting?—They will, of course, always act as ferry boats to carry goods from port to port; but I am speaking rather of over-sea traffic. There must be always small vessels for small purposes.

5153. You tell us that the only limitations to be imposed on the growth of ships are the ability to find cargo at the loading ports, and the depth of the ports?—Yes. The principal European ports of the future must be the ports which can take the big ships. The trade will go in the big ships as far as it can be carried, and the smaller ships will have to do the distribution, as at present. Unless London can take the big ships they will go to Antwerp, Southampton and Liverpool, and these ports will then supply London. London, with its large population behind it, must always be a big port, but it may have to get its trade from better ports by short voyage vessels instead of direct. The effect of this on London will be that, instead of getting her cargoes at the lowest cost of freight and insurance, London will have to pay, in addition to the freight and insurance to the port of discharge in the big ship, the freight and insurance from the port of discharge to London in the coastal or cross-Channel ship; and, of course, the expenses of double handling. This is what London has got to face. It may be said, surely this is looking rather far ahead. Yes, but if this principle had been acted on half or a quarter of a century ago, things would not now have arrived at their present pass. It seems, then, to come to this, that the port of the future will be the port which can give the greatest satisfaction to the owners of big ships. Shipowners will not send their vessels to a port which obstructs or even imperils their ships and delays them, unless paid extra to do so. The practical result will be that lower freights will be quoted to popular ports. In these days, 2s. 6d. a ton more or less in freight may easily decide which port a ship shall be ordered to. The port which shipowners begin to hate is already in a perilous condition.

5154. Do you think they prefer Liverpool or Antwerp?—They greatly prefer Liverpool or Antwerp, and much as they dislike Hamburg, they would as soon send their ships to Hamburg as to London.

5155. What are the reasons for disliking Hamburg?—The reason they dislike Hamburg is, first of all, its geographical situation; and the river is bad, especially in winter, when it is particularly bad. The biggest ships, certainly most of the big ships, have to lighten about a couple of hours below Hamburg. Of course, that is very much against the convenience of shipowners; they dislike that. In winter, too, the ice is a very serious objection. Then over and above that, some shipowners complain that they are practically blackmailed by the cargo people in Hamburg. There is a certain fixed rule regulating, in the case of certain ships, the amount of discharge per hour, and although the ship may be capable of discharging the cargo with her own cranes very much faster, they

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say, "No. Although you could get on quicker, you will have to wait for us or pay us for taking delivery quicker."

5156. Now what do you say as to London's sorts of trade?—There are four sorts of trade: (1) Destination, local consumption trade; (2) inland or coastal trade; (3) Continental transhipment trade; (4) oversea transhipment trade, for instance, the East or Australasia, via London to United States.

5157. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You make no mention of the export trade?—No; I simply had the import trade in my mind. Of course there is the export trade. Broadly stated, London's local consumption trade is secured to her, and probably this is the bulk of the trade of the port. So long as the local demand exists the trade must come to supply it. There is, however, always the danger, however remote, that local needs may be supplied through other ports. There is no doubt at all that a great deal of overseas produce is now transhipped to us from Antwerp and Hamburg, which formerly we used to receive direct from the East. Very much of this comes up the Thames in Channel or North Sea steamers.

5158. (*Chairman.*) What do you say with regard to inland or coastal trade?—Produce comes to London for the Midlands, for Bradford and other places. If it cannot come in the big ships of the future it will go to Southampton, Liverpool, or Antwerp. Already Liverpool is bringing wool from Australia to Liverpool, and thence by rail to Bradford, which used to come to London and go to Bradford by rail or coastwise. Bradford buys in Australia, and only gets her wool via London because, and so long as, London is a convenient port. In this sense London is not a market.

5159. Have you any remarks you would like to make with reference to the Continental transhipment trade?—No; I do not wish to say anything special about it.

5160. Then with regard to the oversea transhipment trade?—Considerable cargo comes to London from Australia and the East to be put on board steamers for America. This trade will come to England in the cheapest, that is the biggest, ships. If London cannot take these ships, the trade will go to Liverpool or Antwerp, and the transhipment will be made there. I have no doubt that large shipments from the East and Australia to America are in fact now made through Hamburg and Antwerp instead of through London.

5161. What do you suggest against the possibilities which you have foreshadowed under those four headings, Destination trade, inland or coastal trade, Continental transhipment trade, and oversea transhipment trade?—The first thing must be to make the river fit for the biggest ships. The second to remove the obsolete laws and customs which saddle shipowners with cargo charges on shore, thus disgusting the shipowners, and at the same time putting it out of the power of dock companies to earn any income on the goods so handled. I will explain this presently. Shipowners dislike the port, and with the competition of other ports, English and Continental, what it is, the position is full of gravity. It is said that it will cost £2,000,000 to bring the river up to date. Whatever the sum, £2,000,000 or £4,000,000, we should spend the money without hesitation. We ought to spend lavishly and at once. I should like to compare the conditions of London in former times. There are three kinds of ports: (1) Land carriage, as, for instance, Liverpool; (2) Water carriage, as, for instance, London; (3) Mixed carriage, as, for instance, Antwerp. That is as viewing them from within. Seeing them from without I should classify them as: (1) Destination port, for example, Liverpool; (2) Distribution port, for example, Copenhagen; (3) Mixed destination and distributing port, as, for instance, London. Ships carry to Liverpool cargoes wanted by cities back of Liverpool; to Copenhagen cargoes wanted by cities of the Baltic littoral, and by Scandinavia, as well as by Danish ports. Formerly London was a distributing and collecting port, as being the world's trade focus, the world's market. The cargoes came to the biggest market. The Low Countries and the Continent bought in London and sent goods to London for shipment. London was the "Goods Exchange" for Europe to a large extent. Foreign produce formerly was largely a prohibitive luxury only available to the few. Foreign ports had no use for shiploads: they wanted parcels; shiploads came to London. The development of production, cheapening of transport, abolition of duties, increase of population, spread of wealth, and the introduction of steam factories, altered the situation. The Continent became able to swallow whole shiploads, but Continental ports being undeveloped and unhandy, and the force of ancient usage being very strong, cargoes continued to come to London. In 1863 the abolition of the Scheldt dues threw open Antwerp, which at once began to compete with London. The Suez Canal was opened, trade increased enormously, and ships began to be ordered, with full cargoes, to Antwerp. The new departure extended to Hamburg, Rotterdam, Havre, and other places, and all these ports began competing furiously with one another, and all with London. Moreover, the practically new ports of Marseilles, Genoa, and Trieste now intercept cargo which formerly passed through the Straits of Dover, and these ports are greatly developing. This competition, powerful as it is, is still in its infancy. Continental ports are spending lavishly on improvements, and already British shipowners prefer Antwerp to London, and would as soon go even to Hamburg as to London. It seems inevitable that the business of London as a port of distribution will decline.

5162. Then do you say that trade is not being driven to the Continent?—No; I think it is nonsense to say that trade is being driven to the Continent. I say it seems inevitable that the business of London as a port of distribution will decline. The altered conditions are drawing trade to the Continent, and will continue to do so. Trade is drawn to the Continent, not driven from London. I think I am right in saying that the Chamber of Commerce says that bad management has driven the trade from London, and they say that is the sole, or at any rate the chief, explanation. I do not think so at all. My opinion is that the docks have very little to do with it. The reason is that the ships carry the trade direct to the Continent. Formerly this was impossible. Goods arriving in London which are taken to wharves or warehouses pay no dock charges at all.

5163. Do you know that that is really the case?—That is the case; that is what is ruining the docks. As it stands, the wharves can underquote the docks. Consequently, if goods are driven straight to the Continent, it is because, not merely the docks, but the wharves and the private warehouses are too dear. Therefore, if there be any blame it rests as much on the wharves as on the docks. My belief is that there is no blame either to the docks or to the wharves. Conditions have changed, adversely to London. I should sum it up with regard to distribution and general transhipment by saying that London is losing its supremacy, and will lose it more and more. London no longer holds the whole pack of cards. I think it is a serious position for London. Then as regards the prosperity of London, I say it is the magnitude and increase of the trade necessary to London which is largely responsible for the lack of enterprise under which the port is suffering. The port was sure of its trade, of which competitors could not rob it. The Continental ports were all in competition one with the other. They have gone ahead with extensions and improvements, while London has remained stationary, and now Antwerp has in popularity outstripped London. English shipowners prefer going to Antwerp. I repeat that this development of the Continental ports is being pushed forward with the utmost vigour. I will hand the Commission some tables which have been kindly supplied to me by the Board of Trade.

(The Witness handed in a table of the tonnage of sailing and steam vessels which entered and cleared (with cargoes and in ballast) ports of the United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, and Belgium, in the years 1875, 1885, *and* 1898. *See Appendix,* 14*th Day. No.* 12.)

I compare the years 1875, 1885, and 1898, to show the growth of the national trade comparatively in the cases of the United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, and Belgium. Comparing 1898 with 1875, the United Kingdom has increased 96 per cent., Germany 156 per cent., Holland 270 per cent., and Belgium 239 per cent. And whereas in 1875 the united trade to ports of Germany, Holland, and Belgium was only 44 per cent. of that of the ports of the United Kingdom, in 1898 it has become 67 per cent. by steady growth.

5164. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) The absolute tonnage of the United Kingdom is as great as the increase in the other three countries together. Is not that so?—We have increased 44,000,000 tons, and they have increased 41,000,000 tons.

5165. It is the tonnage, not the percentage, that you

are dealing with?—Yes; your criticism is perfectly correct. Then I have another table taken from the Board of Trade "Merchant Shipping" returns, showing how the steam tonnage of the different States mentioned has grown, comparing 1898 with 1870. English tonnage has multiplied itself 5 times; German tonnage has multiplied itself 12 times; Dutch tonnage has multiplied itself 10 times; Belgium tonnage has multiplied itself 9 times.

(The Witness handed in a table of the steam tonnage which entered and cleared (with cargoes and in ballast) ports of the United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, and Belgium, in the years 1870, 1880, 1890, *and* 1898. *See Appendix, 14th Day, No.* 13.)

5166. How much of the tonnage for Belgium is Belgian, and how much of it is under the British flag?—I do not know.

5167. (*Chairman.*) That is a very material point?—Yes, I do not know how you will be able to get at it. Lamport and Holt of Liverpool trade from Antwerp, and some years ago they transferred for mail purposes a certain section of their discharges under the Belgian flag, and there are certain reasons why they should keep them there.

5168. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) The question I put to you with regard to the previous table might also be put here?—Yes, it is even more applicable here. These figures are only intended to illustrate the development, during recent years, of the competition with which the United Kingdom has now to contend for the world's carrying trade. In 1870 England's steam tonnage was ten times as great as that of Germany, Holland, and Belgium collectively. In 1898 it was only five times as great. The trade of Germany, etc., has increased, and the shipping tonnage has also increased; a combination of cause and effect. I give these figures largely to deal with the argument that the defects of the dock have driven trade to the Continent. I say it is not so at all. The real reason lies in the development of those countries themselves, and not in our own deficiencies.

5169. (*Chairman.*) Then you agree with what has been said by the shipowners as to prompt despatch. You lay considerable stress on that?—I do not think the importance of it can be exaggerated.

5170. Would you go so far as to agree with the shipowners that they would not mind paying more if they could get the goods away quicker?—That is so; they only want to turn round and go away.

5171. Can you tell us about any of the suggested reasons for the delays in London?—That is a very big question, and yet it is not a difficult one.

5172. Perhaps you would rather like to put your remarks under two heads: one, the customs of the port; and the other, the physical disabilities, the two-storey sheds and the cranes?—Yes. Of course, you cannot compare London and Liverpool; the one is a water-carriage port and the other a land-carriage port. You cannot compare the two. Then with regard to the customs of the port, I should say that the shipowners have it quite in their own power to alter them if they please. They have only got to alter their bill of lading and then they can at once alter the custom of the port, which is at present what they complain of. It is in their own hands.

5173. But taking all the delays and defects of London, you would put your remarks under two heads: one, the customs of the port, the bill of lading, and so on, and the other, the complaints of defective machinery, or defects in navigation; physical difficulties?—Are you speaking of the river, or the docks?

5174. Both. I am talking of the port of London. The Liverpool story I think we have heard. You tell us that Liverpool is a shipowner's port, and you think that popularity among shipowners should be aimed at?—Undoubtedly.

5175. Now, will you tell us about the difficulties of the navigable channel of the Thames?—Really I am not competent to speak upon that. I have only a general impression, or rather I may say a general conviction. I had rather the shipowners spoke upon that. *Mr. D. Owen.* 26 Mar. 1901

5176. Do you say that the cranes are altogether too few in number?—I am not at all sure of it. One goes down to the docks and one sees a long ship, which, according to one's experience at Liverpool or perhaps Antwerp, would want to have at least three or four or five or possibly six cranes at work at the time, and she has perhaps only one or two. Then somebody says, "There are not cranes enough at the dock," and sometimes the quays are so much blocked with cargo that the cranes cannot be moved about, and perhaps cannot be got to the particular ship.

5177. But that is a point upon which you do not lay great stress from your own knowledge?—No, I do not.

5178. Have you anything to say about the Liverpool bill of lading? Are you aware that the Atlantic Transport Company have written to the Press in justification of docks?—Yes; I have seen their letter.

5179. Stating that 14,000 tons of cargo have been discharged in three or four days?—Yes. I think that is a great feat, highly creditable to the dock company, and the dock company are justly proud of it. I think there is nothing to complain of. The explanation of it is that the Atlantic Transport Company use, I believe, the Liverpool bill of lading, which entitles them to discharge on to the quay at the consignees' expense of sorting and delivery; and the Line engages three or four whole sheds for one steamer. Then there are the cranes. I admit that Tilbury is fairly well equipped with cranes, but you will notice that the steamer takes three or four sheds. If the use of the American bill of lading were general, these sheds would not be available for a single steamer. That illustrates what I say, that a barge-carriage port can do with small shed accommodation, and that if discharge be made direct into shed, and the cranes be adequate, shipowners have no occasion to complain. Then as to the expense. I have stated that the Liverpool bill of lading is used by the Atlantic Transport Company, and I believe that over and above the freight the consignees pay 1s. 6d. per ton for sorting. Where does the dock come in? My impression is that it does not come in. The shipowners lease the shed area, and charge the consignees the actual cost of sorting, about 1s. 6d. per ton. Of course the docks get the shed area rent, but this is nothing like what they would get if they did the sorting themselves and charged either a profit or quay dues. As regards Tilbury Dock, I do not think I have anything special to say.

5180. Can you tell us any other causes of delay?—Shipowners complain greatly of obstruction caused by barges. They laugh aloud at the system which permits barges to obstruct the shipping of the port. It may be asked if shipowners complain of having to discharge into barges why should they not protect themselves by a clause in their bill of lading or charter party? Contract overrides custom. I believe shipowners would like to do so, but competition is too keen, and cargo interests are very united at any attempt to touch consignees' pockets. It costs 1s. 6d. to 2s. per ton to discharge on to the quay, and the cargo people prefer that the shipowners should pay it; but the Atlantic Transport Company has succeeded in overcoming this resistance. Of course, they are engaged in the American trade, and they have brought the American trade customs with them to London, and they have been strong enough to say, "We will carry on trade under these customs or we will not." Then to return to the question of delay. I have seen evidence on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce complaining of great delay in discharging ships in London. Probably there was some foundation for that complaint. The Chamber ascribe the blame to the docks, but it may easily be that the docks had nothing to do with it. Quite likely it is the old question of overside discharge into barges, I think the Chamber should be asked to define their complaint.

5180a. There again the docks will have an opportunity of speaking for themselves?—Yes.

a] Recalled 5181.

(Adjourned to Monday next, April 1st, at 11 o'clock.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

Monday, 1st April, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. D. Owen.

1 April 1901

Mr. DOUGLAS OWEN recalled and further examined.

5181. (*Chairman.*) Will you continue your evidence, Mr. Douglas Owen?—Perhaps I may remind your lordship that at your last sitting you asked me a question about Antwerp, and asked me to give further information upon that. May I do so now?

See 5139

5182. Certainly?—If you remember, I stated that the Antwerp people were going to make 1½ miles more open quays. I made that statement because when I was over there about a year ago I saw the port engineer, and he told me so, and evidently it is approximately correct. I wrote to a friend of mine, a Mr. Franck, a leading barrister at Antwerp, asking him to get me the information. He saw the burgomaster, and I have this morning received this letter from him. He is a very accurate man, and I guarantee that his letter is accurate. He says: "I have just obtained from our authorities the following information: (1) We are building on the river, south from the existing quays, 2,000 metres more, which will be fitted with cranes, rails, etc. Of these 2,000 metres, 300 are in use, 250 more will be placed at the disposal of the municipality within one month, and then be fitted with cranes, etc., the remaining 1,450 metres will be finished about the end of the year, but it may take twelve months more before they are entirely furnished with cranes, etc. Taking into consideration the service rendered by the existing riverside quays, it is expected that these 2,000 metres of quays shall supply the necessary accommodation for some 2,000,000 tons (at the entry of the port) yearly increase. (2) No progress has been made with the 'Grande Coupure.'" I daresay you know about the Grande Coupure. It is a question of cutting a canal, and practically diverting the course of the river through this canal, and turning the canal into open quays. There is a good deal of objection to that. It is a question which has been dividing Antwerp for some years. It is really the history of their congestion. There has been no doubt that more accommodation was needed, and it has been a question of what form that accommodation should take. I believe the King's proposal is the Grande Coupure. Those who oppose it say: "We are dealing with a very dangerous and treacherous river, and if you are going to try an experiment with a river of this kind, you do not know what will happen." Belgium has really been divided into two parties on that question. Then he continues "My personal opinion of the position is that the Grande Coupure will not be made. The city is opposing the scheme as firmly as ever, although the expenditure to be made by the Government would not be less than some 100,000,000 francs, but the risk is too big, and the river too good to try such experiments. But the city is willing to take any other measures to enlarge and deepen the channel. This is my personal view of the situation. (3) Pending the debate on the Grande Coupure the Government and the Municipality have agreed on the building of a new dock which will have 2,000 metres of available wharves, and supply accommodation for an increase of yearly tonnage (entering the port) of about 1,500,000 tons. This work has begun of about 150 hectares to be expropriated, of which two-thirds are already bought by the public bodies concerned. As soon as the remaining third will be public property the excavations, etc., will commence. The dock is expected to be ready with all accommodations within five years." Then as to the next question I asked him for some information as to the safety of the quays. He has given me information with regard to that, but that will probably arise later on, and then perhaps you will question me. Then he goes on after that question: "Nothing else worthy of notice has come within my knowledge. The accommodations, which are partly delivered, partly in a state of preparation, and partly resolved upon, and the preliminary measures begun with, will be able to meet within the next years an increase of 500,000 gross tonnage in the yearly movement of the port, which is more than we may dare to expect. Afterwards we shall be supplied with the accommodations to be built as soon as the Government and the Municipality will have agreed on the general plan of future enlargements." Then he adds as a postscript: "I have just received some more useful information, namely: 1st, that to enhance the place"—that is, the room "at the disposal of ordinary shipping it is resolved that the dock now in use for tank steamers shall be withdrawn from that destination, whereas special accommodations will be built on the river-side for the oil trade; 2nd, that with the same aim new accommodations will be built for barges and small craft in the vicinity of the southern quays." So that there are great measures in progress in Antwerp.

5183. When we adjourned at our last sitting, I think we were talking about the delays in the docks. Have you anything to add on that subject?—I say it is misleading to blame the dock people. If I may refer to another matter I may say that I am aware of the argument that the docks near the Tower are commonly full, that they supply the needs of a small class of vessel, and that therefore they are not obsolete; but that argument is unsound. The small ships use these docks, not because they (the ships) are too small for the deep docks, but because the big vessels cannot get into the Tower docks. If the navigable channel of the river were deep and wide enough, and the docks were deep enough, the big vessels would come into them. The docks of London will always be filled with small ships if the big ships cannot get into them. Small ships can fit in even into a full deep-water dock; you do not want a small dock for them. To argue that because a dock is full of small ships it cannot be regarded as obsolete, is misleading and dangerous. Then I made a note about the roadways, but I cannot speak with any great authority on that. It is rather a result of casual observation and information I have obtained.

5184. Is it your opinion that they are not sufficiently wide?—I think they are entirely insufficient in the neighbourhood of the docks. I think the City Corporation and the County Council have let things slide in that respect. I think the evidence of shippers and carters would be useful as to this. Then with regard to the railway facilities, I consider them inadequate, more especially at the up-river docks. They would be more inadequate if barges were less general. Possibly the want of railway facilities has served to promote the growth of barge traffic. I think it likely that the railway companies in possession blackmail railway companies outside by making them pay heavily for the use of their metals. The result of that would be to drive the outside railway companies to carry goods to their own wharves or docks in barges, instead of sending them away direct. I know that in Birmingham, which has relations with London on a good many points, a strong feeling exists that the railway rates on goods from the Thames are unduly high. I believe that some question of the kind is in fact being fought out at the present time before the Railway Commissioners. I have not studied the subject, but I consider that it calls for investigation. It is most necessary that any obstacles to prompt clearance and dispatch of goods should be removed. Then I have a note on the subject of London's trade. It might be asked if London is so unsatisfactory a port, how is it that trade has so increased? Well, it must be remembered that London has not always been unsatisfactory. It is the gradual development of big ships which has brought things to a head. But the port was bound to grow as the population behind it increased. Increased population means necessity for increased supplies; and the increase of population has been vast. The following figures serve to illustrate the growth of London and the surrounding belt and residential cities fed by London.

See 2271; 7751.

	1801.	1891.
London and belt - - -	1,115,000	5,638,000
Brighton - - - - -	8,000	142,000
Hastings - - - - -	3,000	56,000
Eastbourne - - - -	2,000	35,000
Reigate - - - - -	2,000	22,000
Tilbury - - - - -	700	12,000

5185. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What do you call the belt?—That I cannot exactly tell you. It is an expression used by the writer of the paper. It is an expression he uses for the radius.

5186. (*Chairman.*) I suppose he would now take in Surbiton, Kingston, Norbiton, and other places?——

5187. (*Mr. Peel.*) He probably means the area supplied by the water companies?—No; he has nothing to do with the water companies at all. I cannot say what he means. He speaks simply of the belt. He takes a certain radius, and I suppose he would take the same radius in 1801 as in 1891, or it would be no fair comparison.

5187A. (*Chairman.*) Where do these figures come from?—From a paper read on the 20th November to the Royal Statistical Society by Mr. Welton, F.C.A. The population from 1801 to 1891 has increased five-fold, and with it, of course, the four-footed population, all of which require to be fed. If the population has increased fivefold, consumption of foreign produce per head of population has also apparently increased fivefold or more, and this is only half the story. I give these figures as an illustration. Speaking of wheat and flour, the consumption of pounds in weight per head of population in 1800 was 35, as against 255 in 1896; tea, in 1800, 1½lbs.; in 1896, 5¾lbs.; sugar, in 1800, 18lbs.; in 1896, 85lbs. The wheat and tea figures I have calculated out on the Blue-Book figures of the "Customs Tariff, 1800-1897." The sugar figures are worked out in the book itself. So that with, say, a fivefold increase of population, and a five-fold increase of consumption per head, the trade of the port will in the century apparently have increased by 2,500 per cent; that is, 25 needed in 1900 for every 1 in 1800. Of course, I am not speaking mathematically, I only want to demonstrate the necessary growth of the port. The enormous growth of the population, the abolition of duties, the cheapening of supplies, the opening up of new sources of supply, and the increase of wages and wealth of the country are all causes which have combined to increase the pour of trade into London. Then I say that the destination trade of London is likely still to increase, but Antwerp, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Bremen, and the Mediterranean ports will increase much more rapidly, and become more and more wealthy and important. There is room for all, but London's pre-eminence will become less and less. Would you also like me to give the history of the docks' impecuniosity?

5188. If it touches on your evidence, I should like to ask you what you have to say as to free water?—When the first dock was made—I think it was the West India—an Act was passed requiring all the West India trade to go into that dock. Of course, that would have the effect of ousting all the wharfingers who had previously taken the ships of that trade, so a clause was introduced into the Bill providing that the dock should be free water to the lightermen, so that they should be able to come in at any time—come and go. That was the object of that.

5189. Can you tell me whether you know of any dock in the world which is charged for sea water or river water?—I am not using it in that sense. I mean the use of the water was to be free to the barges.

5190. You have already touched on the subject of th Liverpool bill of lading?—Yes.

5191. Now will you tell us if there is any reason why this Liverpool bill of lading should not be more universally used in London?—It is the cargo people. As it is, the cargo people get their cargo delivered to them for nothing. The effect of the Liverpool bill of lading will be to make them pay for handling it on the quay, whereas at present the ship pays it.

5192. You have mentioned the custom of the port in your evidence several times, and many other witnesses have done the same thing. Is not the custom of the port simply an arrangement between the shipowner and the consignee?—The arrangement is founded on the custom. It has been always the custom in London that the bargeman shall receive his goods into his barge.

5193. It happens to be the fact that that is the case by arrangement between the shipowner and the consignee, but there is no reason why they should not have the Liverpool bill of lading if they choose?—Absolutely none.

5194. And you think it would be greatly to the advantage of the Port of London if that were extended?—Yes.

5195. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Did you observe the bill of lading which was put in by the manager of the General Steam Navigation Co.?—No; I did not, but that, I imagine, would not be the Liverpool bill of lading.

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5196. It gave the shipowner the option of delivering the goods in any way he chose?—It would give him the option, but he would have to exercise it at his own cost, I take it.

5197. Perhaps you did not observe the clause?—No, I do not think I saw it. I do not remember reading it, but should certainly say it is not the Liverpool clause. The shipowner may insist on the right to deliver on the quay, if he pleases, but that does not mean that it is to be at the consignee's expense. That is quite another thing. It may be a convenience to the shipowner to put his goods on to the quay, and then into the barge, or into the barge direct, and he wants to be in a position to say to the consignee, "No, I am not going to put my goods straight into the barge. I am going to put them on the quay first, and then into the barge." Upon which the bargeman would say, "Well, do it at your own expense."

5198. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) As a matter of history have you any theory to account for the growing up of this custom in London?—No, I should say it was always there, London always was a barge port. Barges would come alongside the ship when the ship came in, and the goods would be delivered overside. Then when the closed docks were made the barges had the right to go in, and the same process would go on I imagine. There was no occasion to deliver on to the quay. There was no hurry about the thing.

5199. Then do you consider the custom to have had its origin in the free water clause of 1799?—I think the custom was before the free water clause.

5200. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But still you have not

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compared the clauses of the bills of lading?—Not for this special purpose, but I am very familiar with bills of lading clauses of all kinds.

5201. It struck me that the clause which was shown to us by the manager of the General Steam Navigation Company gave the shipowner absolute power in the matter?—I do not know whether the General Steam Navigation Company's steamers go into the dock at all. For the most part they go to their own wharf.

5202. But still this was a general trade?—Probably it was a short sea trader's clause, not meant for the case of steamers going into dock at all. I do not know, but I should think it is very likely so.

5203. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Then practically you advocate the Liverpool bill of lading and custom because it gives quicker dispatch to the steamers?—Yes, unquestionably.

5204. (*Chairman.*) As to barges, you told us that when they come into the docks they for the most part pay nothing at all?—Yes, that is so, I believe. There are certain rights of charge, but if they are exercised at all I do not believe they amount to anything.

5205. Now, as to the practical result of the 1799 Act?—That means that the barges to the number of some 142,000 in a year pay little or nothing to the docks, and their cargoes similarly pay nothing.

5206. Who pays the barges?—In most cases the wharfingers pay them. Having no cost of dock construction on them, the wharfingers can afford to bear the lighterage themselves in order to get the goods. They can afford to under-quote the docks and fetch the goods away from the docks at their own cost, without charging the goods owners. The result is that the docks have been starved, and that money which ought to have been spent on them has not been spent, with the result that the docks are greatly behind the times, and that shipowners are highly discontented with the port. But shipowners have no right to complain, it is largely their own fault. Of course, it is their own fault; but it may be from pressure put on them by cargo owners. If they adopted the Liverpool Bill of lading they would escape paying the cost of sorting and delivery, and would have no obligation to discharge into barges.

5207. Why do they not?—It is very hard to say. People in some cases are very ignorant of the strength of their position; but, more especially, I think it is the pressure of cargo interest. The cargo interest is not generally united, but in a matter of that kind they call a meeting at Cannon Street and become one man to put pressure on shipowners.

5208. Will you tell us your opinion as to the suggestion of a tax on barges?—Personally, I am opposed to taxing barges. In my idea they might as well tax the carts and trucks that come on to the dockland. It is a mistake to tax facilities. Barges are the backbone of the port, and the port owes much of its prosperity to them. Barges now are very large, and are growing larger, but that makes no difference. It is better for the dock companies; for it is better to have one big barge than two little ones. As it is, the docks are too full of barges. I would put a toll on all goods in barges, and would treat barge goods the same as wheel goods. I would no more tax barges by water than carts by land, and would no more allow goods to come free by water than by land. I would be consistent. I would put a toll on every package that uses or derives benefit from the docks.

5209. The same as at Liverpool?—Yes, the same as at Liverpool. I would render the use of barges less necessary by increasing and throwing open the railway access to the docks; but I am decidedly opposed to a tax on barges. I would give barges the utmost facilities, and would study the well-being of barges in London the same as Liverpool studies the well-being of the ships; but I would frame regulations for them, and would entirely alter the present system of licensing lightermen. It makes the lightermen overbearing autocrats, monoplists who practically tyrannise over the trade of the port. Of course, on this point, wharfingers can give better evidence than I can.

5210. We have already been told that every package that comes to Liverpool waters, whether to the river or to the docks, has to pay dues. You approve of that, do you?—Yes, and on that depends all the prosperity of Liverpool, which should not be forgotten.

5211. Do you think that the increase in the size and draught of ships has greatly increased the cost of working the docks?—Yes; there is no doubt about that.

5212. But you think that is a matter more for the docks?—Yes.

5213. Now will you give us your opinion as to the advisability of a trust?—I believe in a trust entirely in principle, but as regards London I do not think the present is the time for the change. If the docks were making large profits and were diverting from the public users of the dock money which ought to go in the reduction of the rates, I should say yes, make your trust, you cannot make it too soon. But the boot is entirely on the other leg. The docks are working at a loss. At any rate, I submit that the position of the port now is a very critical one, and I think for that very reason it is not a time for swapping horses. The critical condition has nothing to do at all with the system of ownership or management. It has existed for 100 years, and London has prospered under it.

5214. But not necessarily by reason of it?—No, not necessarily by reason of it. I grant that.

5215. Do you think it would be difficult to convert the London dock system into a trust of any sort?—I think it would certainly be difficult to do it all at once at any rate, and I do not see what would be the advantage. I do not see that a trust in the present state of affairs could give any advantage to London which the private ownership does not give. There is no reason why with restricted powers of absorbing profits a private ownership should not be as satisfactory as a trust. The Thames Conservancy was a trust, and the Metropolitan Board of Works was a trust. It seems not impossible that a private syndicate charged with the improvement of the Thames, endowed with the necessary powers, and limited as to its share of dues, might have been as satisfactory as the Thames Conservancy.

5216. You say the prosperity of Liverpool is due to the fact that they can charge on every package?—Yes. The management of the trust consists entirely of dock ratepayers. There is no County Council, no Corporation, no municipality in it at all. Everybody understands his business. I say that what is the matter with the London docks is not the management, but the want of money. Put the present owners into a position to earn money, and they can do all that a trust could do. The formation of a trust would in itself be very costly, and the first step of the trust would be to increase the dock charges right and left. One very important step on the road to a trust has already been taken by the amalgamation of the two biggest docks, the London and the India. If the other two docks could be merged with them, the difficulty and the cost of converting the whole of the docks into a trust would be greatly diminished. I think that ought to be done. I think all the docks ought to be merged into one. If the Articles of Association, or the statutory powers do not authorise further amalgamations, then an over-riding Statute should be made giving the powers, and some kind of pressure should be exercised to induce the dock companies to fuse themselves. I see no present advantage in a trust. It will take years to bring the docks up to date, and the present experienced managers can do the work better than anybody else. All they want is money.

5217. Do you propose any alternative?—Yes. I would give the docks the needful increased powers of earning, with a stipulation requiring certain annual expenditure on improvements and new works; also with the provision that when the property shall have reached a certain value the Government or City authorities shall be empowered to take it over. Meantime the system could be gradually so arranged as to facilitate conversion into a trust eventually.

5218. What are the needful powers to which you refer?—First of all I would enable the dock companies to charge an *octroi*. I have already explained that in my writings, so I think you are probably familiar with it.

5219. I take it from what you have told us that your opinion is that the unification of responsibility and authority is a great advantage?—Undoubtedly.

5220. You plead for the constitution of a consolidated authority?—I think so. I think there should be one head of the whole of the docks, as Mr. Burton, of Liverpool, said, or as one of the shipowners, Mr. Jones, said. When he arrived in Liverpool, Mr. Jones said, he had only to go to a head man, and he would have a berth allocated to him at once, and in London there are so many heads to be consulted.

5221. When you say that, you are talking of the docks?—Yes.

5222. I am talking of the whole authority?—That is another thing. I misunderstood your question. I do not myself see any advantage, at any rate any immediate advantage, in having the same management for the docks and the river, to the port generally. I think at some future time it would be an advantage, but I do not see that there is anything to be gained by it now. My own idea is that it would be much better, in the present state of things, to cast one's plan for the formation of a universal trust at some date or certain time to be fixed, and in the meantime smooth away these difficulties to which attention is called. In my opinion, some of them have had a great deal too much attention called to them. With regard to several things which have been mentioned in writings, I have never heard of any inconvenience being suffered. I think the thing is exaggerated, but, at the same time, I say there are certain points in which the authority should be made more uniform.

5223. You do not think it is a *sine quâ non* that there should be one consolidated authority over the Port of London?—No. I think it would be a good thing in the future, but if we had it to-morrow I do not think it would make any difference to the Port.

5224. Then your suggestion at present is limited to the fusion of the dock companies?—So far as the Port is concerned I would fuse the dock companies, and I would give them power to earn as much money as would enable them to bring the docks up to date. That is the first thing that is wanted. If you have a trust, you would have the same thing.

5225. When you speak about bringing the docks up to date, do you include under that head the necessity of dredging the river, which has been pointed out to us several times?—No; the dredging of the river has nothing to do with the docks.

5226. Who do you suggest should pay for that?—It is a question of raising dues from somebody. At present the Thames Conservancy has the power, but it does not exercise it, because it has not got the money.

5227. Do you suggest that the *octroi*, which you tell us ought to be put on all goods, should pay for the dredging of the river?—When I was speaking of the *octroi* I was referring rather to raising money for dock purposes. My idea is that the funds should be provided by those who are the most benefited by the outlay.

5228. Then you say, I understand, that it will take years to make the docks up to date. Will it be possible to have wharves, as at Antwerp?—The wharf question is a very big one. I do not see what you would gain by it at all. There is a good deal of misapprehension about open quays. Several witnesses have said: "Oh, yes, we should like open quays. They are a great advantage, because they save the cost and delay of docking and undocking, and the delay and expense of discharging." For the life of me I cannot see how it is to be done. And further they say—and this is the great charm of the programme—that a ship can come along a wharf at any state of the tide. A ship cannot come anywhere unless she has water to bring her there. Take, for instance, the Albert Dock. At low water off Albert Dock there is, say, 12ft.—I am not sure of the figures, but call it 12ft. Supposing you had an open quay where the dock entrance is, how could a ship come there at any state of the tide? How could a 25ft. ship go into 12ft. of water? It is a fallacy. There is no difference between coming to the entrance of a dock lock and coming to an open quay. It is absolutely the same thing: you must have water there. Take Tilbury, for example. There are 26ft. of water, I think, at the entrance of Tilbury Lock. As a matter of fact—I do not know whether it is a matter of practice or not—a ship drawing 23ft. could come in at any state of the tide. How would she be better off if she had an open quay there? What is the difference? There is not any. The whole thing is a fallacy, as far as I can make out.

5229. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Do you know any open docks in the world—I mean docks with no gates?—Tidal docks?

5230. Yes. Do you know any tidal docks in the world working where the rise and fall of the tide is very considerable—say 20ft.?—No, I do not think so. I do not know any. Of course, at Antwerp sometimes on the open quay you may at certain states of the tide or wind get as much as 21ft., even as much as 25ft., they tell me; but ordinarily I think it is 13ft. May I say this as regards open quays? At Antwerp they have an open quay, and at Bremen and Hamburg they have tidal docks. Why they should have a river quay at one place and a tidal dock at the other I do not know; but it has occurred to me that the reason is probably this, and if so it is material for London. In the case of Antwerp, Antwerp is right on the stream. She can carry her open quays right above on the river, or right below on the river; it does not matter. But at Hamburg and Bremen they are at the end of their tether as regards navigation. The navigation comes up to them and cannot get a bit further, and I suppose they know that they cannot, except at very great expense of dredging, carry their river quays up above the town, and so, in order to keep the port compact, they cut tidal docks. At Bremen, and more especially at Hamburg, it is a series of tidal docks like the palm of one's hand. There is the harbour, and the tidal docks running out like one's fingers all round. Hamburg is convenient. I think there are ten miles of tidal dock quays there. If you imagine those ten miles carried down the river, Hamburg would be a good deal less compact and convenient. Take London: if London were down at Gravesend, and it were decided to have either tidal docks or open quays, it would not matter whether you carried your quays up the river or down the river. It would be much about the same thing. But London is already far beyond the deep navigation. It is quite out of the question to carry open quays above London. If you are going to carry them down the river the front is already taken up for some miles, and you would have to carry the quays for miles down the river. What would be the good of them when you have got them there? You must have the depth of water. Supposing you have a quay with 16ft. at low water, what is the good of that to a ship drawing 25ft.? As far as I can see, with a ship drawing 25ft., no quay would be any good above Tilbury. Now, I should like to refer to the question of expense and time. I cannot speak as an expert, but my impression is that when a ship goes into one of these London Docks it takes her half an hour, or possibly three-quarters of an hour, and the same coming out. That is not a great amount of time to save. When she is inside she has all the advantage, and the comfort and security of a closed dock, with no rising or falling against quays. I think the shipowner would very gladly submit to the delay of half-an-hour, or three-quarters of an hour for the sake of the advantage of a fixed quay, and lying in security in a dock. I do not see where the advantage as to time there comes in, particularly. Then with regard to discharging; one of the witnesses said it would save the time of discharging in a dock. It seems to me that if you get a discharge at one side of a ship on to a quay, and a discharge on the other side into barges in the river, it does not make any difference whether that is a tidal dock quay or a closed dock quay. There is one side of the ship against the quay. Whatever the nature of the quay, you have some kind of accommodation, and on the other side as regards the water it is much the same. It seems to me that it would be against the convenience of discharging to discharge into a stream running at three or four knots an hour. It would at any rate be so in the case of a ship with general cargo. We know from experience in the docks, and anybody can see it, that there would be a certain barge alongside, and certain cargo would be discharged into it; then all at once the end of that lode or vein of cargo is reached, and they say to the "Kate," or the "Jane," or whatever it may be, "You haul off and let the 'Alfred' come along." Then the "Alfred" comes in, and that process goes on all the time. How would that be in a stream running at three or four knots an hour? They would say to the "Jane," "Haul off": then what is to become of the "Jane" in the stream? She would be carried away by the flood. From whatever point of view you look at it, I do not think there is any gain in open quays at all. I myself started with a contrary opinion, but I have changed my mind for sufficient reason. Then with regard to the cost, I asked the port engineer at Antwerp, M. Royers, when I was there, what the cost was, and he said: "The cost of our quay accommodation in Antwerp is about three times what the dock accommodation would cost—some of it five times." I did not ask him why five times, but if you will allow me I will read an extract from a letter in the "Shipping Gazette," I think about the 1st February, from the Antwerp correspondent of the "Gazette":—"Reference was recently made in this column to 2,000 metres of river quays which the Government has been constructing for the past three years at the southern extremity of

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the river front. This measure was taken to temporarily relieve the traffic while some steps were taken as to the final extension of the port. Owing apparently to defective engineering, the first 100 metres finished broke away and slipped into the river about a year ago. This involved a serious delay, and has only just been remedied. Another accident occurred yesterday to further delay the completion of the work. For a distance of over 150 metres the land along the quay wall has sunk to a distance of more than three feet. Steamers were alongside working, and the railway lines and movable cranes were in jeopardy for some time, though some 200 workmen were speedily sent to the spot to fill in the sunken ground." That is only from a newspaper, and, of course, I know it is not evidence, but in writing to Mr. Franck I said I should like to know if it was true, and I asked him if there had been any accidents happening to the quays, and he said: "There have been two accidents at the South Quays of which I spoke. The first one was important, and delayed the delivery of the work; the second one seems of less consequence." So that I think one may take it that the newspaper report is true, that 100 metres slipped bodily into the river and 150 metres settled 3ft. And one must remember that the Antwerp people are not tyros in this kind of work; it is their speciality—they understand it. It is a very serious thing to have a quay slipping into the river, so one can understand that when the Dock Engineer told me that the quays had cost three times, and in some cases five times, as much as the docks, he may as regards the latter have had in his mind parts where the quay slipped bodily into the river. Of course, I do not know how the foundations of the Thames may compare with the foundations of the Scheldt, but that has something to do with it, no doubt. In any case, it seems to me that the cost of building quays must be greatly more than that of constructing closed docks. One of the witnesses the other day, Mr. Varce Williams, seemed to like quays, but he said he had found the cost to be prohibitive; there was a difficulty about the foundations, and it meant that the walls had got to be 50ft. in height. That is quite true. Of course, a closed dock impounds the high water. Supposing you want to build a dock to contain a ship drawing 25ft., and you excavate the dock to that depth, you impound the high water into it, and the ship lies there. Supposing there was a rise and fall of 20ft. in the tide, and that ship were to lie outside the dock in the river, she could do so, assuming there was the depth. But there would be that to be added to the dock quay. The dock is up in the air, and the ship is lifted up to it from the river. She is only there at high water. You have all the difference between low water and high water, or something like it. The quays would be like fortifications, and, of course, if you have a shifting foundation, or an unstable foundation, the cost would be very great. Also the deeper you get with your quay wall, obviously the greater weight there is to carry and the thicker it has to be, and the cost of material would be very great, and the cost of the labour would be very great. But over and above that the actual cost of construction is very much in favour of the dock. If you are going to build a dock you build it on dry land. You excavate your quay, and you build your quay on dry land. If you are going to build it along the river front, a great part of it has to be built underwater. The dock engineer at Antwerp told me it had to be built with the assistance of compressed air. I dare say caissons would do, but in either case it must be exceedingly expensive. So that I think when he said the cost of the quay walls at Antwerp was three times and sometimes as much as five times the cost of the dock, it is not difficult to understand. So that I think when these London witnesses come to the Commission and say that they recommend Antwerp quays for London because of the cheapness of building, they cannot have considered the subject at all.

5231. You deny that that is the fact?—Yes, absolutely.

5232. Do you know any instance in London of quays having collapsed?—No, I cannot imagine that a quay built on dry soil would collapse. I know there were difficulties at Tilbury, and I think the quays there were built on piles.

5233. Have you anything to say with regard to the cargo charges, you told us that in your opinion the labour charges have practically nothing to do with the question?—I do not think they have.

5234. What have you to say with regard to the charges made by the dock companies and lighters?—As regards the charges for lighterage, I heard bitter complaints at Bremen, though my own opinion is that they were exaggerated; but with lighterage a close borough, a monopoly to the freemen of the Watermen's Society, it may easily be that lighterage is dear in London.

5235. What is your opinion as to the lighterage system?—I think it is a farce. It is altogether out of date. At any rate, that is so as regards the Watermen's Company.

5236. Have you read the evidence of the Chamber of Commerce with regard to dock charges on cargo?—Yes. As far as I understand it, the Chamber of Commerce complains of excessive quay dues. I have not investigated the complaint, but if two-thirds or three-fourths of the goods which use the docks pay nothing at all for the use, it would not be wonderful if the dock companies saw no reason for making a very light charge on the remainder. If they are to charge nothing on waterborne goods, and next to nothing on quay goods, how are the docks and quays to be kept in order? It seems to me very much like the case of water companies for every four pints of water they supplied giving three of them free, and only charging on the fourth. In that case I think we should not get the fourth very cheap. But I imagine that the competition of the wharves, which can get the goods free of quay charges, is likely to be a powerful lever in preventing the levying of exorbitant quay dues by the dock companies. There is no reason why goods should pass over dock quays even if required at an up-town warehouse. The consignee can send his barge for them and take delivery into his carts across a wharf quay. As a broad statement, the allegations of the Chamber of Commerce seem too vague.

5237. Have you made any comparison of the dearness of the docks of London as compared with those of Liverpool?—Practically there are no charges in London. I have already explained that in London the shipowners have to pay 1s. 6d. or 2s. a ton after discharge, cargo charges, which in Liverpool fall on the cargo owners. So far, therefore, as concerns cargo which goes to wharves, etc., in barges, the cargo people pay nothing to the docks at all. It is the ship owners who exclaim at the dearness of London, and justly. My own belief is that cargo-owners use the shipowners' cry to strengthen their own protestations against any proposal to put on to cargo dock charges which the consignees would have to pay. I believe the cargo people's cry to be meretricious. The Chamber of Commerce can give information as to that.

5238. What is your opinion as to what ought to be accepted as the dock system of the port?—I think that no scheme for a new dock will solve the difficulty as regards the present docks. The first step is to determine what ought to be accepted as the dock system of the port. Then new docks must be made on that system, and the old docks gradually adapted to it. And not only will a new dock not solve the difficulty of the old docks, but the more the river is improved the greater will become the difficulty with the old docks. Bigger ships will come into them, bringing bigger cargoes, requiring a greater number of barges to handle them. So that the effect of improving the river will be to add to the difficulties of the docks. Just as the docks have been going from bad to worse during one or two generations, so must it be a long and tedious process to bring them up to date. You cannot sweep away the old docks and substitute new ones for them. It must be a gradual process of improvement. The old buildings must in course of time be swept away with a view to the construction of barge canals and two-storey sheds.

5239. Can you say if any plan has been formulated as to this?—I know of none except one which I formulated myself, which I will mention presently. I wrote a paper for the "Shipping Gazette." In the case of the Albert Dock, the most important up-river dock, the improvements should, I think, not be difficult. In the Victoria Dock, with its projecting jetties, improvements will be rendered less urgent if the Albert Dock is modernised, especially if a new, that is additional, dock is constructed. The Victoria Dock system is good enough so long as it is possible to leave one side of each jetty clear for barges, in the intention of the original plan of the construction. It must be remembered that to modernise the Albert Dock will be to greatly increase its capacity. To expedite the departure of the ships, and give prompt removal to their cargoes, must be in effect to increase the capacity of a dock. As regards the other docks, it will be more difficult to modernise them, but though it may not be possible to make ideal docks of them, it should be possible to greatly improve them. I confess that I have not studied the question of, or the possibility of, the improvement as regards these other docks; it must in any case be a process both of time and expense, but my general impression is that they can all of

them be improved. Of course, the widening of the roads to the docks and the improvement of railway facilities will have to be a part of the general scheme. Briefly, in my opinion, the complaints of shipowners, cargo owners, and lightermen all go back to one and the same thing—delay; delay in discharging, delay in getting the goods out of the docks, delay in loading barges, delay of ships in entering and leaving; and the delay is approximately due to this: that the barges cannot get to the quays to take the goods away, because the quays are occupied by the ships. When one ship leaves another takes her place; the goods accumulate on the quays, blocking the crane-rails, whilst the barges accumulate in the docks waiting a chance to come up to the quays. The result is a general deadlock; ships, goods, and barges are all delayed. Merely to regulate the barges will not touch the spot. To expedite the discharge of ships will only add to the accumulation of cargo on the quay. There is only one remedy, and that is to provide barge canals of ample width at the back of the dock sheds. The cargo can then be landed, sorted, and delivered into the barge and taken away without any delay. Now, with permission I will hand in a sketch in section of my proposed dock quay shed, railway, canal, and wagon way. (*The witness handed in a sketch.*) I think the sketch explains itself. The shed is of two storeys, with a platform extending over the quay, as at Copenhagen. There are the usual crane rails on the quay front, and also cranes on the edge of the raised platform, one leg on the ground, on a special ground crane rail. Cargo can be delivered on to either floor on the shed. At the back of the shed is the railway as usual. The metals are sunk so that wagons can use the railway track as usual. Delivery can be made from either floor of the shed into the trucks or carts. Just across the railway track is a canal quay and a wide canal. The canal should not be less than 80ft. wide to allow, say, four barges abreast. Cargo can be delivered from either floor of the shed to the barges in the canal. On the other side of the canal is a wagon road. At intervals across the canal are bridges, so that the wagons can come into the sheds without being led all along the railway track. To allow of the bridges being flat, the canal must have ample space between the water surface and the quay edge for the passage of empty barges. This will mean a corresponding increase in the height of dry quay-face of the docks. In a dock plan embracing so many more or less conflicting interests, as of sheds, railways, carts, and barges, an all-round compromise of method has to be arrived at. My scheme intends such a compromise. Then I submit a ground plan of the dock showing the canal. (*The witness handed in a ground plan of the dock.*) It will be noticed that the canal runs at the back of each of the two rows of sheds, that is, on either side of the dock. There are, in fact, two canals, one for each long quay. Each canal enters the dock at each of the two corners nearest to it. Barges, therefore, can lie either in the canal, or, when convenient, in the dock alongside the ship. There is a special lock—this is the great point—allowing barges to enter the canal direct from the river, at a point half-way between the ship-locks to the dock. Barges can be locked in and out of the dock at all states of the tide without interfering with the passage of ships. The plan, as sketched, explains itself. There is, however, one item of the plan or plans which does not clearly appear, namely, a special passage way for foot passengers, clear of the quay and its encumbrances. The inconvenience to foot passengers in London at, for example, the Albert Docks is extreme. They are not considered at all. A walk along the open cargo quay is always highly inconvenient, and sometimes dangerous. An up-to-date dock for a water carriage port requires a special covered way for workmen, employees, and visitors. I propose to carry an alley way the whole length of the dock under the angle of the roof of the sheds, with a covered gallery from shed to shed, and with stairways to the ground against one end of each shed. My sketch of the shed elevation shows by dotted lines where the alley-way would run. I have also endeavoured to indicate it by parallel lines in the ground plan showing the sheds. Apart from the right which employees, ships' companies, and others have to safe and convenient coming and going at the docks, the more you facilitate and expedite the passing to and fro in and about the docks, the more will dispatch generally be accelerated.

5240. And you consider this suggestion of yours is practicable as to existing docks on the River Thames?—It is practicable in the Albert Dock and the Victoria Dock. I have not considered it with regard to the others.

5241. Have you taken any expert's opinion on the subject?—No. I have talked with experts when I have had the plans, and been down and looked at things, and so on.

5242. Have you anything to say on the subject of open berths and closed docks?—My remarks will deal with the river aspect. If you are going to dredge the river up to 25ft., or whatever the depth may be, it does not seem to me to matter whether you have quays or docks if you are going to put the question of cost on one side; but as it stands now, the depth of the river is an absolute bar to ships coming up to the quays at any stage of the tide, as people say.

5243. We have already touched on the question of the provision of funds. I do not know whether you have anything further to tell us on that point. In your opinion the improvement of the river and the roadways will cost several millions?—Yes. If you ask me where the money is to come from, in my opinion I should say the bulk of it from London and its environs in the form of local or municipal rates or taxation. Next, a similar but modified tax on towns within the supply radius, such as Brighton, Croydon, Eastbourne, and from all other towns within the radius, a possibly graduating tax according to the distance from London. Next, from tonnage dues on ships coming to the port, and also from tonnage dues on ships leaving port for the coast and the continent. It is difficult to draw the line, no doubt, but it could be done. Finally, a certain proportion ought to be provided out of the national purse, the whole nation being interested in the question of maintaining the port of London. Or, in the alternative there might be an *ad valorem* toll or tax on all goods arriving at the port. Taking the foreign and continental trade to the port at £160,000,000, a farthing in the £ would yield £160,000 per annum, and would be unfelt. It could be done by the sale of "Customs Entry" stamps, to be affixed to the entry forms at present used.

5244. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What is your idea of the additional income that is required for the purposes that you mention?—I cannot say. I have not formed any opinion. I am not able to.

5245. You have mentioned that one farthing in the £ on imports would come to £160,000 more. Would that be sufficient?—I did not mean to suggest any sum. I only meant to illustrate the value of a farthing. If a farthing in the £ would give you £160,000, a penny in the £ would give you four times the amount, and to say that a penny would be felt as a tax on goods would be absurd.

5246. As you have given some thought to these matters, I should like to have your opinion as to what the total additional amount is that is required to put the port of London in a proper condition, and to keep it in a proper condition?—I could not possibly give you an opinion, and I think the more I thought it out the less I should be likely to arrive at one. It is beyond me altogether.

5247. (*Chairman.*) Would you like in concluding your evidence to sum up the conclusions at which you have arrived under the respective heads?—Yes. I have classified them:—(1) Improved river approach. That should be proceeded with immediately. (2) Provide wide barge canals at back of transit sheds, with access from dock to canal. Where possible, give special access for barges between dock and river. (3) Abolish or deny the right to overside discharge in the case of mixed cargoes. That is a question for ship-owners. (4) Give increased shed-room and quay space. (5) Secure regulation of the barges. Thoroughly investigate and revise the present system of limiting number of, and licensing, lightermen. (6) Improve the existing docks, and dredge deeper where needful. (7) Put a new dock in hand. (8) Put the docks in a position to earn enough money to bring the docks up to date. I think that ought to be put first, really. (9) Throw open the present narrow road approaches to docks. The County Council ought to see to that. (10) Increase the railway approaches, and especially secure that companies owning present approaches shall not charge other companies unduly for use of their ways.

5248. Have you anything to say as to the question of the lightermen's complaint that the shipowners can limit their liability while they themselves cannot?—I have seen that that was a complaint. They say that if they run into a ship they are liable to an unlimited extent for the damage they do to the ship. Supposing

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they stove in an engine-room plate bulkhead on a P. and O. steamer they are liable to their last farthing personally, whereas if a P. and O. steamer damaged them they could only get £8 a ton on the ship's tonnage. But £8 a ton on a P. and O. steamer's tonnage would satisfy any barge claim. But there is no real comparison; there is no common basis between the two. As a matter of broad principle I take it that no man ought to be able to limit his liability for wrongs done to another. There was an exception made to that in the case of ships solely on the ground—I think it was under an Act of 1734—that it was expedient in the national interest to encourage merchants to own ships. Evidently at that time there was a feeling that merchants were afraid to engage in the business of ship owning, because of the liability attaching to it, so that a limit of their liability was imposed. Gradually in the course of years that liability has been shifted about, and now it is £8 a ton on the wrong doing ship's tonnage, with, in the case of loss of life, another £7. Lightermen say they ought to be put on the same footing, but I do not know that the business of owning lighters is seriously interfered with, or interfered with at all, by the present state of the law. The lightermen have no difficulty in insuring themselves, or at any rate I have never heard of any difficulty. The number has increased, as we have been told very largely, and I do not think that the inconvenience of which they speak is a practical one; and if it were I think they would have to bear it. I do not see why they should be relieved. Of course, there are two aspects of the question. There is one in the case of damage done to an innocent third party, where a barge runs into another barge or a ship, and there a lighterman cannot protect himself, and his common law liability, as he says, makes him liable in full for any damage he does. But he is like a shipowner, in this respect, that, as regards any damage done to his own cargo on board he can contract himself out of it. If the ship gets into collision the ship is always liable up to £8 a ton; but with regard to her own cargo there would be a clause in her bill of lading exonerating her from the perils of navigation, and practically in the case of a large and increasing number of lightermen their contracts with goods owners are made on the same basis; that is, on a basis known as a "no recourse against lightermen basis." That number is increasing, and I should think that in the course of time the position with lightermen will be the same as the position with ships; that is, they will contract themselves out of the liability for damage done to their own cargo. I do not know whether in the question you asked you were referring to that, or to the question that they raised as to being able to choose their own servants.

5249. No. That is another question altogether. Have you any views you wish to express as to the Watermen and Lightermen's Company?—I think it is easily summed up by calling it an absurdity. It really is. You might as well, in the interests of the Honourable Company of Tallow Chandlers, cause the "Twopenny Tube" to be lighted with tallow candles.

5250. Do you think the present practice interferes with or retards the progress of the port?—Yes, I think it does, because it makes lightermen much too much the masters of the situation.

5251. Then your opinion is that it is not in the interests of the port that the present arrangement should continue?—No. I should abolish it absolutely. I see no reason at all why a wharfinger should not have an absolutely free choice to choose his own men, the more especially as he personally is responsible for any damage, that is to say, damage done to third parties' cargoes on other vessels. As regards damage done to cargo on his own barge, that is another thing. As I have said, he contracts himself out of it. I should personally be inclined to say give the wharfingers absolutely free and uncontrolled power to choose their own men to navigate their craft, but place some countervailing limit or check on it as regards their rights to contract themselves out of all liability for the cargo they carry.

5252. (*Mr. Peel.*) I want to ask you one question about the roadways that you think ought to be improved. Have you at all considered the question of expense there?—Not at all. I should say it ought to be done whatever the expense.

5253. Perhaps you have not considered either the question of where these roads should run to or from?—My idea is to widen the existing roads. If you go to St. Katharine's Docks you see the roads that the traffic has to pass over, which could be widened to a great extent by moving back the dock fortification.

5254. But as to the general expense of widening these roads, I understand you think it ought to fall on the County Council or the Municipal Authority?—I simply go on the general principle that that is the effect of widening roads; the municipality does it. I do not see why widening a road for a dock should be different from widening a road for other purposes.

5255. And at the same time you would not give the municipality any additional source of revenue for so doing?—I do not know. I have not considered that. They have their own power to increase their rates if they like.

5256. Then you say that the existing system of ownership and management has lasted 100 years, and London has prospered under it. That statement needs qualification, does it not? From previous witnesses we have heard that at certain points the dock accommodation has kept up with the increasing traffic, but I suppose you would hardly say that it does so at present. You said: "But just as the docks have been going from bad to worse during one or two generations, so it must be a long and tedious process to bring them up to date." That is hardly consistent?—I said the port had improved.

5257. The docks are a large portion of the port?—I was dealing with the port as a whole; the port of London. I assume that the port was never so prosperous as it is at the present moment.

5258. At the same time you say that the docks have been going from bad to worse?—That is true.

5259. You have said you thoroughly approve of a trust as regards Liverpool, and you apparently object to a trust controlling the docks and wharves in London. What are the special conditions in London which make you so averse to it in London?—I do not think I said I was averse to it. I said I was entirely in favour of the principle of a trust for London or anywhere else, but I said I do not think the present is the time to introduce it. I said my idea would be to introduce it gradually, instead of all in a heap.

5260. You said that the first step of the trust would be to increase the dock charges right and left. On what considerations do you base that?—First of all it is quite certain that no trust would have any power of raising money unless either by the security of city rates or rates of some kind or another, or else by an increased power of charging. I think it is practically admitted now that there must be increased charges put upon goods. That would necessarily be the first thing. What London is suffering under is the want of rates put on goods. Only 25 per cent. of the goods pay anything.

5261. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I want to follow out your idea of forming a trust a little further. Supposing a trust were formed, would you bring into the trust the whole of the property of the dock companies?—Every bit of it.

5262. Then you would bring in the warehousing interest as well as the quay interest?—Unquestionably. You cannot separate the two.

5263. Do you think it is impossible to separate the two?—Yes.

5264. Then as respects the private warehouse owners on the river, they would be competing with the trust?—Unquestionably.

5265. And that you see no difficulty in?—I see great difficulty. I think if a trust took over the warehouses it would have to proceed to get rid of them—to pull them down or let them. To a great extent they would be required for dock improvements.

5266. What warehouses are you speaking of? Are you speaking of the dock companies' warehouses?—Yes, simply of the dock companies warehouses.

5267. But why should they pull them down if they were not required for dock extension?—I should say in that case let them. You cannot in fairness have a Dock Trust competing with private owners.

5268. You say you could not in fairness have a trust competing in the matter of warehouse facilities and charges with private owners?—No.

5269. Then if you make a trust of the dock property you would have to denude the trust of the warehouse property?—Yes.

5270. That you think would be advisable?—Yes.

5271. And I think you go as far as to say almost necessary?—Yes, and inevitable.

5272. Therefore, what would remain in the trust would be the water way of the dock and the quays, and transit sheds, and matters of that kind, but you would separate the warehouse interest altogether from the docks?—Exactly; so that the whole dock system, as far as the trust system is concerned, would be like Tilbury Dock, where there are no warehouses.

5273. You think that there is great unfairness in a Dock Trust competing with private owners?—Yes.

5274. Why have you considered that there should be a division of authority in the river. Take the case of dredging. Is not the case of dredging the river bound up with the working of the docks?—There is no question of it.

5275. Supposing the authority for dredging had been the dock authority in former times, do you think the river would have been left in its present condition?—I should think it would have been very much worse, because they would have had no money to dredge with.

5276. But I am assuming that they would have had enough money?—Then they would have given adequate water up to the dock sills.

5277. Their interest would have been undoubtedly to keep the entrance to the docks open?—Yes, at all states of the tide.

5278. Just as at Liverpool, where the Dock Trust have spent enormous sums of money in dredging the bar?—Yes.

5279. Which is an indirect advantage to the docks, and a direct advantage to the port?—Yes.

5280. Now, take the case of lighting. One of the great complaints of the shipowners is the great charge for lighting?—I am afraid that is an aspect of the subject that I have not considered at all. I really do not know anything about the lighting.

5281. Supposing the welfare of the port is bound up in the charges which fall on the shipowners, and very heavy charges are made for lighting, does it not seem to you a reason for consolidating the lighting with the dredging in the one trust?—It would certainly be convenient. Undoubtedly it would be convenient, but so long as the different trusts or powers were represented on one another's Boards, and they acted in a friendly way together, I cannot see that it makes any very great amount of difference.

5282. You mean that the trust would have the right to fix the amount of money charged to the ship owner?—Perhaps I did not understand you. I was imagining one trust for the lighting and another trust for the dredging.

5283. I am imagining the very reverse?—I say it would no doubt be more convenient to have one trust for the two, but I do not know that it can be put any higher than that it would be more convenient.

5284. I put it to you that the question of charging that to ships is a very important matter?—You mean that there should be one charge to cover the dredging and the lighting.

5285. It might be that the charges put upon ships for lighting charges are higher than the port will stand as a commercial business?—It is perhaps conceivable.

5286. Would it not be a very unfavourable thing that there should be one authority for the dredging, another for the lighting, and another for various other purposes, so that the persons in authority on the trust would have no voice with regard to those charges?—Yes, I think so.

5287. Then you do not seem to see any difficulty in the consolidation of all those matters, provided, as you say, it is done at a suitable time?—Yes, that is absolutely my view.

5288. You would rather be in favour of the consolidation of all those interests?—Absolutely.

5289. Now, I want to ask you one or two questions about the open quays merely to make plain what I think is in your mind. An open quay on a tidal river with an assumed rise of tide of 25ft., and a depth alongside the quay of 30ft., must have a depth of quay wall very much greater than the depth of the quay wall in a dock?—Quite so.

5290. Measured by the rise of tide?—Something like it.

5291. Thus, if a height of wall of 40ft. were sufficient in a dock you would have to contemplate a height of wall of about 60ft. or 65ft., in a tidal quay to be equally accessible?—Yes, on those lines. Of course, I know Tilbury has 40ft., but you have only ships of 30ft. If you go to 40ft. you are putting 10ft. on to the dock.

5292. I was taking it in this way. First of all you have 30ft. alongside the quays for the shipping, have you not?—30ft. in the dock?

5293. Yes. Then the coping must be higher than the water?—Yes, 5ft. That is 35ft.

5294. Then you have to contemplate some possible deposit in the dock?—Yes.

5295. Which we will take at 5ft.?—It is rather extreme to call it 5ft.

5296. That makes 40ft.; and if you have the same quay in the open river you must have 50ft.?—You have to add about 20ft. for the rise and fall of the tide.

5297. In addition to that the length of quay space which could be given is obviously limited all the length of the river course, for open quays?—Clearly.

5298. Whereas, if you go and cut into the land you may extend the number of lineal yards of quay to any extent you like?—Yes.

5299. Quite independently of the length of the river itself?—Nothing to do with it at all.

5300. And in that way a dock could be concentrated near the place where the convenience is greatest and much better than by constructing docks?—Yes.

5301. Tidal or otherwise?—Yes.

5302. But in the case of the Thames, having a rise of 25ft. it is not a convenient thing for tidal docks?—It is 20ft., is it not?

5303. Well, say, 20ft.?—Whatever it may be.

5304. Now, I want to follow out your plan about the canal. How far off the ship would the canal be?—You have, first of all, your quay. Then you have your shed, then you have your quay the other side of the shed, and then the canal.

5305. What would that amount to?—I suppose the dock quay would be about 40ft., the shed 120ft., and then perhaps 20ft. again for the canal quay—something like that.

5306. That would be 180ft. distant from the ship's side?—Yes.

5307. Then all the goods would have to be wheeled or trolleyed, and in some way taken over that distance?—Yes. 40ft. is the ordinary width of dock quay, I think, and 120ft., I think, is the width of the shed. If goods are going away by train they have 160ft. to go on the quays.

5308. That is if traffic is going by train?—Yes.

5309. Not barge traffic?—No.

5310. Barge traffic is discharged over side?—What goes into the shed has to be carried across the quay, and into the shed, and on to the other side.

5311. Then what goes on the canal would have to cross the lines of rails at right angles?—Yes, right across, but, of course, those lines of rails are not continually being used by trains. As a matter of practice at different docks they are not very often occupied by wagons.

5312. There is not a very large amount of railway traffic goes away from the dock, is there?—No, I should not think so.

5313. Then the distance you would have to take all the goods would be about 180ft.?—Thereabouts.

5314. Would you forbid the barges to come alongside the ship on the other side?—No, not at all. They would go along the same as usual. The complaint is that shipowners in order to save time are obliged to land their goods on the quay and sort them in the shed.

5315. To some extent?—To a very large extent. The P. and O. Company, I think, put about 30 per cent. overside straight, but they have made a study of it. In the case of an ordinary steamer coming she cannot afford the time to discharge overside. She runs the goods straight into the shed.

5316. Then all that could be put out on the other

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side of the ship would be put out?—Yes, just the same as at present. In the case of sugar or grain the difficulty does not arise. It is where you have to sort the cargo. It is the general cargo ship that makes the difficulty.

5317. Have you ever been to Marseilles?—Yes, I have been there several times, but I have never studied the docks there.

5318. Have you seen where the ship is boomed out and barges come in between the ship and the quay side?—Yes, I think I remember that.

5319. Apart from the additional swing of the cranes to reach the hold of the ship is there any objection to that?—There is the initial objection still there. How are you going to sort the cargo. The cargo must be landed to be sorted. You cannot sort your cargo on board ship.

5320. But supposing it goes on to the quay, and goes direct back from the quay into the barges, it has not to go 180ft., and cross several lines of railway?—No, but Marseilles and London are different places. There is plenty of room at Marseilles. There is no pressure.

5321. But this is a new scheme where you might propose to have the requisite amount of space?—Yes, but I am proposing it for London not for Marseilles. If the conditions are what they are at Marseilles by all means do it there.

5322. If you want to land cargo and put it back into the barges afterwards, is it not more convenient to put it back over the quay side than to take it 180ft.?—Yes, only the ships are so big. What are you going to do with the cargo? You will block the whole quay if you leave it there. You had better put it into the shed.

5323. I assume you put it into the shed, and then bring it back?—Does it matter very much whether you bring it back to the barge alongside the dock quay or take it to the canal quay?

5324. The difficulty is that you have to cross two lines of railway, and go 180ft.?—I do not think the railway matters, and as to trundling across the floor of the shed, what is it after all?

5325. It all means money, does it not?—A very small sum of money. I do not mean to say that that scheme is ideal, but it is the best I can think of. I can see none better; there are so many conflicting interests to reconcile.

5326. There is no doubt that every ship owner demands more quay space?—That is so.

5327. The great object at the present time is to have a great amount of quay space to discharge these large ships and save demurrage?—Yes.

5328. And every demand is always for greater and greater width, and two storeys?—Either width or two storeys. You must have the space somehow.

5329. If you had the width, two storeys would not be so good as additional width, would it?—I think two storeys would be better, because you have the double discharge going on at the same time.

5330. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Your general proposal as regards cost, I see, is that the consumer shall pay?—Yes.

5331. And you have taken a great expenditure as necessary?—Yes.

5332. That would be a charge on the goods?—Yes.

5333. I see you indicate also a further opinion that London at large, or even the nation at large, ought to pay something?—I think it would not be unreasonable that it should. Personally as far as I am concerned I should be quite willing to see everything taken out of the goods.

5334. Of course directly you get a charge on London, which would be a charge on the rates, you have the question of representation?—Yes.

5335. That is a difficulty that you acknowledge you would have to face?—Yes.

5336. And if further you made a charge on the Imperial Exchequer you would also have similar questions?—Yes, from Liverpool and elsewhere.

5337. Supposing Liverpool or Bristol to be in a similar condition of impecuniosity, would you regard that as a national question?—That is very difficult to say. It might be a national question. I think it would not be for the good of the nation, for instance, that owing to the want of funds either Liverpool or Bristol should be allowed to decline. But it is a difficult question.

5338. Is there any specific reason in your mind for drawing a distinction between Bristol and Liverpool, and London?—No, except that London is the capital, and London is England.

5339. Supposing what you suggested just now to be adopted, and supposing there was a further charge upon goods, I presume a large amount of goods must necessarily, in any event, charge them what you will, come to London?—Yes.

5340. And I suppose there is also a large class of goods which may go to London, or may go to Southampton, Bristol, or Liverpool, or other competing ports?—Yes, to some extent. The Midland cities are a sort of Tom Tiddler's ground for the various ports.

5341. Have you considered the effect upon London of raising the charge upon goods in competition with these other ports?—I do not think it would have any effect at all.

5342. Do you think the traffic would bear it?—Absolutely. My idea is that Southampton and Bristol would be only too pleased to put their rates up a bit. At present they only keep them down because of London. In any case the few pence put upon the goods would not make any difference at all. It would be a mere bagatelle.

Mr. ROBERT URWIN called and examined.

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5343. (*Chairman.*) You have been the secretary of the Tyne Improvement Commissioners since April, 1880?—Yes.

5344. What position did you hold previous to that?—I was secretary to the Newcastle Committee of the North-Eastern Railway Company and mineral traffic manager.

5345. You have been good enough to supply the Commission with answers to a number of questions which were put with regard to the docks on the Tyne?—Yes.

5346. We should now like to hear from you as to the constitution of the Tyne Improvement Commission, and as to the general working of the Commissioners' Docks?—Prior to the year 1850 ("from time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," to quote the words of Section 27 of the River Tyne Improvement Act, 1850), the Conservancy of the Port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and of the River Tyne, was vested in the Corporation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In that year the River Tyne Improvement Act, 1850 (13 and 14 Victoria, chapter 63), entitled "An Act for the improvement and regulation of the River Tyne, and the navigation thereof, and for other purposes," was passed, and eighteen Commissioners, to be called "The Tyne Improvement Commissioners," were appointed to carry out the powers thereby conferred upon them, namely:—

4 Persons named in the Act. Two not to be replaced on their death or resignation. Successors to the other two to be appointed from time to time by the Admiralty (now by the Board of Trade).

6 Persons to be appointed by the Newcastle Council.

2 Persons to be appointed by the Gateshead Council.

3 Persons to be appointed by the Tynemouth Council.

3 Persons elected by the Improvement Commissions of South Shields.

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These Commissioners were appointed the "Conservators of the port, and of the River" (the limits of which are defined by the Act to extend from Hedwin Streams to Spar Hawke in the sea, including all streams, havens, creeks, bays, and inlets within the flow and reflow of the tide), and all the rights, powers, privileges, authorities, immunities, duties, and responsibilities whatsoever, vested in the Corporation with respect to the Conservancy of the port and the river, and the improvement, maintenance and repair

of the port, and the river and the quays, banks, and shores thereof, except so far as regards rates, tolls, and dues, were vested in the Commissioners. The Act incorporated parts of the Commissioners' Clauses Act, 1847, parts of the "Harbours, Docks, and Piers Clauses Act, 1847," and parts of the "Companies Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845," and empowered the Commissioners, *inter alia*, to "build, purchase, hire, and employ vessels to be worked by steam, or otherwise, for dredging, scouring, cleansing, and deepening the bed of the river, so far as they lawfully can or may," and to make bye-laws for regulating the removal and disposal of ballast brought by vessels into the port, and for regulating the supply of ballast to vessels. It also enacted that certain ancient dues received by the Corporation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne should be carried by the Corporation to the credit of a separate and distinct account, to be called the "Tyne Improvement Fund," for carrying the Act into execution by the Commissioners, and that certain principal sums (amounting to £67,349), borrowed by the Corporation, and expended by them in the improvement of the river, and the interest thereon, and also the price (£12,000) of certain lands at Howdon, contracted to be purchased by the Corporation for the purpose of executing certain works for the improvement of the river, together with all costs and charges in connection with the purchase, should be borne by the Tyne Improvement Fund, and authorised the Commissioners to borrow £30,000 additional on the security of the Tyne Improvement Fund. By the Tyne Improvement Act, 1857, the Commissioners were incorporated under the name of "The Tyne Improvement Commissioners." Since the Commission was formed in 1850, several additions to the number of its members have been made, and the electorate has been enlarged. During the first 25 years of its existence, in which period the powers of the Commissioners had been enlarged, and the trade of the Tyne, and the dues received by the Commissioners, had considerably increased, there was no direct representation of dues payers on the Commission. Owing to a desire expressed by merchants, shipowners and traders, for representation on the Commission (not because of any complaint of inefficient administration by the then existing Board) the Tyne Improvement Act, 1875, was promoted and passed, and the first increase in the number of Commissioners took place. By that Act it was provided that six additional members should be elected (every three years) by the three classes of payers of Tyne dues, namely, shipowners, coal owners, and traders, making a total of 24 Commissioners. The dues payers were at the same time empowered to elect an auditor of the Commissioners' accounts. In April, 1881, one of the life members named in the Act of 1850 died. As by this Act, his place was not to be filled the number of Commissioners was thus reduced to 23. The next extension of the Commission took place in 1886, when the claim of the Corporation of Jarrow (which had been incorporated on the 4th June, 1875), to representation, was met by the addition of another member, to be appointed by that Corporation, under the provisions of the Tyne Improvement Act, 1886. The total number of Commissioners was thus again brought up to 24. The third and last extension was made 12 years later, when the Tyne Dues Payers, having demanded increased representation, and promoted a Bill with that object, the Tyne Improvement (Constitution and Works) Act, 1898, was passed, by which the number of representatives elected by ship owners, coal owners, and traders, was increased from six to 15, thus bringing the total number of Commissioners up to 33, to be ultimately reduced to 32, on the death or resignation of the last surviving life member, nominated in the Act of 1850, whose place is not to be filled. Excluding the life members, therefore, the representation is now divided equally between the riparian municipalities and the payers of Tyne dues. The following table shows the various changes which have taken place in the constitution and membership of the Commission from its commencement up to the present time:—

TYNE IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS.

Under Act of	Life Members.	Elected annually by the Corporations of						Elected every Three Years by Dues Payers.				GRAND TOTAL.
		Newcastle.	Gateshead.	Tynemouth.	South Shields.	Jarrow.	Total.	Shipowners.	Coalowners.	Traders.	Total.	
1850 - -	4	6	2	3	3	—	14	—	—	—	—	18
1875 - - -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	2	6	6
1886 - - -	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
1898 - - .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3	3	9	9
	4	6	2	3	3	1	15	5	5	5	15	34
Died, April, 1881 (not replaced)	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Present Constitution.	3	6	2	3	3	1	15	5	5	5	15	33

* Successors to two of these to be appointed from time to time by the Board of Trade. No successors to the other two, on their death or resignation, so that ultimately the number of Life Members will be reduced to two, and the total number of the members on the Commission to 32.

5347. Who are the persons eligible to be Commissioners?—Persons eligible to be Commissioners are:—Life members: Appointed under the River Tyne Improvement Act, 1850. Municipal representatives: Persons who are members or qualified to be members of the several Councils. Dues Payers' representatives: Persons whose names are on the list of any class of electors, or persons nominated in accordance with Section 7 of the Tyne Improvement Act, 1890, as amended by Section 51 of the Tyne Improvement Act, 1897. The three classes of dues payers, namely (1) shipowners; (2) coalowners; and (3) traders, are respectively described to be:—(1) Persons (including in such expression partnerships, co-ownerships, and companies) residing or carrying on business in the district situate within five miles from any part of the port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, as defined by the Tyne Act of 1850, paying Tyne dues (which district is referred to as the Tyne District), and being registered in the books of the respective Custom Houses of the ports of Newcastle-on-Tyne, North Shields, and South Shields (which custom houses and ports are referred to as the three custom houses, and the three ports) as owners or part owners of vessels registered as belonging to the three ports respectively. (2) Persons (including in such expression partnerships and companies) being owners, lessees, or occupiers of coal mines, who deliver or put on board vessels on the Tyne, or in any of the docks

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thereof, coal, coke or cinders. (3) Persons (including in such expression partnerships and companies) residing or carrying on business within the Tyne district, and paying Tyne dues, rates, tolls or charges. Lists of electors in the three classes of dues payers are prepared by the Commissioners every third year from statements supplied by the shipowners and coalowners, and accounts of the dues paid to the Commissioners by the traders—for the twelve months ending on the 31st December, preceding the year of election. The voting power of electors in each of the three classes of dues payers is defined in section 14 of the Tyne Improvement Act, 1890. Shortly stated, it is as follows:—Scale of votes: Electors on the list of shipowners are entitled to one vote for the first 100 tons of net register tonnage, and one additional vote for every additional 250 tons up to a maximum of 18 votes, that is 4,350 tons register. Electors on the list of coalowners are entitled to one vote for 10,000 tons of coal shipped, and one additional vote for every additional 25,000 tons up to a maximum of 18 votes, that is 435,000 tons. Electors on the list of traders are entitled to one vote for payment of £10 of dues (other than dues on ships and ballast), one additional vote for every additional £25 of such dues paid up to a maximum of 18 votes, that is £435 of dues paid.

5348. Now, will you tell us as to the committees that are appointed?—For the purpose of carrying on the work of the Commission, there are seven committees, who are appointed every year, and who report regularly their proceedings to the Board. First there is a "Finance Committee," which meets every fortnight, and oftener if required. Then there is a "Dredging and River Works Committee," which meets every month, which has charge of all the works connected with dredging and improving the river. Then the "Docks Committee" meets every month, and has charge of the administration of the docks. Then there is a "Piers Committee," which meets every month, which has charge of the two Tyne piers on the north and south sides of the harbour entrance. Then there is a "Harbour and Ferry Committee," which meets every month. We took over certain ferries in 1863 from a private company—to destroy a monopoly really. That committee has charge of the ferries, and also of the moorings in the river. Then there is a "Harbour Lights, Buoys, and Beacons Committee," which meets every three months. In 1883, the Commissioners took over the High and Low lighthouses, the leading lights in the Tyne, and certain buoys and beacons, and a committee was appointed to look after that business. Then there is a "Parliamentary Committee," which meets as often as required. Then besides those committees there are several sub-committees appointed from time to time to deal with certain subjects which arise.

5349. Now, will you tell us as to the general working of the Commissioners' Docks?—The dock system of the Tyne Improvement Commissioners is situated on the north side of the river Tyne, and comprises:—(1) The Northumberland Dock, constructed under the authority of the Tyne Improvement Act, 1852, and opened for traffic in June, 1857. (2) Four river staiths, eastward of the Northumberland Dock, constructed under the authority of the Tyne Improvement Act, 1867, two of which were opened for traffic in March, 1874, and two in May, 1891. (3) The Albert Edward Dock, eastward of the river staiths, constructed under the authority of the Tyne Improvement Act, 1872, and opened in August, 1884, by their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales. An additional river staith is at present under construction by the Commissioners. These docks and staiths have all direct connection with the North-Eastern Railway, and with certain private colliery lines. They form one system, and are worked in common, under one management. The executive staff is controlled by a dock superintendent, an assistant dock superintendent, a dock master, two deputy dock masters, and various foremen. The entire dock estate consists of 357¼ acres. The water area of the docks (including basins) is 84¼ acres, and the land area of the docks is 273 acres. It contains about 40 miles of railways and sidings; 17 coal shipping staiths; three brick built warehouses—one on the dock quay at the Albert Edward Dock for the storage of grain and general merchandise; and two in connection with the Northumberland Dock (situated about a mile from both docks) for the storage of nitrate of soda, guano, and general merchandise; and 12 wooden sheds at different parts of the Dock Estate for the storage of deals, battens, and boards, "under cover," besides a considerable area of ground which has been drained and levelled, and made available for the storage of deals, battens and boards, timber, props and other goods, in the "open." Part of this ground is let by the Commissioners to merchants and others on short tenancies, at annual rentals. In other cases, rent is charged for the space occupied at monthly or other intervals.

5350. Have you a plan of the Dock Estate?—Yes.

(*The witness handed in a plan of the Dock Estate.*)

5351. What is the staple export of the docks?—The staple export at the Commissioners' Docks is coal and coke. The other exports consist chiefly of bricks, grindstones, chemicals, lead, iron plates, pig iron, and cement. The imports consist chiefly of timber, pit props, deals, battens, and boards, telegraph poles, and grain, provisions, nitrate of soda, and guano. For the year 1900 the exports of coal and coke amounted to 3,307,200 tons, the exports of general merchandise to 71,800 tons, and the imports of general merchandise to 175,500 tons. For the working of traffic within their dock estate the Commissioners have 10 locomotive engines and 420 wagons, 10 steam and 20 hydraulic cranes, and 9 hydraulic hoists, besides several hydraulic capstans.

5352. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Do those figures with regard to exports include what was exported by the docks belonging to the railway company?—No. I may mention that the entire exports of coal from the Tyne, which includes the docks you refer to and our own docks also, for the same year 1900 amounted to 14,520,929 tons.

5353. So that your dock had about a fourth part of the business?—Yes.

5354. (*Chairman.*) Now will you tell us the method of working as to coal and coke?—From the plan which you have before you, you will see that the Commissioners have certain standage sidings. The method of working is as follows:—Coal and coke, for shipment at Albert Edward Dock and river staiths is, by arrangement with the Commissioners, led over their railway to standage sidings provided by them in connection with their shipping staiths, a distance of nearly a mile, in the wagons and by the locomotives and men of the North-Eastern Railway Company and the colliery companies, whose railways connect with the Commissioners' Dock system. From these standage sidings the laden wagons are taken by the Commissioners' men to the respective staiths, and unloaded or "teemed" into the vessel. The wagons when emptied are run from the staith head to sidings on a lower level, from which they are removed by the locomotives of the North-Eastern Railway Company or the colliery owners as the case may be. The coal and coke is trimmed in the vessel by "trimmers," who are appointed by the Commissioners, but paid according to a recognised tariff of charges by the owners of the vessel. At Northumberland Dock the coal shipping staiths and the railways leading thereto belong partly to the North-Eastern Railway Company and partly to colliery companies, who make their own arrangements for leading and shipping the coal, and for trimmers. At Albert Edward Dock the Commissioners have recently provided on the dock quay a 23-ton hydraulic crane, by means of which heavy goods, or a wagon laden with coal or coke, can be lifted and swung over the hatchway of a vessel lying alongside.

5355. Does this arrangement also apply to the General Merchandise Dock?—No, that is entirely as far as coal is concerned.

5356. Now, will you describe the mode of dealing with the general merchanise traffic other than coal and coke?—To and from Northumberland Dock and the North-Eastern Railway it is worked by the North-Eastern Railway Company's locomotives and men, in railway wagons, over the Commissioners' railway, between its junction with the company's system and exchange sidings provided by the Commissioners on the Dock Estate, a distance of about a mile. To and from Albert Edward Dock and the North-Eastern Railway it is worked by the railway company's locomotives in railway wagons, over the Commissioners' railway, between the junction with the company's system and exchange sidings at the dock side, a distance of about a mile. Traffic to and from collieries in direct communication with the Commissioners' Docks is conveyed over the Commissioners' railways to and from the exchange sidings in the wagons, and by the locomotives of the North Eastern Railway Company or the colliery owners. Between the exchange sidings and the docks, and other parts of the Dock Estate, the traffic is worked by the Commissioners' locomotives and men. Traffic between ship and warehouse, and storage sheds, and storage ground on the Dock Estate is worked by the

Commissioners' locomotives and wagons, except where it is transferred direct from or to ship and the warehouse at Albert Edward Dock, by the dock cranes, or where it can be carried by hand to or from ship or storage ground, in which cases the manual labour is supplied by the Commissioners or the merchants. Wagons are loaded and unloaded by men engaged directly or through a contractor, by the Commissioners or the merchant. The cases wherein the merchant does the work are practically confined to wood goods. Wagons loaded to be forwarded by rail are shunted by the Commissioners' locomotives into the exchange sidings, from which they are taken by the North-Eastern Railway Company or the colliery companies, as the case may be. For traffic to be forwarded by the North-Eastern Railway the Commissioners' officials make out and hand consignment notes to the company's agent stationed at the dock. Traffic to and from the docks is invoiced, and carriage rates thereon are charged by the North-Eastern Railway Company. For traffic to and from colliery railways having direct connection with the dock system an account for the Commissioners' charges is rendered by them to the merchant ordering the traffic to be forwarded. For discharging and loading vessels, and for storing the cargoes in the warehouses and sheds, or on the storage ground, the Commissioners provide cranes and other appliances (with men to work them), and employ contractors, who are responsible for obtaining a sufficient number of suitable men for the handling of the cargoes. In some instances the shipowner or the merchant supplies the necessary manual labour himself. All stowing on board vessels is done by the crew, or men employed by the shipowner.

5357. You have told us that in the year 1850 the Tyne Improvement Commissioners replaced the previous port authority?—Yes. There was an outcry against the Newcastle Corporation prior to 1850, and the result was the passing of the River Tyne Improvement Act, 1850, whereby eighteen members were appointed as Conservators for the improvement and maintenance of the River Tyne.

5358. Has the transfer been found beneficial?—Yes, as instanced by the large development which has taken place in the trade and commerce of the port.

5359. Is the constitution of the Commission satisfactory in your opinion?—Yes. The last increase in the constitution was as late as 1898, and, as I have intimated, the representatives from the riparian municipalities were made 15, and the dues payers' representatives 15, in addition to the three life members, the three being reduced to two when one of them dies. I should like just to mention a figure or two to show the development. When the Commission took over the Conservancy, in 1850, the gross revenue receipts amounted to £15,470. In 1875 when the first increase in the constitution took place there was £177,873 of gross revenue. The next increase that took place was in 1886, when the gross revenue receipts amounted to £262,556. In 1898 when the last increase took place, our revenue amounted in round figures to £375,000. Last year the gross revenue was £383,506.

5360. Will you explain the system of lightering in the docks, and tell us whether the Commissioners levy any charges upon lighters or upon goods discharged into lighters?—We levy a charge upon all goods discharged into lighters, in addition to which we levy a charge on the lighter itself of 1s. per lighter up to 50 tons. If a lighter carries more than 50 tons we charge a penny per ton above 50 tons.

5361. So all goods coming into the docks pay some dues?—Yes.

5362. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Has the North-Eastern Railway Company a monopoly there?—Yes.

5363. No other company has running powers?—No other railway company. I believe the North British under an arrangement with the North-Eastern have running powers in certain eventualities from Morpeth down to our dock. The North-Eastern work the traffic satisfactorily, and therefore there is no need for the North British to exercise their running powers. In addition there are two or three colliery lines which communicate with the dock without the intervention of the North-Eastern Railway Company.

5364. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) The Corporations that are represented are not contributory in any way, are they, as Corporations?—No.

5365. And never have been?—No.

5366. But the special circumstance at Newcastle, touching the Corporation of Newcastle, is that they are dockowners, is it not?—No. The Tyne Commissioners are the only dockowners in addition to the North-Eastern Railway Company.

5367. Are the Corporation owners of quays?—Yes, at Newcastle they have what is called the Town Quay—a quay which existed long before the Tyne Commission was formed, which has since been very greatly improved, and at which a large amount of traffic is discharged, and on which there is a large private warehouse. At least it is a private company which owns it. It is a large grain warehouse.

5368. Then their interest is as large owners of riverside property?—Yes.

5369. Are the other corporations owners of riverside property?—Gateshead in 1854, after a large fire which burnt down a lot of property, formed a quay, but they have never done a great deal of business at it. The traffic seems to be on the wrong side of the river. I do not know how it is, or why it is, that they do not succeed, but they never have done very much. Then at North Shields there is a small quay, and at South Shields, between South Shields and Tyne Dock, there is a small quay, and at Blaydon, in the upper reaches of the river, there is a small quay.

5370. It seems rather peculiar to the Tyne that half the total number of Commissioners are representatives of corporations?—I think the reason for that may be taken to be this: the river was formerly administered by the Corporation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne exclusively, and when the agitation took place and the Act of 1850 was passed the Corporations of North Shields and South Shields and Gateshead were prime movers in addition to the merchants and shipowners of the district; and I suppose it has been regarded as a satisfactory arrangement that if they balanced the representation of Newcastle by other corporations, the case would be met, the corporations at that date, I suppose, representing the trade of the district. That is the only explanation I can give you. But since then in 1875, and again in 1898, the dues payers have been introduced in numbers equal to those of the corporations.

5371. Is it not somewhat peculiar to the Tyne that the corporations should have such a preponderating voice?—No, I do not think it is peculiar to the Tyne. I rather think that on the Clyde Commission corporations are largely represented.

5372. They are represented?—And very largely, I think, in proportion. I do not remember the proportions exactly.

5373. Then with regard to the work done since 1850 and the revenue, I suppose some of the expenditure has been on docks?—Yes. We have spent about a million and a half on docks, and the railways, and the river staiths, which are all connected with the docks, as shown upon the plan; and we spent nearly three millions of money upon the river in dredging, deepening, widening it, and cutting off promontories; and we are still going on completing the works.

5374. What dues do you get out of ships that do not go into your docks?—We get what we call a river tonnage due on all vessels entering and leaving the Tyne with cargo. I can hand in a copy of the tariff containing the Tyne Commissioners' "River Tonnage and other Dues."

(*The witness handed in a copy of the tariff.*)

In addition to that, every vessel using the Tyne, having to pass the Tyne piers, pays what we call a pier due; and in addition to that also, the Commissioners are entitled to levy, and do levy, an old due of a farthing a ton upon every vessel for the provision of moorings and of river police. Under the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Port Act, 1845, the Newcastle Corporation, who had been urged by the shipowners, were authorised to establish a river police and to put down moorings; and the shipowners consented at that time to a rate of one farthing per ton register being levied upon every ship, and we have continued that charge ever since.

5375. The pier due, I suppose, is in respect of the great improvement in the breakwaters?—Yes. It was originally for the purpose of forming the piers. Under our Act of 1852 for that purpose we got power to levy a due, and we have continued to do it ever since.

5376. What is the aggregate of all these tolls that are levied on ships that do not go into the Commissioners' Docks?—I can tell you what it was last year.

5377. I mean the aggregate per ton?—That is a difficult question to answer, but I can give it you approximately. For the year 1900 we had outward with cargo

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7,535,898 register tons, and we got £118,248 of dues. That works out at 3·76d. per ton.

5378. About 3¾d. per ton?—Yes, about that.

5379. Why is it difficult to calculate that?—It is not difficult to calculate what I have given you at all, but what I have in my head as your meaning is what was the average rate we were getting from vessels which also used our docks.

5380. No. I wanted to know what have the ships paid for facilities which they use whether they are going into your docks or not. That you say is about 3¾d. per ton?—Yes.

5381. You are the exclusive dredging authority, are you not?—Yes.

5382. Are you also the lighting authority?—Yes.

5383. Are you the exclusive lighting authority?—Yes, we are the exclusive lighting authority within the port.

5384. Are the lighting dues included in the 3¾d. per ton?—Yes, but they are very trifling. Under an old Act of 1801 there were tariff dues authorised, which the Trinity House of Newcastle-on-Tyne operated; and when we by mutual arrangement took over the Trinity House in 1883, the High and Low leading lights in the Tyne, we took over the power to levy these dues, and we have continued to levy them ever since.

5385. Then you took the duties of lighting over from the Trinity House?—Yes.

5386. Was that considered advantageous as an arrangement?—Yes.

5387. Do you also light the river all the way up as far as the ships go?—No. We have no guiding lights excepting on the two ends of the Tyne piers, which the Commissioners themselves erected, and one on the south side of the harbour entrance, called the Groyne Light, which was erected by the Trinity House before we took the lighting over.

5388. Is there no lighting of the river further up than that?—No, there are no guiding lights at all.

5389. If there were any guiding lights would you be responsible for them if you thought them necessary?—Yes, we have power to do that.

5390. The Trinity House have nothing whatever to do with that?—No.

5391. You are also the ferry authority, are you not?—Yes, with this exception. We took over in 1863 what were called the North and South Shields ferries. There were two lines of ferries between North and South Shields, and one further west, between Whitehill Point (near to the Commissioners' Docks) and South Shields, and we have continued to work them in the interests of the public ever since. But in 1862 the Tyne General Ferry Company, as it is now called, was promoted, and it sought power at that time to provide cross-river, as well as up and down river, accommodation. The Commissioners of that day, having the idea that it would create a monopoly, resisted that, but they agreed to their having the power on a journey from a point up river down to Tynemouth, for instance, to call on the way at the landing stages on each side of the river, and take up passengers intending to go down or up the river.

5392. Speaking generally with regard to the navigation of the Tyne, all the powers and privileges are consolidated in the Tyne Commissioners, are they not?—No.

5393. Is there any conflicting authority?—There is no conflicting authority, but the pilotage, for instance, has a separate Board under The (Tyne) Pilotage Order Confirmation Act of 1865. That was before there was very much improvement made in the river. That has worked very well. I believe we work in harmony with them and they with us.

5394. Are the Tyne Commissioners represented on the Pilotage Board?—Yes, there are 17 members on that Board. There are five representing the Trinity House of Newcastle, who originally had the pilotage under their jurisdiction.

5395. That is not the Trinity House of London, is it?—No. There are six representatives from shipowners on the local register, there are two sent by the Tyne Commissioners, two by the licensed pilots, that is pilots licensed to pilot vessels in and outside of the river, and there are two representatives sent by the Board of Trade. That is 17 in all.

5396. Were the people who used to do the lighting the local Trinity House?—Yes, the Trinity House of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

5397. (*Mr. Peel.*) The great bulk of your trade is coal trade, is it not?—Yes.

5398. Then I suppose you do not do very much warehousing?—As I have said, we have a warehouse at the Albert Edward Dock.

5399. But do you find that the amount of the warehousing you do is less than it used to be in relation to the amount of general trade?—No. It is not very large at the best, but it is increasing. It has increased since we opened the Albert Edward Dock. That dock was opened in 1884, and I think the amount of warehousing has gradually increased, and the other conveniences which I have set out in connection with the Northumberland Dock have been more fully occupied than they were in earlier years.

5400. Is the coal that comes brought mainly by the railways?—It is brought mainly from collieries on the North-Eastern Railway, and the North-Eastern Railway Company provide wagons and locomotives by which that coal is brought to our docks.

5401. Then it is not brought by lighter into the docks?—No. There is a very trifling amount brought in in that way. If anything is brought in in that way it is under these circumstances. Say, for the sake of argument, a vessel is loading a particular kind of coal or goods, or take the Norwegian mail steamers which run from our docks. In certain cases I have known bunker coal has been crafted into the dock for them, but it is comparatively small. It is nothing to speak of. All the shipment of coal practically is by staiths, as we call them.

5402. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In the case of barges unloading to a ship or barges loading from a ship in the stream do you charge them anything?—If they use our buoys we make a charge upon the vessel. I think it was in 1890 we took power to make a charge upon vessels loaded thereat or unloaded thereat. Where a vessel used our moorings which were put down for the purpose of mooring ships waiting for cargo at a particular staith or jetty, and used them for the purpose of a wharf practically or a loading place, we obtained power to levy a charge on the ship, which we now do.

5403. Do you make any charge on the barge?—No, not upon the barge. We take it upon the vessel loading or discharging cargo from or to the barge.

5404. Do the Commissioners receive any fees?—No; all their services are gratuitous, and I must confess they put in a good deal of time.

5405. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) How much of your gross income of £333,000 comes from your own docks?—In the year 1900 we had £71,834 from the dock system. That is gross revenue.

5406. I think you told Sir John Wolfe-Barry that you had £118,000 from shipping not coming to your own docks?—Then I misunderstood Sir John if that is so. I will give you the exact proportions.

5407. Will you give us the principal items making up the £383,000 gross income?—For the year 1900 from shipping entirely, whether in the river or our own docks, including shipping in and out of the Tyne, we earned £195,208, which is practically 50·90 per cent. of the total.

5408. And the greater part of that shipping would be shipping that did not come into your own docks?—Yes. Of the 14,520,929 tons of coal shipped last year nearly seven millions is shipped at the Tyne Docks belonging to the North-Eastern Railway Company, and between one and two millions is shipped at Dunston Staith, which is higher up the river, also belonging to the North-Eastern Railway Company. We shipped 3,307,200 tons, and the rest was shipped at private coal shipping staiths on the river. I may mention for the information of the Commission that this amount is made up mainly in this way. The Tyne Commissioners are authorised to levy a Tyne Export Due of 1½d. on all coal exported. That means, including the dock due on the coal shipped at the Commissioners' docks, £88,242 in addition to what I have given, which is 23 per cent. of the total receipts. Then dues upon goods amounted to £62,187, representing 16·21 per cent. of the total. Then there are miscellaneous items making up £37,867, or a proportion of 9·88 per cent. of the total receipts for the year.

5409. But the figures are not arranged in such a way that you can tell us how much comes from goods and shipping using your own docks and how much from other goods and shipping?—No, but I shall be very pleased to get it for you and hand it in.

5410. I think it might be convenient that we should

know that?—I will have that taken out, and will hand it into the Commission.

(The witness handed in a statement of the Tyne Improvement Commission Consolidated Fund Revenue receipts, showing percentage of dues received from shipping, coal, goods, and miscellaneous (river and docks separately) in 1900. *See Appendix, 15th day, No.* 1.)

5411. What are your principal items of outlay?—Of course you are speaking of revenue outlay?

5412. Yes?—I may mention, to begin with, that we originally had, and have yet, for our own internal purposes, four funds. One fund, called the Tyne Improvement Fund, which is a fund for the improvement and maintenance of the river and works in connection therewith. The second fund is what we call the River Moorings Fund. That is a fund under which all charges for putting down moorings and maintaining moorings come. Then the third fund is the Tyne Piers Fund, which, of course, speaks for itself. The fourth fund is the Northumberland Dock Fund. Although we have two docks, and river staiths, by our Acts authorising these, they are one concern, and all income and outlay is charged to the "Northumberland Dock Fund." Taking the year 1900, in the Tyne Improvement Fund, the largest item out of a total of £77,000 was for maintenance dredging. The charge we made to revenue for maintaining the channel which had already previously been dredged was £36,250, out of a total of £77,705. Then we had salaries and collection of dues, £6,390; port and harbour charges of a general character, £7,700; engineering and contingencies, £4,000.

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Then under that head came the North and South Shields Steam Ferries, which represent an expenditure of £12,303. Then there are Imperial taxes, and so on, and sundry other items, making up £77,705. The maintenance of river police involved £3,634.

5413. I think perhaps you are going more into detail than is necessary. Will you give us some larger items?—These are the two largest under that head. The Tyne Piers Fund only aggregated £7,376 all told. Then, going to the Northumberland Dock Fund, the whole of the expenses in connection with the import and export of traffic at the docks, such as the shipment of coal and the labourage, where the Commissioners bear the charges, aggregated £38,406.

5414. Where do you get the £383,000 of income expended?—I am endeavouring to explain that all these items aggregated together represent £153,394. Then the interest which is charged to revenue on our mortgage debt amounted for the year to £154,569. These two items together aggregate £307,863, which left us a surplus of £75,642 upon the year, which amount is expended upon works. Instead of borrowing to that extent for works we apply the revenue surplus year by year.

5415. Have you expended anything in addition out of borrowed money of late years?—Yes. What we have done is this: With regard to our capital account, we have standing against it a sum of £5,733,251. We have met that out of surplus revenue, to the extent of £1,581,768, the residue of £4,151,482 having been met out of borrowed money.

5416. Since 1850?—Yes.

Mr. JOHN DIXON called and examined.

Mr. J. Dixon.

5417. (*Chairman.*) You are the Docks and Marine Superintendent of the Southampton Docks, and have held that position since their purchase by the London and South-Western Railway Company in 1892?—Yes.

5418. You are also Specific Commissioner of the Southampton Harbour Board?—Yes.

5419. You were also formerly General Superintendent of the Swansea Harbour Trust, 1888 to 1892; manager of the Sharpness New Docks and Birmingham Navigation Company from 1885 to 1887; general manager of the Bristol Port and Channel Dock Company, Avonmouth, from 1878 to 1885; general manager of King's Lynn Docks and Railway Company, from 1869 to 1878; and prior to that Assistant-Superintendent of the North-Eastern Railway Company's Tyne Docks?—Yes.

5420. Will you describe to us the position of the Southampton Docks and the accommodation?—The Southampton Docks are distant from the English Channel 26 miles, two-thirds of this distance being the Solent, inside the Needles, and one-third the Southampton Water, which gives access to the docks, before reaching the Rivers Itchen and Test. Access to the docks is marked by gas and bell buoys from the Needles through the Solent and up Southampton Water, and there is an available depth of 30ft. at low water of ordinary spring tides. The tidal range at ordinary spring tides is 12ft., at extraordinary springs 13ft., and at neaps about 8ft. With the exception of the inner basin, the quays and docks are accessible without locks or gates, the depth being at low water (ordinary spring tides), in the outer dock 18ft., Empress Dock 26ft., and at New Quays 28ft. The entrance to the Empress Dock is 165ft. wide, to the outer dock 150ft., and to the inner basin 60ft. The inner basin covers 10 acres, the outer dock 16, and the Empress Dock 18½, whilst the open quays at present constructed are some 6,000ft. in length. Of the present graving docks, five in number, four are approached through the open docks and one from the River Itchen, and the company are constructing a sixth dock, the approach to which will be from the River Test. They are respectively 250ft. long with a depth of 15ft., 400ft. long with a depth of 21ft., 430ft. long with a depth of 25ft., 500ft. long with a depth of 25ft., and 750ft. long with a depth of 32ft., and a maximum width of 110ft. The sixth graving dock (in course of construction) will be 800ft. long, 90ft. wide at entrance, and the depth of water on blocks will be 33ft. at H.W.O.S.T. The whole of the dry docks belong to the London and South-Western Railway Company. There are large repairing engineering factories in the possession of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company and the Union Castle Mail Steamship Company, and the works of the various shipbuilding and repairing firms are within a reasonable distance of the dry docks. The port authority is the Southampton Harbour Board, and its jurisdiction extends over the Rivers Itchen and Test, and Southampton Water, to an authorised line near Calshot Castle, and includes the quays of the Harbour Board. The railways connecting with the docks and also with the quays of the Southampton Harbour Board are owned by the London and South-Western Railway Company, and thus connected with all the principal railways in the kingdom. The railways round the docks and quays are all worked by the London and South-Western Railway Company. The present dock authority is the London and South-Western Railway Company, to whom the docks were transferred on the 1st November, 1892, and are managed under the Southampton Docks Act, 1871. Vessels are generally loaded and unloaded by the London and South-Western Railway Company, the dock authority, but in some cases, with their concurrence, the work is performed by the shipowners. This applies to labour on the docks. The labour on board ship is in nearly all cases performed by the shipowners. Previous to 1892 the work was all done by the old dock authority. When the railway company acquired the docks they left it optional. Pilotage at Southampton is compulsory, and is controlled by Commissioners, consisting of the Collector of H.M. Customs, Commander H. Mansell, R.N., and Commander E. Pilkington, R.N., under the control of Trinity House, London. The maintenance of the Rivers Itchen and Test is under the control of the Southampton Harbour Board, who are the Conservators of the port. This body consists of the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Councilmen of the Borough, and of ten specific Commissioners. The rates of pilotage are as under:—From Lepe Buoy to Lee Point to Eling, Redbridge, Northam, or Chapel, 1s. per foot extra If a vessel inward bound be not boarded until E.N.E. of Calshot Castle, only one-third of rate. From Southampton to sea, 17ft. and under, 6s. per foot; 17ft. to 20ft., 7s.; above 20ft., 9s. Removing in Southampton Water, from Southampton to Redbridge, Eling, Northam, or Chapel, and *vice versâ*, 1s. per foot; to Hamble, Bursledon, Lepe, or Beaulieu, and *vice versâ*, 1s. 6d.; proportionate for any intermediate distance. The above rates are subject to a reduction of one-fourth in respect of steam vessels and vessels towed up. Pilots retained on board while at anchor, 7s. 6d. per day. From line drawn from Lepe Buoy to Lee Point to Southampton, Hamble, or Bursledon, 17ft. and under, 1s. 6d. per foot.; 17ft. to 20ft., 2s. 6d.; above 20ft., 3s. 6d. The buoying and surveying of the various channels are under the control of the Southampton Harbour Board. Powers exist under the Special Act

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of Parliament, as well as under the Harbours, Docks, and Piers Act, 1847, to make bye-laws; but with the exception of the regulations for shipping in the docks it has not so far been found necessary to make use of such powers. I have forwarded to the Commission a copy of the Dock Regulations and Harbour Board Bye-laws. The docks are lighted by electricity, and goods are discharged and shipped and work frequently carried on at night, including the repairs and refitment of ships in the graving docks, and coaling of vessels. In fact, during the busy seasons, the work does not cease from midnight on Sunday night until the following Saturday night. Hydraulic cranes are on all the quays, and hand and other cranes in all the warehouses. Their powers range from 30cwt. to, say, 12 tons. There are also sheer-legs that will lift up to 80 tons, and others ranging from 20 tons. We have also a 30-ton travelling crane, which is specially used in the No. 5 Graving Dock in lifting shafts and heavy pieces of machinery. Grain in bulk is unloaded from vessels by elevator, and conveyed by travelling bands to the whole of the warehouses. Our rates on grain cover the use of machinery. The hydraulic cranes on the quays lift direct from the holds of ships and deposit either into railway trucks or into the doorways of warehouses. There is a considerable area of ground set apart for the piling of deals, etc., and in addition thereto there is extensive shed room for the storage of wood goods under cover. Mineral oils are not dealt with by us. Very extensive provision is being made for cold storage and lairage. The several companies using the port have, of course, their own cold stores for their own purposes, and the American line have also provision for their imported meat trade. The extensive system of warehouses in the docks is the property of the London and South-Western Railway Company. The work at Southampton Docks is very varied. The fruit trade involves immediate despatch, and is practically not warehoused, and this applies equally to Channel Islands and French products. On the other hand, American goods are put into warehouses, also grain, wine, and maize, which is not to be delivered for a considerable time after being landed, whilst West Indies products are housed for a longer or shorter period, as required. The provision of warehouses is under the Southampton Docks Act, 1871. Rent is in all cases charged when goods remain for the convenience of the importer. To ensure correct delivery of cargo, there is necessarily a short time (about seven days) involved in the handling of it, and rent is not then enforced. I have forwarded to the Commission a schedule of dues charged on shipping, also of the charges on goods, according to schedule in Southampton Docks Act, 1871. Vessels are charged harbour dues as well as dock dues; but on goods there is no charge but that of the dock authority. It is the rule with the dock authority to give equal facility to all parties and dues are levied in all cases to make the payments equivalent. The granting of exceptional privileges is not permitted. The tonnage of ships is ascertained from their register. The tonnage of goods is ascertained by weighing, or measuring, as the case may be, according to the kind of merchandise. Goods brought by ships trading to Southampton are invariably despatched by rail, and not into lighters. The Southampton Harbour Board quays are not under the control of the dock authority, and regular lines of ships, principally coasters, trade from there. The railway traffic is worked by the London and South-Western Railway Company. Ships belonging to His Majesty have, of course, free use of water space, and ships that have loaded at the docks and returned disabled have privileges under the Harbours, Docks, and Piers Act, 1847. The tugs at Southampton are the property of a local steamship company. I am unable to give you their rates, as it does not fall within the province of this railway company to hire them. The following are particulars of the tonnage of vessels which entered the docks during 1900:—

——	Number of Vessels.	Gross.	Net.
Under 500 tons - -	887	240,672	116,438
500 tons to 1,000 tons -	677	504,745	232,150
1,000 tons to 2,000 tons	1,107	1,445,132	630,199
2,000 tons to 4,000 tons	102	315,499	200,808
4,000 tons to 6,000 tons	238	1,217,962	734,664
Over 6,000 tons - -	192	1,801,786	989,564
Total - - -	3,203	5,525,796	2,903,823

5421. Are the hours of the Customs officials the same as at other ports?—Yes, the hours of the Customs officials are the same as at other ports; but they do not regulate the working hours of labour in the docks. At Southampton they are practically continuous. The work is continuous, and the Customs House hours are practically continuous. The arrivals in dock and discharge of steamers over 2,000 tons burden, during the week ending 2nd February, 1901, were as follows:—

Royal Mail Steam Packet Company:
31st January. S.S. "Atrato" from West Indies. Tonnage:—Gross, 5,366, Net, 3,068. Cargo, 1,330 tons. Commenced discharge 31st January, finished discharge the 2nd February.

Union-Castle Mail Steam Ship Company:
29th January. S.S. "Doune Castle," from Hamburg. Tonnage:—Gross, 4,046, Net, 2,613. Cargo, 110 tons. Commenced and finished discharge the day of arrival.
1st February. S.S. "Dunvegan Castle," from Portsmouth. Tonnage:—Gross, 5,958, Net, 3,428. Cargo, nil.
1st February. S.S. "Scot," from Portsmouth. Tonnage:—Gross, 7,815, Net, 4,278. Cargo, nil.
2nd February. S.S. "Tantallon Castle," from the Cape. Tonnage:—Gross, 5,636, Net, 3,048. Cargo, 750 tons. Commenced discharge 4th February, and finished the 5th.

American Line:
27th January. S.S. "Noordland," from New York. Tonnage:—Gross, 5,150, Net, 3,867. Cargo, 840 tons. Commenced discharge 27th January, and finished the 28th.

Cunard Line:
28th January. S.S. "Aurania," from the Cape. (Trooper.) Tonnage:—Gross, 7,269, Net, 4,030. Cargo, 70 tons. Commenced and finished discharge the same day.

Rotterdam Lloyd:
28th January. S.S. "Soembing," from Rotterdam. Tonnage:—Gross, 5,142, Net, 1,815. Cargo, 4 tons. Commenced and finished discharge the same day.

P. & O. Steam Navigation Company:
28th January. S.S. "Nubia," from Cape. (Trooper.) Tonnage:—Gross, 5,914, Net, 3,824. Cargo, 26 tons. Commenced and finished discharge the 28th January.

5422. Southampton is one of the few examples in England where the dock management is in private hands, is it not?—Hull is another case. Hull is in the hands of the North-Eastern Railway Company; the same as Southampton is in the hands of the London and South-Western Railway Company.

5423. Do you consider that private ownership of docks has any advantages over public ownership?—I have a very strong opinion that the ownership of docks by railway companies—not a private dock company—is an advantage. The instance of Southampton itself is a case in point against Dock Company ownership. The old Dock Company had no resources to fall back upon, and the result was, they got into a state of impecuniosity, out of which the railway company had to lift them.

5424. You have told us that the warehouses belong to the railway company?—Yes. There is an extensive system of warehouses there.

5425. Are you of opinion that in any scheme of dock management warehouses should be included?—Yes, certainly.

5426. You mentioned that the ordinary range of spring tides was 12ft. Is it not the fact that there are double tides at Southampton?—Yes, there are four tides a day.

5427. Does that give you a longer time of high water?—We have practically a period of four hours of high water, twice a day.

5428. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are there tidal basins at Southampton?—We have only one pair of gates. There is not a lock.

5429. Have you any accounts of the Southampton Harbour Board?—I have the accounts of the London and South-Western Railway Company.

5430. I am speaking more of the harbour than the railway?—I will hand in the last published harbour accounts. (*The witness handed in the harbour accounts.*)

5431. Will you state whether you have a surplus or a deficit on the Harbour Board?—They pay their way very well. They pay interest on all their bonds.

5432. How much interest do they pay?—About four per cent.

5433. What is the amount altogether?—£8,105, and that includes bank charges, £118.

5434. The chief income and expenditure account in connection with the docks would, of course, be kept by the railway company?—Yes.

5435. Do they publish separate accounts of the matters?—They do not publish detailed accounts, but the receipts and expenditure are shown in our half-yearly accounts—the railway company's account.

5436. Can you tell us how they work out?—If you take the last half year the docks receipts were £127,000 and the expenditure £92,000.

5437. Where would the capital expenditure of the docks appear?—£1,422,000 we paid for the docks, and our total expenditure since 1892 up to the 21st December, including the purchase of the docks, was £3,056,768. We have spent more over the docks since we bought them than we paid for them.

5438. Then that apparent surplus of an income of £127,000 and an expenditure of £92,000 does not include the expenditure of interest on capital spent in the construction of the docks?—No, about 2½ per cent. is what we make upon our productive capital.

5439. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) When the docks were taken over by the London and South Western Railway Company in 1892, I suppose they had fallen rather behind the requirements of the times, had they not?—Yes. They had no means of raising capital, or, at any rate, they could not raise it at all. The railway company had assisted them already, and they thought something had better be done, and that they had better take them over.

5440. The London and South Western Railway Company, being, of course, greatly interested in the prosperity of the docks at Southampton?—Yes.

5441. And although, perhaps, the return on their expenditure does not appear to be very much when looked at from the point of view of dock receipts, yet, when looked at over the whole system of the London and South Western Railway it may be very advantageous to the railway company?—It is a feeder decidedly. Private companies cannot afford to carry on such a business at 2½ per cent., but a railway company of course can.

5442. In many cases a dock of this kind is something like a great railway station?—Yes, it is a huge railway terminus.

5443. Has the traffic greatly increased since 1892?—It has increased considerably. The tonnage of shipping which entered the docks in 1892, which was the year of the transfer, was 2,369,000 gross, and last year it had increased to 5,525,758.

5444. Therefore it would appear that the policy of bringing the docks up to modern requirements has produced a very largely increased traffic?—Yes.

5445. And I take it that the expenditure which has been incurred on the docks since they were purchased has been all in the direction of bringing them up to the requirements of modern shipping?—Yes, the destruction of all wooden sheds and the construction of brick warehouses and double storey sheds, and the supply of hydraulic power and electric power. Of course the old Dock Company when we took it over was hopelessly behind modern requirements.

5446. Then the result of the expenditure has been a very large increase of traffic?—Yes.

5447. Who does the dredging below the docks so as to give the 30ft. of water up to the docks?—The Harbour Board or the railway company did, by arrangement with the Harbour Board. It was the Harbour Board's business, but with our large interest in it we agreed to bring the five fathom line up to Southampton, we practically paying one-half of the cost. The cost of doing that was about £42,000, and we found about £22,000 out of the £42,000. *Mr. J. Dixon.* 1 April 1901.

5448. That was an example of the work which was thought to be necessary for the full development of the docks?—That was so. It was for the ships that we expected to come. Thirty feet is enough for present requirements, and we have that at low water, of course. There is one significant figure appearing in the traffic. In 1892 the steamers which used the port took in 179,520 tons of coal, principally Welsh. Last year the steamers using the port consumed 495,449 tons, which is a very considerable increase.

5449. Has that anything to do with opening the Severn Tunnel?—No, the bulk of it comes by water. As a matter of fact, 355,000 tons out of that 495,000 came by water last year.

5450. Is there any private warehousing done at Southampton?—Yes, there are warehouses there which are leased by local merchants; for instance, Fear, Colebrook and Co., and Jefferey and Lewis. There is a considerable grain trade done at Southampton.

5451. And you compete with them, I suppose, for warehousing?—No, we have no competition. The effect of the purchase of the docks by the railway company has been to stop all competition. Formerly the Harbour Board used to compete with the dock company.

5452. You have warehouses and private owners have warehouses, you say?—Yes.

5453. If there is a cargo of goods, I suppose a private warehouse owner would like to get it into his warehouse?—Well, he can take it. We do not put any impediment in his way.

5454. The manager of the docks would point out the advantage of warehousing on the dock property?—Certainly; but we take the grain from his docks to his own private warehouse for a small charge.

5455. Do you mean on the rails of the company?—Yes, because we ultimately get the carriage of it, whether it comes from his warehouse or ours. Personally, I would prefer that he should take it to his own warehouse.

5456. You do not get the warehouse rent unless it comes into your warehouse?—No, but we have the room.

5457. (*Chairman.*) Can you tell us the amount of dredging that is done, and its annual cost?—Do you speak more particularly of the cost of the dredging of the Harbour Board?

5458. Yes?—It is a small matter. We have one other great advantage at Southampton besides the double tide. The ebb tide only lasts about three and a half hours against the flood tide five and a half or six hours, so that what is brought up by the flood tide is carried out by the extra scour that we have by the short ebb. The cost of the dredging of the Harbour Board last year was £6,296; but that £6,296 was an exceptional item. The net dredging only amounts to about £1,000 a year for the Harbour Board, and our dredging the docks is about £2,000 a year on revenue account. Of course, we have a tremendous amount of dredging on capital account.

Mr. Charles James More recalled and further examined.

5459. (*Chairman.*) You now appear before us in order to put in an estimate of the cost of the work which would be necessary to deepen the river to 30ft. up to the Victoria and Albert Docks, in accordance with the promise given by the Chairman of the Conservancy at Questions 1440 to 1447 and 1474 to 1480?—I do. *Mr. C. J. More.*

5460. Will you kindly give us that estimate?—This is my report to the Conservators on the subject containing the estimate which the Chairman referred to:— See 7483-4.

20th February, 1901.

To the Conservators of the River Thames.

Gentlemen,—As directed by the order of the Board, dated the 26th November last, I have prepared and submit herewith an estimate of the cost of providing a channel 30 feet deep at low water of spring tides between the Nore Lightship and the Albert Dock, and having a minimum width of 1,000 feet up to Gravesend, and 600 feet between Gravesend and the Albert Dock entrance.

The total quantity of material which would have to be dredged to make this channel as far as Gravesend is 7,807,000 cube yards, and the quantity between Gravesend and the Albert Dock is 12,342,000 cube yards, making a total of 20,149,000 cube yards, the cost of dredging which I estimate at the sum of £1,514,838, as set out in detail on the annexed statements.

Mr. C. J. More.

1 April 1901.

In considering the question of the plant required to carry out this dredging, I have assumed that the dredging for the deepening of the channel opposite the Leigh Middle could be carried out by contract as the material is known to be silt or sand, and would be most economically removed by suction dredgers.

The dredging between the Chapman Light and the Albert Dock entrance amounts to 14,292,000 cube yards, and if the work were spread over ten years, three powerful dredgers and twelve steam hoppers, each of about 700 cube yards carrying capacity, would be required.

The limit of ten years would cover the whole of the dredging operations, but the work could be so arranged that the channel might be deepened up to the Tilbury Docks in from two to three years from the date of commencing the work.

A tender and a steam surveying vessel would have to be provided, the cost of which is included in the estimate.

I have also provided for the insurance of the dredgers, hoppers, and other craft for a period of ten years, and the estimate includes a sum of £20,000 for the extension of wharf accommodation and increased plant which would be required to carry out the necessary repairs to the dredgers, hoppers, and other vessels employed.

Training Banks.

As pointed out by the Lower Thames Navigation Commissioners in paragraph 47 of their report dated the 25th March, 1896, it is improbable that a channel of the depth of 30 feet at low water could be maintained through the shallows to the south of the Leigh Middle without the construction of a training bank to direct and control the tidal currents between Canvey Island and Shoeburyness.

In designing such a work care must be taken to place it in a position where it will exercise the most beneficial effect on the navigable channel whilst interfering as little as possible with the access to Leigh and Southend and the sea frontage extending between these places.

This can only be determined after a prolonged series of observations on the directions of the tidal currents, which cannot be satisfactorily carried out except during calm, clear, and settled weather.

The cost of the bank would also depend to a great extent on the nature of the soil on which it is constructed, and to ascertain this borings would have to be made along the line decided on.

In the absence of this necessary information any estimate of the cost of the training bank must be a very rough approximation, and it is only in consequence of the strongly expressed desire of the Commissioners to have such an estimate that I have ventured to deal with the matter on the inadequate data at present accessible.

For the purpose of making this estimate I have laid down alternative lines for a training bank, which are shown in red and blue on the accompanying charts.

The section adopted for calculating the quantity of material required is also shown on the chart.

I estimate the cost of a bank constructed in the position shown by the red lines at about £135,000, and a bank constructed in the position shown by the blue lines at about £82,000.

In the latter case, however, the bank would probably have to be extended eventually to a greater distance than is shown from Canvey Island, and as it would then enter deep water, the cost would be considerably increased.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) CHARLES J. MORE, Engineer.

THAMES CONSERVANCY,
20th February 1901.

ESTIMATED COST OF DEEPENING THE RIVER THAMES SO AS TO PROVIDE A CHANNEL HAVING A DEPTH OF 30 FEET AT LOW WATER OF SPRING TIDES UP TO THE ALBERT DOCK ENTRANCE. (QUESTION No. 1440.)

The minimum width of the channel to be 1,000 feet up to Gravesend and 600 feet between Gravesend and the Albert Dock.

SUMMARY

Cost of Dredging as per Statement No. 1	1,050,038
Cost of Plant as per Statement No. 2	349,800
Insurance of Plant for 10 years at £5,000 per annum	50,000
Working Expenses of Tender for 10 years at £2,000 per annum	20,000
Working Expenses of Survey Vessel for 10 years at £2,500 per annum	25,000
Enlarging Conservancy Wharf and providing extra machinery in workshop	20,000
Total Cost of Dredging	1,514,838
Cost of Training Walls between Canvey Island and Shoeburyness, as per Statement No. 3, say	135,000
	£1,649,838

STATEMENT No. 1.

QUANTITIES OF MATERIAL TO BE DREDGED, AND ESTIMATED COST OF WORKING DREDGERS AND HOPPERS.

	£	£
Between the Nore Lightship and the Chapman Light through the "Yantlet" Channel—		
5,857,000 cube yards at 10d. per cube yard	244,042	
Add 10 per cent. for Contingencies	24,404	
		268,446
Between the Chapman Light and Gravesend—		
1,950,000 cube yards at 11½d. per cube yard	93,438	
Between Gravesend and the Albert Dock—		
12,342,000 cube yards at 1s. per cube yard	617,100	
	710,538	
Add 10 per cent. for Contingencies	71,054	
		781,592
		£1,050,038

NOTE.—Through the Leigh Middle Channel there would be 667,125 cube yards less dredging, which would reduce the cost by £30,575.

STATEMENT No. 2.

ESTIMATED COST OF PLANT REQUIRED FOR DREDGING.

It is assumed that the dredging required between the Nore Lightship and the Chapman Light might be done under Contract, the material to be removed being sand and silt.

Between the Chapman Light and the Albert Dock Entrance the quantity of material to be dredged is 14,300,000 cube yards.

Assuming that one dredger and four steam hoppers could dispose of 500,000 cube yards of material in a year, if the dredging operations were extended over ten years, three dredgers and twelve hoppers would be required to do the work.

The cost of a dredger if taken at £28,000 and the cost of a steam hopper capable of carrying 1,000 tons, or say 700 cube yards of heavy material, is taken at £18,000.

ESTIMATE.

	£
3 Dredgers at £28,000 each	84,000
12 Steam Hoppers at £18,000 each	216,000
Steam Tender for Dredgers	10,000
Survey Vessel	8,000
	318,000
Add 10 per cent. for Contingencies	31,800
	£349,800

STATEMENT No. 3.

PROPOSED TRAINING BANKS BETWEEN CANVEY ISLAND AND SOUTHEND PIER.

Plan A shown in Red on Admiralty Chart.

ESTIMATE OF COST.

	£	s.	d.
118,240 C. yards Rubble Stone at 6s.	35,472	–	–
118,240 „ Block Chalk at 3s. 6d.	20,692	–	–
93,520 „ Packed Rubble at 6s. 6d.	30,394	–	–
44,660 Sq. yards Rough Pitching at 7s. 6d.	16,747	10	–
9,108 C. yards Concrete in Bags at 8s. 6d.	3,870	18	–
Beacons and Guard Piles, say	5,000	–	–
Temporary Works, say	10,000	–	–
	122,176	8	–
Add for Contingencies 10 per cent.	12,217	12	–
	£134,394	–	–

PROPOSED TRAINING BANKS BETWEEN CANVEY ISLAND AND SHOEBURYNESS.

Plan B shown in Blue on Admiralty Chart.

ESTIMATE OF COST.

UPPER TRAINING BANK.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
33,970 C. Yds. Rubble Stone, at 6s.	10,191 0 0	
33,970 C. Yds. Block Chalk, at 3s. 6d.	5,944 15 0	
29,092 C. Yds. Packed Rubble, at 6s. 6d.	9,454 18 0	
13,404 Sq. Yds. Rough Pitching, at 7s. 6d.	5,026 10 0	
2,112 C. Yds. Concrete in bags, at 8s. 6d.	897 12 0	
Beacons and Guard Piles, say	2,500 0 0	
Temporary Works, say	3,000 0 0	
	37,014 15 0	
Add for Contingencies 10 per cent.	3,701 8 0	
		40,716 3 0

LOWER TRAINING BANK.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
35,100 C. Yds. Rubble Stone, at 6s.	10,530 0 0	
35,100 C. Yds. Block Chalk, at 3s. 6d.	6,142 10 0	
26,850 C. Yds. Packed Rubble, at 6s. 6d.	8,726 5 0	
13,640 Sq. Yds. Rough Pitching, at 7s. 6d.	5,115 0 0	
2,860 C. Yds. Concrete in bags, at 8s. 6d.	1,215 10 0	
Beacons and Guard Piles, say	2,500 0 0	
Temporary Works, say	3,000 0 0	
	37,229 5 0	
Add for Contingencies 10 per cent.	3,722 18 0	
		40,952 3 0
		£81,668 6 0

ESTIMATED COST OF PROVIDING EXTRA MOORINGS FROM BARKING REACH TO NORTHFLEET HOPE AS PER HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT, DATED THE 16TH OCTOBER, 1900, AS SHOWN ON PLAN SUBMITTED TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION. (QUESTIONS 1,691 AND 1,692.)

	£	£
Barking Reach—		
Nos. 1 and 2 for ships 250 feet long and 20 feet draught—		
Moorings and Buoys	1,120	
Dredging 50,000 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	3,750	
		4,870
Nos. 3 and 4 for ships 300 feet long and 20 feet draught—		
Moorings and Buoys	1,120	
Dredging 38,150 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	2,861	
		3,981
Halfway Reach for ships 400 feet long and 25 feet draught—		
Nos. 5, 6, and 7, Moorings and Buoys	1,728	
Dredging 48,540 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	3,641	
		5,369
Erith Reach for ships 400 feet long and 25 feet draught—		
No. 8, Moorings and Buoys	576	
Dredging 6,234 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	468	
		1,044
No. 9, Moorings and Buoys	576	
Dredging 3,460 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	259	
		835
No. 10, Moorings and Buoys	576	
Dredging 27,700 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	2,078	
		2,654
Nos. 11 and 12, Moorings and Buoys	1,152	
		1,152
Erith Rands for ships 400 feet long and 25 feet draught—		
No. 13, Moorings and Buoys	576	
Dredging 5,550 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	416	
		992
Nos. 14 and 15, Moorings and Buoys	1,152	
		1,152
Long Reach, North side for ships 500 feet long and 30 feet draught—		
No. 16, Moorings and Buoys	700	
		700
No. 17, Moorings and Buoys	700	
Dredging 33,000 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	2,475	
		3,175
No. 18, Moorings and Buoys	700	
Dredging 22,500 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	1,688	
		2,388
No. 19, Moorings and Buoys	700	
Dredging 27,500 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	2,063	
		2,763
Long Reach, South side for ships 500 feet long and 30 feet draught—		
No. 20, Moorings and Buoys	700	
Dredging 20,000 cube yards at 1s. 6d.	1,500	
		2,200
Nos. 21, 22, 23 and 24, Moorings and Buoys	2,800	
		2,800
St. Clements Reach for ships 500 feet long and 30 feet draught—		
Nos. 25 and 26, Moorings and Buoys	1,400	
		1,400
Northfleet Hope for ships 500 feet long and 30 feet draught—		
Nos. 27, 28, 29 and 30, Moorings and Buoys	2,800	
		2,800
		40,275
Add for Contingencies 10 per cent.		4,027
		£44,302

Say £45,000.

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5461. Have you seen the estimate of Sir Alexander Binnie for similar work, which is given at Question 3086?—I have.

5462. Have you any observations to make upon that estimate?—I think so far as we can compare the two the quantities are very nearly the same for the part between Gravesend and the Albert Dock. So far as the estimate for the cost is concerned I have taken it out at 1s. per cube yard. There is not very much difference really between us on the whole.

5463. Then with regard to Questions 1691 and 1692, you promised to give us an estimate of the cost of providing extra moorings from Barking Reach to North fleet Hope?—Yes. That is included in my estimate.

5464. Then with regard to dredging, you promised to give us a statement of the amount dredged during the years 1894 and 1899. Can you give us that?—Yes, I will put it in now. See 1703.

(The Witness handed in a statement showing the quantity of material dredged by the Thames Conservancy dredgers below London Bridge for the six years 1894 to 1899. See Appendix, 15th day, No. 2.)

5465. Have you any further remarks to make with reference to the statement you have put in?—Not with reference to this, I think.

5466. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to what you say as to the construction of a training bank, you say the position can only be determined after a prolonged series of observations on the directions of the tidal currents, which cannot be satisfactorily carried out except during calm, clear, and settled weather. Is it proposed by your Board to proceed with those observations?—I think we should. In this coming summer we shall certainly take a series of observations there.

5467. We may take it that you are really going to do it?—Yes, you may take it that we will.

5468. Does the same remark apply to the question of the borings?—Yes, we should also do that when the summer weather comes in, if the Commission desire it. We had not settled to do that, but if the Commission wish it, of course we could do so. It will have to be done if ever the scheme is carried out.

5469. It is a necessary thing to do?—Yes, quite necessary.

5470. I see you take the total cost for deepening the River Thames so as to provide a channel having a depth of 30ft. at low water of spring tides, up to the Albert Dock entrance, the minimum width of the channel to be 1,000ft. up to Gravesend, and 600ft. between Gravesend and the Albert Dock, and you estimate that at £1,649,838?—Yes.

5471. May I ask you whether you have formed any idea as to the time which the operations will occupy?—Yes, I have stated in the estimate that, assuming one dredger and four steam hoppers could dispose of

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1 April 1901.

500,000 cube yards of material in a year, if the dredging operations were extended over ten years three dredgers and twelve hoppers would be required to do the work.

5472. And the time would be proportionately less if more plant were used?—Yes, but that is the basis on which I estimated for the plant.

5473. You have to increase the amount of plant, and to that extent you have to increase your estimate for the depreciation of the plant?—That is so.

5474. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You spoke about cube yards. What is the proportion of the cube yard in the tonnage?—A cube yard would be about a ton and a third, or something of that kind. It depends on the material. It varies greatly in weight. Some would be more than that.

5475. After the river is dredged to the proposed depth have you thought what it would cost to keep it at that depth?—I think myself from Albert Dock down to Gravesend—at any rate—the river would maintain itself at that depth, because we have already many reaches where we have that depth, and even a greater depth than that. Of course, when you come to a channel like the Leigh Middle that would be a most expensive thing to keep open. I may say that going beyond the Albert Dock higher up it would be a very difficult thing to maintain a 30ft. channel there.

5476. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Looking at the conditions of the river and the prospects of an increase of shipping business, would you recommend that the works should take ten years?—I have mentioned that you might begin by deepening the channel from Gravesend to Tilbury Docks, which would take from two to three years. You might concentrate your plant on that. The higher part of the river would be done in ten years, but it ought to be done from Gravesend to Tilbury in very much less than ten years.

5477. Then the trade of the port would, you think, benefit, although the works extend over ten years?—Yes. That would enable you to get to Tilbury Docks within two or three years.

5478. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I see in what you call your statement No. 1 you put down a sum of £268,446 for dredging between the Nore Lightship and the Chapman Light through the Yantlet Channel?—Yes.

5479. Am I right in supposing that the bulk of that is through what is called the Leigh Middle Shoals?—Nearly the whole of it.

5480. It does not, I presume, exactly follow that if the training wall were made you would have to do so much dredging?—No; it is possible that you might save a great deal of dredging. I may say that it appears to me that the proper course would be to make the training wall first, and it might be so successful that it would do away with a great deal of dredging.

5481. Therefore it is quite conceivable that the amount required might be less at any rate in that locality?—Yes, it is quite problematical what dredging there would cost.

5482. You have, I think, something like 60ft. of water at the Chapman Light?—There is a hole there.

5483. Then you come to 40ft. of water, where the river begins to widen out?—Yes.

5484. And then it is reduced to about 25ft.?—25ft. to 26ft. in the deepest part.

5485. Then below the point where the training wall might be supposed to stop you begin to get depths of 60ft., 50ft., 40ft.—ample depths of water?—Yes.

5486-7. Therefore it is quite conceivable that training the channel from the Chapman Light down to somewhere nearly opposite Shoebury you might possibly do without dredging the channel?—Yes.

My lord, I was going to ask to be allowed to explain something which has been said by the pilots who have been called with regard to the dredgers. They are not Conservancy dredgers; they dredge for the purpose of obtaining ballast for sale. They belong to private owners, and are not there for the purpose of improving the channel. They are under the control of the Conservancy Harbour Masters, and they work under the Thames Conservancy licence, but they are not our dredgers. Five of them are for raising ballast and three for sand.

5488-9. Do you tell us that those are the only dredgers of which the pilots complain?—I think they mentioned those specially. They are in the Lower Hope. If your lordship cares, I could put in a copy of the licence which we grant to show the conditions under which they are worked.

5490. (*Chairman.*) Yes, we should like to have that. Will you put in now?—Yes.

(*The witness handed in a form of dredging licence granted by the Thames Conservancy. See Appendix, 15th day, No. 3.*)

Mr. GEORGE AMBROSE POGSON called and examined.

Mr. G. A. Pogson.

5491. (*Chairman.*) You are the British Vice-Consul at Hamburg?—Yes.

5492. We have received answers to the several questions submitted by us to the British Consul-General at Hamburg?—Yes.

5493. And we are now desirous of obtaining some further information with regard to that port. Will you describe to us the method of working employed there?—I have brought with me maps of the port, which the Commission have before them. I should like to say that the Hamburg Republic has about 700,000 inhabitants, and they have the sole government of the port. The dock was constructed between 1880 and 1888, after all parts of the world had been visited, so that it contains the most modern scientific improvements. It is about 58 miles from the mouth of the Elbe, with a mean lowest depth of 16¼ft. of navigable channel, ranging to about 25ft. 3in. at high water. There are ten tidal basins in Hamburg Docks—no locks—these tidal basins having a water area of about 332 acres. The total acreage with the quays in the new basin now under construction comes to 1,133 acres.

5494. These particulars, I think, we already have in the answers to our questions?—Yes. They are all there more or less.

5495. Will you tell us whether the harbour administration is worked at a profit?—No, it is not. That is private information from the Senate, but it is on the best authority. The expenses exceed the receipts.

5496. Can you tell us the amount of the loss per annum?—It is not published. No special balance sheet is published. It does not appear in the Budget at all.

5497. Does the Government consider that the benefits accruing owing to the influx of trade compensate for that loss?—Undoubtedly, since they continually increase the facilities of the harbour, which is being done at the present moment at very great expense. The German Government have, according to Mr. W. H. Gastrell, our Commercial Attaché at Berlin, spent at Hamburg and other German ports since 1888 about £24,428,000 on harbour accommodation for increased shipping. Some £15,000,000 of this sum has been expended at Hamburg on such works; at Bremen, Vegesack, and Bremerhaven £5,700,000; at Altona, £450,000; at Geestemunde, £800,000; at Danzig, £400,000; at Stettin, £1,400,000. See 7774.

5498. Was that expended by the German Government or by the local authorities?—Partly by the Hamburg State and partly by the Imperial authorities.

5499. Will you explain the system of lighterage in force?—The lighterage is generally in the hands of private people. No charges are made by the authorities for goods passed over the side of the vessel into lighters. If removed off the quay there are certain charges made. I have made a translation of the Regulations since the answers to the questions were forwarded to the Commission, which I hand in.

(*The witness handed in a translation of the Regulations as to Quay Traffic and Dues in the Port of Hamburg. See Appendix, 15th day, No. 4.*)

5500. The charge is for goods from lighters on to the quay?—Yes; and into lighters from the quay.

5501. Now will you tell us, if you please, if the barges are registered?—The barges have a number, in the same way as the vehicles in London, for the purposes of identification.

5502. And for no other purpose?—They do not pay any fee. I do not think that they pay for a licence. I think they are only numbered, and they pay a nominal fee for that number. The fee is a few marks only.

5503. Can you tell us the amount and cost of the dredging that is done in the river?—The Hamburg State possessed at the end of the year 1900 eleven dredgers, and the dredging of the river and the harbour costs Hamburg £40,000 to £45,000 annually.

5504. Is that for a period of several years?—That is on the average.

5505. An average since 1888?—For the last ten years.

5506. Can you tell me the amount of the dredging that has been done?—During the past ten years from 1,900,000 to 2,800,000 cubic metres of sand, clay, and other refuse annually from the bed of the harbour and from the Elbe.

5507. Now with regard to the quay traffic, can you give us a statement of the rates levied?—The quay dues are contained in the translation of the regulations that I have handed in.

5508. Have you ever heard of any cases where goods are conveyed to Hamburg and then transhipped to London in preference to being sent direct to London?—I think it is an increasing custom forced upon merchants by the heavier charges in London upon direct shipments from other countries. I am able to give the Commission some information on that point, but I have not permission to give the names of the firms generally.

5509. Then I am afraid we cannot take it. You must either give the whole of it, or not at all?—I am allowed to pass it round to the members of the Commission?

5510. No; that will not do?—It is a firm established in London and New York and Hamburg.

5511. We must have it in its entirety or not at all?—Then may I give you a statement from my own knowledge?

5512. Yes?—The instance I will give you is that of some sewing machines shipped from New York this year. One parcel from New York to Hamburg and thence to London, and one to London direct. *Viâ* Hamburg they went from Hamburg by the General steam Navigation to Harwich, and thence to Liverpool Street at a total cost of £20 11s. 7d., whereas the direct shipment for the same weight and the same goods at the same time came to £25 8s. 1d. There was a bitter complaint about an amount of £6 16s. 9d. for dock dues, delivery, and cartage, and also a complaint about the "London clause." Not being able to explain the London clause, I applied for, and received this morning two bills of lading from the Atlantic Transport Company, containing that clause. I may say that the actual freight to London in one case was £16 16s. 9d., and the freight to Hamburg 307 marks, which we may call £15. There was a charge *viâ* Hamburg of dock dues, 13s., and transhipment charges 20s., raising it to £17. The carriage from Hamburg to Harwich and thence to London was £3 18s. 2d., allowing the goods which had been placed on board at Hamburg to be received, I believe, at Aldersgate Street within 60 hours of their being put on board at Hamburg, whereas it is stated by the merchant that it took over a fortnight from the arrival of the goods in London to the time that he was able to receive them. He would have saved £5 in the freight and a fortnight's time in the receipt of the goods if they had been sent the other way.

See 5629–30.

5513. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What are the charges in London in addition to the freight?—Through the London clause a charge accrued as per bill of lading of 1s. 9d. for 40 cubic feet, amounting to £2 4s. 10d. That was occasioned by the London clause in this American bill of lading.

5514. What was that for?—I have heard that it is a common clause on goods sent to London.

5515. But what affected this is a sum of money, you say, in addition to the freight?—Yes; the London clause charge is £2 4s. 10d.

5516. But what is it for doing?—This is the clause: "The steamship owners shall at their option be entitled to land the goods within mentioned on to the quays or to discharge them into craft hired by them immediately on arrival and at consignees' risk and expense'—

5517. (*Chairman.*) Is this the case you are mentioning from your own knowledge?—Yes.

5518. You say your correspondent told you that he complained of that particular bill of lading. Is that it?—He complained that the London clause with regard to the carriage of goods from New York to London was a drawback.

5519. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That extra charge was made for landing the goods on the quay. Is that what it means?—Or into lighters at their option. It seems to be a compulsory clause bringing in a charge of £2 4s. 10d., and the dock dues amounted to £6 16s. 9d., raising the direct charges to £25 18s. 1d., as against £20 11s. 7d. *viâ* Hamburg.

5520. Will you enumerate those charges again?—London clause charges as per bill of lading, £2 4s. 10d.; dock dues, delivery, and cartage charged by the London and India Docks Joint Committee at 5s. 4d. per 40 cubic feet, £6 16s. 9d., as against dues at Hamburg amounting to 13s., transhipment charges 20 marks—roughly £1; and through rate, Hamburg-Harwich to London, £3 18s. 2d.

5521. (*Chairman.*) How do you make up the £25?—£16 16s. 6d., £2 4s. 10d., £6 16s. 9d., amounting to £25 18s. 1d. *Viâ* Hamburg, 307 marks, or £15, freight, 13s. dock dues. £1 transhipment, amounting exactly to £16 13s. 5d., plus £3 18s. 2d. from Hamburg to Liverpool Street, I assume.

5522. Has the operation of the Merchandise Marks Act, in your opinion, been injurious to London shipowners?—I should answer that question in the affirmative unhesitatingly.

5523. Are you able to suggest any remedies for the alleged disadvantages of the Act?—There seems to be a want of unity in the carrying of it out throughout the British Empire and the colonies as well, since we can get no international agreement on the matter.

5524. Can you suggest any remedy?—We ought to manage to get an international agreement on the matter by all manufacturing countries.

5525. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) A part of that charge by the London dock company that you mentioned was for cartage. Can you tell us where the cartage was to?—It says here: "Charged by the London and India Docks Joint Committee to Aldersgate Street."

5526. To the destination?—Yes.

5527. In the case of the goods by way of Hamburg the charge was not to Aldersgate Street, but to Liverpool Street, was it not?—"Through rate, Hamburg-Harwich to London, domicile." That would be also to Aldersgate Street.

5528. Including the cartage?—Yes.

5529. Are you quite sure of that?—It is mentioned here. "Through rate, Hamburg-Harwich, to London, domicile." It must be Aldersgate Street, the address of the merchant himself.

5530. (*Mr. Peel.*) What is the rate at which the stream runs at Hamburg?—The distance from Hamburg to Cuxhaven is 58 miles, and the tide takes four hours and twenty-one minutes.

5531. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) That is the speed of the tidal wave. The question was, what is the speed of the current of the river?—The current would be nearly the same, would it not?

5532. (*Mr. Peel.*) You say the depth of the water in Hamburg Harbour at high water is 25ft. ?—Yes.

5533. What is it at low water?—16¼ft.

5534. When you say "Hamburg Harbour," what do you include under that?—From the entrance to the harbour to the sailing ship harbour. Some of the older docks or tidal basins are not as deep as those under construction. Those under construction are having the walls of the new basins constructed so that another 5ft. depth can be added afterwards if necessary.

5535. You say 16¼ft. is the minimum depth at mean low water. That is found off Schulau?—At Schulau and Blankanese.

5536. The larger vessels have to lie there, I suppose?—Yes, sometimes.

Mr. C. A. Pogson.

1 April 1901.

5537. Does the Elbe silt up very rapidly in these open docks?—Not so much in the harbour. The dredging in the river is continual.

5538. You have given some figures about the dredging. I suppose you could not tell us how much of that yearly expense is for the dredging in the docks?—No, that was not given to us by the authorities.

5539. You talk about these canals that run into the interior of the town, and I presume further back?—They run through the territory of the Free State of Hamburg.

5540. Does much traffic run up these canals?—I think the main stream would be congested by barges and river craft, if these canals were not made use of.

5541. Are they freely made use of?—Yes.

5542. What do they take the traffic up to, do they take it to railway wharves, or what?—In the Free Harbour itself, in the district where goods are manipulated and sorted and redistributed and repacked, there is a very large private company founded called the Lagerhaus Gesellschaft. The Hamburg Government holds a great many shares in that company which has been constructed solely for the convenience of all the ships' cargoes; there is, in addition, a very complete network of railways round all the quay-sheds shown in the ground plans.

5543. Then with regard to the unloading at night, who are the judges of the necessity?—The quay authorities under the direction of the Deputation for Trade and Navigation.

5544. As a matter of fact, is much trade done at night?—Not a great deal; only for the short line vessels, such as the General Steam Navigation and the Grimsby lines; those making short journeys.

5545. Speaking generally, does the Hamburg Deputation for Trade and Navigation deal with the whole of the port, the buoying, lighting, and everything?—They have the whole of the control. They appoint the officials, and they regulate the charges and settle all the general expenses of the harbour.

5546. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to the River Elbe, is the depth given in your answers to the questions confined to one or two shoals, or is it the general depth?—The general depth is 16½ft.

5547. Irrespective of shoals, is that the general depth of the river, or are there particular bars with that depth on and deeper spaces in between?—The spaces are deeper.

(*The witness explained by means of a map, and showed the navigable channel of the river.*)

5548. Supposing the shoals were dredged away, would there be a larger depth of water available at Hamburg?—I think it is impossible to dredge those shoals away. They are always silting up again, and new shoals arrive. Suppose a vessel got stranded for 24 hours or 12 hours, it very often makes the sand silt up in another part.

5549. Then the limitation of depth for the Elbe appears to be about 23ft. at neap high tide?—That is about right.

5550. Then when you get into the harbour itself you have a depth of 25ft., have you not, alongside the quays?—In many parts.

5551. Then any ship that can come up the river lies afloat in the harbour, does it?—Not at all times. With certain winds the water in the harbour is very low.

5552. There you lose the difference between high and low water, which is something like 6ft. at spring tides?—And a little more.

5553. Do the ocean ships lie partly aground?—The very largest vessels remain lower down the river. The vessels which belong to the Hamburg-American line are generally kept down the river.

5554. Whereabouts?—At a place called Stade. They are generally kept opposite Brunshausen.

5555. Then the large ocean-going steamers do not come into the harbour?—No, not as a regular thing. The "Deutschland" was up there a few weeks ago, drawing about 27ft., and she reached Hamburg safely.

5556. Then there must be rather more water than you have mentioned in your answer?—Yes. The west wind fills the harbour, and they take advantage of such an opportunity. It raises the water 6ft. 3in.

5557. Are there any proposals for improving the river between Stade and Hamburg—deepening the river?—It has not been necessary yet, not so far down the river.

5558. There has been no necessity for an increase of water up to Hamburg?—Not so far down the river—only in the vicinity of Hamburg.

5559. Has there been any proposal for deepening the river up from Stade?—They are continually dredging it.

5560. Is that to maintain the depth, or to increase it?—I do not think there is any plan for using Government money on a large scale. They have no settled scheme for it.

5561. (*Chairman.*) Can you tell me what amount of assistance to expenditure is given from Imperial funds to Municipal funds for the maintenance of these works?—Hamburg is a Republic altogether, and the Imperial Government only exercise jurisdiction in military, postal, and criminal law, and Customs jurisdiction.

5562. Can you tell me whether there is any assistance given from Imperial or other funds towards the improvement of this port?—Not at the present time.

5563. Has there ever been?—When Hamburg went into the *Zollverein*, the Imperial Government voted a certain sum towards the construction of the harbour.

5564. When was that?—That would be about 1882. Hamburg went into the *Zollverein* actually in 1888, and the money was voted earlier, I suppose.

5565. Can you tell me whether since 1882 any Imperial funds have been used in the improvement of the harbour?—That is since Hamburg actually went into the *Zollverein*? I do not think any Imperial funds have been voted since then.

(*The witness handed in a sectional plan of the harbour at Hamburg, showing the different tidal basins.*)

Sir FREDERICK DIXON DIXON-HARTLAND, Bart., M.P., recalled and further examined.

Sir F. D. Dixon-Hartland, Bart

5566. (*Chairman.*) Are you prepared, on behalf of the Thames Conservancy, to give us any information as to the financial proposals of the Board to-day?—No, not to-day; but I should like to give a message from my Board.

5567. Very well?—I gave a pledge to this Commission that our engineer should, if possible, prepare a plan which should be handed into you. I passed that through the Board at once, but as you will notice, that report was only signed on the 20th February. It was not handed to our Board till a short time after that. Then we had to send our secretary to obtain information with regard to various ports, and, as a matter of fact, the information only came to us fully last Wednesday. That was considered by the Finance Committee last Wednesday, but this morning the Board, without any wish to be discourteous at all, thought that they ought to discuss it a little before I was allowed to bring it before the Commission. It is being pushed on as fast as we can push it on. It is a large work, and we have had to do it properly.

Now, my Lord, as I am here, perhaps I may be allowed to correct my evidence on one or two little points. The first is with regard to Question 1387. I left it a little doubtful as to the composition of the Board.

5568. (*Chairman.*) The question is, "What amount of tonnage would they represent?"—Yes. From my evidence it rather seemed as if we had only the small shipowners on the Conservancy Board. I wish to state that the largest shipowners in London are represented on the Conservancy Board by Mr. T. L. Devitt, a joint manager of the Orient Steam Navigation Company, Limited, one of the Conservators elected by shipowners. That is to say, that we have a representation of the largest as well as the smallest shipowners. Then I wish to correct a statement with regard to taking over the duties of the Port Sanitary Authority. That is at Questions 1422 and 1423. I had not noticed it, but I was wrongly reported in that instance. What I said was, that if the Commissioners recommend the placing of any additional duties upon the Conservators, they would be able to carry out such additional work. I did not say that they desired to take over the duties of the Port Sanitary Authority, which they consider have been admirably performed by the City of London, and would be best left in their hands.

5569. Then do you wish to make any remarks with reference to the answers given by the pilots who have been called?—Yes. With reference to the answers given by the pilots at Questions 4226 to 4228, 4302 to 4305, 4322 to 4326, and 4379 to 4381, I would point out that the Thames Conservancy has for some years employed a surveying staff, and that the results of the various surveys are sent from time to time to the Admiralty and to the Trinity House, both of which bodies, as well as the shipowners themselves, have representatives on the Conservancy Board, whose duty it would be to bring up any complaints that had been received, and the Board presume that no complaints have been made, as none have ever been brought up. The pilots represented that there was no surveyor and that there were no surveys. The regular surveys have been taken by the regular staff; they have been handed in regularly to the proper authorities, and if those authorities had any reason to complain they have their representatives on the Board, and they could bring up their complaint to us, and it would be immediately looked into. As we got no complaint we did not understand that there was anything to complain of.

Sir F. D. Dixon-Hartland, Bart.

1 April 1901.

Recalled, 7432.

(Adjourned *sine die.*)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

Monday, 6th May, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Docks Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. K. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. JOSEPH SHAW appeared on behalf of the North London Railway Company.

(*Chairman.*) We have had some applications made to us with reference to the appearance of Counsel before this Commission, and the Commissioners would like to say that as far as the examination, the cross-examination and addressing the Commission are concerned, they will only recognise the attendance of one Counsel for each interest. This, however, will not prevent notes being taken by any person whom the parties affected may desire to attend for the purpose.

Mr. THOMAS WILLIAM JACOBS, jun., recalled and further examined.

Mr. T. W. Jacobs, jun. 6 May 1901.

5570. (*Chairman.*) You are Chairman of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners?—Yes.

5571. You have some documents, I think, which you are desirous of handing in to the Commission?—Yes.

5572. Will you kindly do so, and at the same time tell us the number of the question in the Minutes of Evidence where the matter is referred to?—With reference to towage within the docks, which was dealt with at Questions 3725 to 3734 and 3746-49, I was asked to put in correspondence which I referred to that had taken place between my Company and the Dock Company. I am sorry to say that I have not been able to find that particular correspondence, but I have correspondence with another firm.

5573. This case which you wish to put in is not referred to in the evidence is it?—It is a similar case. I have not been able to put my hand upon the letters that passed between my Company and the Dock Company.

5574. These are not the documents referred to in the previous evidence. It is not that particular case?—No, it is not that particular case.

5575. Then I am afraid we cannot take it. Now have you any other documents?—Yes. With reference to Questions 3723, 3767 to 3771, and 3806 to 3825, on the subject of compulsory pilotage, I was asked to give further particulars of cases where bargeowners had suffered hardship through the law relating to compulsory pilotage.

(*The Witness handed in a Table of Cases where the Law relating to Compulsory Pilotage has proved a hardship. See Appendix, 16th day, No. 1.*)

5576. Have you any remarks to make upon this table?—No, these are particulars in support of the evidence that has been given by myself and other witnesses. Then as to the Lighter Pass Regulations, the evidence with regard to which is at Questions 3734 to 3739, I now hand in suggestions which were made by my Association for amended pass regulations, and the correspondence which has passed with the Board of Trade on the subject.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the Correspondence between the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners, the London and India Docks Joint Committee, and the Board of Trade, on the subject of the suggested Regulations in respect of passes for Lighters using the London and St. Katharine Docks. See Appendix, 16th day, No. 2.*)

Then I put in a copy of the judgment in the case of "Waldemar Friedlaender *v.* Shaw, Savill and Albion Company," which bears on the question of Pass Regulations.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the Judgment in the Waldemar Friedlaender v. Shaw, Savill and Albion Company, Limited, March 1st, 1897, in an action for the wrongful detention at the Victoria Dock of a lighter containing Plaintiff's goods. See Appendix, 16th day, No. 3.*)

5577. Have you anything further to add?—I have nothing further to add. I have further correspondence which has passed in specific cases if the Commission think it would be of any use. It is rather voluminous, and I think the Commission have all that is necessary.

(*Chairman.*) Thank you. I think we shall be satisfied with what we have.

Mr. WILLIAM VARCO WILLIAMS recalled and further examined.

Mr. W. V. Williams.

6 May 1901.

5578. (*Chairman.*) You have, I believe, some documents to hand in to the Commission?—Yes. First of all, in connection with Questions 3852 to 3854, we were asked to provide figures as to the magnitude of our dredging operations. We have taken out some careful figures, and we find that our average is as near as possible 1,000 tons a day. Then with regard to Question 3870 and others I hand in a document showing sundry amounts that we have received from steamship owners in payment of damage caused by excessive rates of speed in 1899 and 1900.

(*The Witness handed in a Table showing List of Payments received by Samuel Williams and Sons, Limited, in settlement of various claims for damage caused by excessive speed of steamers while navigating in the lower reaches of the Thames during the years* 1899 *and* 1900. *See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 4.)

5579. Have you any further remarks to make?—No, I have nothing further to add.

(*Chairman.*) We propose now to proceed with the examination of Mr. Scott. We intend that the witness shall in the first place be examined by the Commissioners, and after that is finished Counsel representing the witness will have the opportunity of applying to the Commissioners with a view to supplementing the examination by such questions as they may think fit, and after that will follow the cross-examination on such points as the Commissioners may allow.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) Very well, my Lord. In that case, as you can only stand one Counsel a day, perhaps you will allow my friend, Mr. George Wallace, to suggest the questions, if your Lordship has not asked them beforehand.

(*Chairman.*) We must have the examination by the Commissioners before any questions are asked by Counsel.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) So I understood.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES CATER SCOTT recalled and further examined.

Mr. C. J. C. Scott.

5580. (*Chairman.*) Will you proceed with your evidence?—I wish in the first place to put in certain returns which have been asked for by the Commissioners. When I was before the Royal Commission before, I was asked certain questions, and I promised to give the information later on. The first table is a return showing the market values at the prices on November 22nd, 1900, of the stocks, etc., of the London and St. Katharine Docks Company, the East and West India Dock Company, and the Joint Committee respectively.

(*The Witness handed in the Return. See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 5.)

That return was asked for in Question 526 of the Minutes of Evidence. I think Sir Robert Giffen, if I remember rightly, asked the question. Then the next is in answer to Questions 535 to 542 of the Minutes of Evidence.

(*The Witness handed in a Return showing the Capital Account of the London and St. Katharine Docks Company, the East and West India Dock Company, and the Joint Committee respectively, on* 22*nd November*, 1900. *See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 6.)

Then the third table shows the dividends paid by the West India Dock to begin with, then the East India Dock, and the East and West India Dock down to the time of their amalgamation in 1838, and subsequently the dividends paid by the East and West India Dock Company down to the end of 1899. This is in answer to Questions 594 to 598.

(*The Witness handed in a Return showing the Dividends (including bonuses) paid by the West India Dock Company, the East India Dock Company, and the East and West India Dock Company on ordinary capital stock since the opening of the Docks. See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 7.)

Then in answer to Questions 876 and 877, I hand in a table of the cost of dredging. These questions were put to the engineer of the Joint Committee, and I thought if you would allow me to put the return in here it might save time. It is simply the information which we have from our accountant.

(*The Witness handed in a Return of the expenses incurred by the London and India Docks Joint Committee on account of dredging inside and outside the gates at each dock for the years* 1896–99*; also the average expenditure per annum, all expenses except supervision being included in these amounts. See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 8.)

Then there were certain other questions. 776 to 778, put to Mr. Baggallay as to the tides in the course of a year.

(*The Witness handed in a Statement showing the levels at high water in the river at Galleons entrance, Royal Albert Dock, during the year* 1899. *See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 9.)

Then the next table is in answer to Question 790, and shows how tonnage discharged at Tilbury is dealt with by rail and barge.

(*The Witness handed in a Return of the proportion of the Out-turn tonnage at the Tilbury Dock of the London and India Docks Joint Committee that was delivered by rail and water respectively during the half-year January* 1*st to June* 30*th*, 1900. *See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 10.)

Then I hand in a return showing the dividends paid by the London Dock Company. We were not asked for this, but I thought as we were putting in the dividends paid by the East and West India Dock Company it would be satisfactory if we gave the same information as to the London and St. Katharine Dock.

(*The Witness handed in a Return showing the dividends paid by the London Dock Company, the St. Katharine Dock Company, and the London and St. Katharine's Dock Company on the ordinary capital stock since the opening of the docks to* 1865, *inclusive, as extracted from the minute books of the Company. See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 11.)

Then the next table I hand in shows the amounts charged to revenue, but which really should have been properly charged to capital, prior to 1863, spent by the London and St. Katharine Dock Companies. These figures were up to 1863 the amounts charged to revenue. For the period subsequent to that date we have put in other tables.

(*The Witness handed in a Return showing the amounts charged to revenue in respect of new works by the London Dock Company and the St. Katharine's Dock Company respectively, during the years* 1845 *to* 1864, *as extracted from the minute books of the Company. See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 12.)

The amount here is another £255,000. Since I gave my previous evidence in November last the amalgamation of the two Dock Companies has been completed, and on the 1st January they became one company—the London and India Dock Company, the Joint Committee disappearing. I have, therefore, thought it well that I should put in a statement showing how the capital of the two former companies, the London and St. Katharine Dock Company and the East and West India Dock Company, became merged into the capital of the London and India Dock Company, and I will put in a table showing what the unexhausted capital powers of the London and India Dock Company on the 1st January, 1901, were.

(*The Witness handed in a Return showing* (1) *the estimated amounts of new stocks that will have to be issued by the amalgamated London and India Docks Company on* 1*st January*, 1901, *to replace the existing issues of the separate companies and the Joint Committee; and* (2) *the unexhausted capital powers after providing for such new issues, but before paying off certain liabilities shown in the Return. See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 13.)

I should like in passing to remark that although we show there unexhausted borrowing powers of £1,291,000, of that amount £250,000 is only available for working capital. It is not available for any new dock or extension of buildings. It is kept loose, and represents our floating cash in the business in case of need. A further amount of £247,000 is only available, or is rather taken up by the repayment of the London Company's debentures. Those debentures are debentures payable at three, four, and five years, and by the Act of Amalgamation they have to be paid off. We can only pay them off by the issue of debentures or stock at

Mr. C. J. C. Scott.

6 May 1901.

the company. So that that takes up a further amount of our unexhausted borrowing powers. Then there was a further amount of £78,000, which was a debt to the London and Westminster Bank at the end of last year on account of debentures which had been paid off, but we thought the moment was not a fitting one for the issue of debenture stock to pay that. So that from that amount of £1,291,000 a total of £575,000 must be deducted showing the amount of available capital for extensions as £715,000.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) My Lord, might I interrupt the witness for a moment? I appear for the Corporation of the City of London. I gather that at the end of this witness's evidence in chief, your Lordship will invite suggestions to see whether Counsel have any relevant cross-examination to offer. The difficulty is this. As I gather from listening to the evidence there may be important matters upon which the witness will have to be cross-examined. The members of the Commission have this evidence before them, and can follow it, but Counsel here have not had it before them at all, and we cannot get any copies from the Dock Company. I have asked. I gather that the figures are relevant, and we should be able to follow them.

(*Chairman.*) Have you not been supplied with copies?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) No. It is very interesting, but without the book it is quite impossible to follow.

(*Chairman.*) I think it is quite necessary that you should have copies.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, copies shall be supplied, as far as we can do so, if the Commissioners think fit, but I do not think the supply is unlimited.

(*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) It is very important for the Poplar Dock Company to have a copy, because I see the railway has been mentioned.

5581. (*Chairman.*) I think it is important that everybody should have copies. (*To the witness.*) Now will you proceed?—The next table is a return of the description and tonnage of goods discharged from ocean-going vessels in the Docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee between the 1st January and the 30th June, 1900, showing the quantity on which quay or warehouse rates were levied, and the quantity which passed through the docks (overside) without any payment to the Joint Committee.

(*The Witness handed in the Return. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 14.)

We thought it might be of interest to take out the actual figures for six months so that in this table we have the actual figures of the imports, and it is rather satisfactory to us that on the actual figures we find the amount of goods which went away from the docks without paying anything came to 76 per cent. as against our estimate of 72 per cent., showing that we had understated it. We have no means of getting at the actual export figures. This table only refers to the import figures. Then another table deals with the same figures, only it takes in certain small trading lines which are constantly in and out. Some of them run every day, and some two or three times a week, and of that cargo we in some cases have no full return.

See 6403.

(*The Witness handed in a Return of the tonnage of goods discharged from vessels from foreign and colonial ports in the Docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee during the first six months of the year* 1900. *See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 15.)

Then the next table is a return showing some of the largest ships that have entered each of the docks under the control of the London and India Docks Joint Committee.

(*The Witness handed in Return. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 16.)

I think this return should be read in connection with a return which I put in at Question 626, showing the actual tonnage which we had dealt with at different docks in different years, my object being to show that even the smaller docks of the Dock Company have now their proper use, and that they are not out of date and obsolete, as has been suggested in some quarters. And if you further turn to this table which has been put in, and go through it with these particulars of the larger ships, I think my contention is well supported. I might perhaps just instance one thing at the London Dock, which is one of our oldest docks, and which in 1871 had 373,000 tons, and in 1899 had 447,000 tons. In those 29 years the tonnage has varied from a minimum of 373,000 to a maximum of 473,000, showing I think that the Dock has been fully occupied all that time. Now, my Lord, there is another matter to which I wish to refer. I was asked if I could divide the receipts and expenditure of the Dock Companies. I had certain correspondence with Lord Egerton, in which I told him we were asked to do a thing that we believed was actually impossible. However, he pressed the point, and we have done it to the very best of our ability. I put in now the division so far as we have been able to do it, and the correspondence relating thereto.

(*The Witness handed in a statement of Revenue and Expenses of the London and India Docks Joint Committee,* 1899, *with correspondence relating thereto. See Appendix,* 16*th day, No.* 17.)

I would like to draw your attention to one letter signed by Mr. Welton, the accountant. You may perhaps wonder why we selected Mr. Welton. My reason is that Mr. Welton was one of the auditors of the Joint Committee, and is to-day one of the auditors of the London and India Docks Company, and is therefore fully acquainted with all our accounts, and I thought it would be satisfactory to you that you should have his certificate that we have made the division to the very best extent we could. Even this division that we have made is to a certain extent estimated. Before I proceed to the next portion of my evidence may I refer again to the fact that it was prepared when the Joint Committee was in existence. The Joint Committee ceased to exist on the 1st January, when the two dock companies, the London and St. Katharine and the East and West India Docks Companies disappeared. Now the entire docks on the north side of the river, with the exception of Millwall, are in the hands of the London and India Docks Company. The proposal which the London and India Docks Company submit as being the best, the most equitable, and the most effective mode of dealing with the present crisis in the condition of the Port of London, and with the financial affairs of the Dock Company themselves, is briefly thus:—To abolish a clause which is to be found, except as hereinafter mentioned, in every important Act of Parliament affecting the dock companies during the last 101 years, whereby lighters, barges or craft entering into any docks, basins, locks, cuts, or works, to discharge or receive ballast or goods to or from on board of any ship or vessel lying therein are exempted from payment of rates so long as the lighter or craft shall be *bonâ fide* engaged in so discharging or receiving ballast or goods, and whereby the ballast or goods so discharged or received are exempted from all rates and charges. The survival of this clause into modern times—when the conditions of shipping and commerce combined with the peculiar wharfage and lighterage system which has become inseparable from the trade of the Port of London, have brought it into a prominence which 100 years ago could never have been foreseen, and which is continually on the increase—is, it is submitted, very largely responsible for the difficulties with which this Commission have been appointed to deal. The historical causes which led to the insertion of this clause (except as above stated) in the first of the Dock Acts I have already set out in my previous evidence. (*See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 1.) They may be briefly recapitulated here. For more than a century before the constitution of the first dock company, the crowding of the river, and the limited extent of the legal quays, the sufferance wharves on which alone dutiable goods, that is to say, practically all goods, could be landed, had made the Port of London the subject of bitter complaints. As early as 1674 we find the London merchants petitioning the Privy Council in vain for redress of their grievances. Yet between the years 1702 and 1770 (when 1,335 ships of a total tonnage of 157,035 were employed in the trade of the Port) the commerce of the Port was nearly doubled, and between 1770 and 1795 (when 3,663 ships of a total tonnage of 620,845 were employed), it was doubled again. Not only were the number and tonnage of ships thus rapidly increasing during the century, but also their draught and bulk. In about 1750 the average foreign trading vessel was 132 tons, and the average coasting vessel 80 tons; in 1794 the averages were 194 tons and 101 tons. At the end of the 18th Century the biggest ships in use were those engaged in the West India trade, which in a few cases reached 500 tons, and in

the East India trade even rather more; ships of 400 tons were, however, hardly known to any other trade, nearly half the British ships were under 200 tons and more than half the coasters under 100 tons. The lighters, hoys and craft in use on the river at this time (including colliers) averaged 32 tons. It is important to bear these figures in mind because they help to picture the conditions which prevailed in the age of sailing vessels when the exemption clause was first introduced and to contrast them with those of modern commerce as carried on in the age of leviathan steamers and barges even running to 200 tons. You will see from that that many of the barges exceed the size of the ships for which the docks were originally built, and as far as we can see there is no reason why this increase of size should not go on. Only last week I had one ship owner who suggested to me the advisability of putting on the river steam barges of 1,000 tons. If you are going to have steam barges of 1,000 tons on the river, and that barge is to have the same right of entry as the smaller barges originally of 30 or 40 tons, I do not know really what the position of the Dock Company will be. A steam barge of 1,000 tons cannot really be called a barge. You have steamers to-day without any masts, having simply a mast to carry a flag, and those steamers it seems to me are just as much barges as one of these barges. The evils of which the merchants complained in 1674 had therefore quadrupled by the end of the 18th Century, for during the whole intervening period not a foot of fresh accommodation was added to the Legal Quays and Sufferance wharves, the extent of which was then, as formerly, 1,464 feet and 3,676 feet respectively. These evils were (1) the difficulty of access to the port and the over-crowded state of the river from ships, timber barges, &c., which drove many ships on to the shallows. (2) The danger of delay or loss to ships from the circuitous course round the Isle of Dogs and from the insufficient depth of the river. (3) Want of arrangement in the mooring and navigation for ships. (4) The neglect and bad practices resulting from the foregoing which included the depredations of the several well recognised classes of river thieves, this state of things being aggravated by the connivance of the Revenue officers. Lastly, the state of the Legal Quays and Sufferance wharves and the insufficiency of the accommodation afforded by them for the delivery and reception of cargoes, leading to the detention of loaded cargoes for weeks at a time for want of space and consequent exposure to pilfering and frauds on the revenue, and to a deficiency of lighters for river service. The confusion was rendered complete by the indiscriminate use of the quays as an import and export market. It will readily be understood that the people interested in the wharfage monopoly, who included a large number of influential City men, fiercely resisted any proposals threatening their vested interests, even if for the advantage of the port as a whole. That is a condition which we find to-day. At length, however, the evils grew to be so serious and the trade and prosperity of the port were so imperilled, that after a severe struggle, and many abortive attempts, a Bill was passed in 1799 for the construction of a dock for the exclusive accommodation of the West India trade. The recommendations of the Committee appointed to enquire into the matter were to the effect that it would be necessary at all events at first to require all West India ships to use the wet docks at the Isle of Dogs; they also embody suggestions with regard to the important question of warehousing (dealt with by the Act of 1803, presently mentioned), the necessity for further docks and warehouses, and other matters of management and detail. The provisions of the Act of 1799, and of the subsequent Acts, referred to later, which are material to the present subject, will be found more in detail in my previous evidence. (*See Appendix, 2nd Day, No.* 2.) As these provisions are to a great extent similar in the case of the West India Dock Act, and of the two Acts which followed in 1800 and 1803 for the construction by the London Dock Company of a dock at Wapping for the wine, brandy, tobacco, and rice trades, and of a dock at Blackwall by the East India Dock Company for the East Indies and China trade, it will be sufficient here to state generally the nature of the "bargain" which each of them represents. In each case a monopoly for twenty-one years of the trade for which the dock is designed is granted to the company. The dividend is limited to 10 per cent.; there are compulsory provisions for the protection of goods by the construction at great expense of a high and solid wall, and in other ways; officials are to be appointed to superintend the management of the dock; the docks are made part of the Port of London; compensation is to be made to landowners, dock owners, and other prejudiced persons; the quays, which in each case are to be built round the docks, are made legal quays; proper warehouses for the accommodation of the goods are to be constructed. I think this rather shows that warehouses were the prime origin of the docks, and the reason was that it was largely to protect the revenue, the docks for shipping being built to ensure the warehousing. Statutory charges of large amounts (in the case of the West India Dock Company 6s. 8d. a ton) are authorised on ships, and on goods landed on the quays or warehoused; and, lastly, the exemption clause above referred to is inserted, exempting lighters from charges under the circumstances mentioned. I should like to say that the 6s. 8d. a ton is not the dues. It does not compare with the 1s. which we charge to-day, but that 6s. 8d. did include a good many other charges at the time. If it is wished, I can put in a statement showing exactly what it did include, but I may say that we would be perfectly willing to accept that 6s. 8d., with its liabilities, instead of the 1s. 6d. which we have to-day. The goods themselves which the lighters carry are not by the exemption clauses in these three earliest Acts exempted from dues. The reason probably was that all goods of the kind for which the respective docks were granted a monopoly practically had to be landed inside the docks, and were, therefore, in any case liable to dues. Whether the goods were actually charged for on entering or not is not known. Anyhow, after the expiry of the monopolies, in all the similar clauses inserted in subsequent Acts, the exemption was extended to the goods as well as the lighters, and applied as well to these original docks as to those built afterwards, except the London Dock Company. It must not, however, be supposed that the exemption clauses granted to the lightermen were the only countervailing privileges granted to the persons prejudiced by the construction of wet docks. As before mentioned, provision was made for the indemnification of those whose lands were required for the docks themselves, while in addition a very large sum, variously stated at £1,000,000, £1,600,000, and even £2,000,000 was paid to the proprietors or occupants of wharves in compensation for their loss of business. With regard to the twenty-one years' monopoly granted to these companies, it has been suggested that the length of the period was taken from the similar period granted in 1709 to Liverpool. The analogy, however, failed in one very important respect, inasmuch as the Corporation of Liverpool continued after the expiry of their monopoly and still continues to levy town and anchorage dues irrespective of their docks, and are therefore independent to a great extent of any such monopoly. In the London Docks no such privilege remained after their monopoly was removed. In 1802 the Western Dock (London) was commenced, and shortly afterwards in the same year the West India Import Dock was opened. In the following year, 1803, the great Warehousing Act (43 George III., chapter 142) was passed to secure certain specified goods in their warehouses without payment of duty. Previously to this time the duties on most imported goods had either to be paid at the moment of importation or a bond with sufficient security for future payment had to be given to the Revenue officers, and the country was on this account to some extent prohibited from being an entrepôt for goods for foreign consumption. Now, however, the quays and wharves of the various docks having been declared legal quays, and adequate warehouses having been constructed, in which tobacco, wine, silk goods, and other commodities, were allowed to be deposited under the custody of the officers of Customs, it had become obvious that facilities might be afforded to both importers and exporters by the introduction of the system of warehousing dutiable goods without first requiring payment of duty. This Act of 1803 therefore provided that certain imported goods could be so deposited in warehouses, to which the Commissioners of Customs allowed the privilege, and further that goods intended for exportation might also be deposited in such warehouses and taken out for exportation free of dues. By this Act the application of the system was limited to the Port of London, and it was not in fact for many years extended by the Commissioners beyond the dock warehouses, but it was afterwards developed and applied by the Legislature to

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other ports, and extended all over the Port of London by the Warehousing Act, 1832 (3 and 4 William IV., chapter 57), and the Customs Consolidation Act, 1853 (16 and 17 Victoria, chapter 107). The advantage of the system was that property lying in the dock warehouses became transferable by dock warrants, which soon acquired a high reputation as securities, and thus facilitated mercantile transactions. On January 31st, 1805, the Western Dock (London) of 20 acres was completed at Wapping, and in the same year the West India Export Docks and the City Corporation's Canal across the Isle of Dogs were completed. In August, 1806, the East India Docks were opened, and later on in 1820 the Hermitage Basin of the London Docks. A House of Commons Committee in 1810 testify to the excellence of these docks as "a work of great and general public benefit accomplished without any charge whatever on the public at large." The West India Docks continued during the period of their respective monopolies to enjoy great prosperity and to pay their full 10 per cent. dividend. The India Company paid 6 to 7 per cent. in 1818, 10 per cent. for three or four years, and then 8 per cent. for a time. The London and St. Katharine Dock never paid their full dividend, averaging only 4 or 5 per cent. The first of the monopolies to expire was that of the West India Dock Company in 1823, but in that year a strong attempt was made to obtain a renewal of it, and the facts and arguments adduced in favour of such renewal are contained in the Report of that year of the Committee appointed to report on the foreign trade of the Port. (*See Appendix, 2nd Day, No.* 3.) The evidence before this Committee shows that in 1817 this Company was enabled in accordance with the provisions of its Act to reduce the maximum charge of 6s. 8d. a ton, which that Act allowed, to 5s. a ton in 1817, and to make a further reduction in 1822. It is believed that a further reduction was made in 1823 and 1824. Neither these reductions in rates nor the acknowledged excellence of the docks in respect of their accommodation of the trade for which they were constructed availed to obtain for the company a renewal of its privilege. The principle of free competition was held paramount, and the monopoly expired in due course, as did those of the London and East India Dock Companies in 1826 and 1827 respectively. It is observable that apparently throughout the enquiry of 1823 by the Select Committee the exemption clause was not once mentioned, nor was there any suggestion of compensation to the companies for their compulsory expenditure on walls and other strict precautions for the protection of dutiable goods. This is submitted to be a very significant fact. The obvious inference of course is, that at this time, practically before steamers had been introduced, and when the goods affected by the monopolies had not only to be brought into these particular docks, but also in the case of the West India Company, had by statute to be landed in the dock, and in the cases of the other two companies were to all intents obliged to be landed there, owing to the restriction of privilege observed by the Commissioners of Customs in favour of the warehouses which surrounded the dock waters there was little need for lighters to enter the docks at all. I venture to point out that it is a remarkable thing that in 1823 that exemption clause was never mentioned at all. Practically the result to the dock companies at that time was that the limitation of the right of landing goods in bond to the warehouse if the dock companies preserved their monopoly. Of course that limitation was afterwards removed. One of the witnesses before the Select Committee on Foreign Trade of 1823, stated (page 224, B) that he did not in 1823 own more than one-third in number of the lighters that he formerly possessed, and that since the institution of the docks he had sold for £20 lighters which had cost him £800 and £900 each. The same witness was compensated to the extent of £3,327 for the loss of his business occasioned by the institution of the docks. (Third Report of Select Committee on Foreign Trade, House of Commons Paper, 431 of 1824.)

5582. (*Chairman.*) Can you give us the question and answer?—It is the Report of the Select Committee on the Foreign Trade of the Country: House of Commons Paper, No. 411, of 1823, page 224. "Q.) What number of barges may you have?—(A.) I have now about one-third of what I had. (Q.) Are barges or lighters more used?—(A.) More barges than lighters. I have sold some at £20 that cost me £800 or £900 since the docks have been in operation." It seems a fair inference from this that the reason why this clause was allowed to stand was its comparative insignificance. It seems to have been simply overlooked, as appears from the fact that the arguments for the renewal (which appear in Vol. B.), based on the liabilities to which the company was subjected by the Act as a counter-balance to the privileges which it was accorded, nowhere include any mention of this clause. The Dock Companies are suffering now for their shortsightedness on that occasion. But they were then prosperous bodies, and the prospect of dangerous rivalry from this unnoticed source appeared to be of the remotest. Moreover free trade had not then commenced to flourish or to enable large classes of goods no longer subject to duty to go direct to unlicensed wharves and warehouses. The customs had not then commenced to extend the Legal Quay and Bonded Warehouse system beyond the limits of the docks, and so enable even dutiable goods to be taken away directly to the riverside wharves and warehouses. For some years, in fact after the expiry of the monopolies, it appears that the dock companies hardly felt their loss. It was free competition between the dock establishments that the Committee of 1823 were advocating. (*See* Vol. B., pages 3-15 *passim.*) That other rivals from outside should compete with them for their business seems hardly then to have been contemplated, nor does it appear that either the wharfingers or lightermen presented any petition against the company's application to Parliament for a renewal of their monopoly. It is noticeable, however, that the Committee volunteered a recommendation to the Commissioners of Customs to extend the bonded warehouse privilege, which policy was gradually more and more adopted to the serious prejudice of the Dock Companies. I have dealt more fully with the history which now follows down to 1855 in the Appendix to my evidence on the Second Day. (*See Appendix, 2nd Day, No.* 4.) The expiry of the monopolies led to a fierce struggle between the established Dock Companies on the one hand and would-be promoters of rival dock schemes on the other. The St. Katharine Dock Company was, after a chequered history, in which it was first encouraged, and then opposed by the London Dock Company, constituted by the Act of 1825 (6 George IV., chapter 105), and the first free dock in London (the waterway of which was only some 10 acres in extent) was opened at enormous expense in 1828, subject to the usual exemption clause (s. 116). The reason of the enormous expense of the St. Katharine Dock was that for the building of that dock the site had to be bought, It was covered with houses, and I believe there were two or three churches, and in the first place the cost was naturally very great. Then it was surrounded by these enormous walls, and so the whole of the cost of the dock was very large indeed. But there was an object for that. The object was that the warehousing business should be as near to the City as possible; and that is what we find to-day; that for the warehousing business you are bound to keep your warehouses close to the City. So that the St. Katharine Dock at this enormous expense was built simply for the advantage of the warehousing business. But the opposition of the older Dock Companies apparently discouraged other enterprises, for from that year (in which the London Company opened its Eastern and Tobacco Docks) until 1850, there was a lull in dock expansion. Several important Acts, however, passed during this period, and significant events took place. Thus in 1829 the West India Dock Company purchased for £120,000 the canal across the Isle of Dogs (which in 1870 was converted into the present South West India Dock). Now I ask your permission to make a digression here, and to deal with some points raised in the evidence of Mr. Gomme, clerk and late statistician to the London County Council. Have I your permission to go on with that?

5583. If you please?—This sum was offered by the Dock Company for the canal, in response to an appeal by the Treasury for tenders for its purchase. (See Treasury Minute of April 14th, 1829.) How the canal came in this way into the open market is a question of interest, because it bears on the connection between the Corporation of London and the Port in the early part of the century, as to which the evidence of Mr. Gomme may, I think, give rise to misapprehension. The "City Bill" of 1799, to which Mr. Gomme referred, which was passed in consequence of the recommendations of the Committee appointed to consider the question of the improvement of the Port of London, is better known as the West India Dock Act of that year, to which I have before referred. By this Act (39 Geo. III., cap.

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lxix.), as we have seen, a company was constituted to construct wet docks, quays, and warehouses at the Isle of Dogs (secs. 56, 57) in pursuance of the scheme finally approved by the Committee for the amelioration of the Port. By the same Act the Corporation of London, who had proposed a scheme which was rejected by the Committee, were granted £72,000 for the construction of the canal which was afterwards purchased by the West India Dock Company as before stated. It was provided by the Act that the Corporation should in the first instance acquire the land on which the docks were to be constructed, and convey it to trustees for the company at the company's expense, the company paying the purchase money out of its capital (see secs. 21, 74, and 160 of the Act). But it does not appear that beyond lending the support of their name and credit in this way to the promotion of the Bill and the acquisition of the necessary land, and having eight members of their body on the Board of the company, the Corporation had any further or other connection with the docks of London. Further moneys were by successive Acts (viz., 42 Geo. III., cap xlix., 43 Geo. III., cap. cxxiv., 44 Geo. III., cap. vii., 45 Geo. III., cap. lxiii., and 47 Geo. III., cap. xxxi.) granted to the Corporation out of the Consolidated Fund for the completion of the canal and other works for the benefit of the Port, the total advances (with the £72,000 originally granted) amounting to £327,000. It is suggested or implied by Mr. Gomme that these sums were principally devoted to the improvement of the docks. This view does not, however, appear to be quite in accordance with the facts, and is indeed shown on a perusal of the Acts themselves to be erroneous. The docks were paid for by and were the property of the dock company, and are stated—(see Report of the House of Commons Committee, 1810)—to have conferred a great benefit on the port "without any charge whatever on the public at large." The moneys advanced to the Corporation were for the construction and completion of the canal, the purchase of mooring chains and other port improvements. It should be noticed, too, that the different Acts under which the moneys were advanced charged these advances on the Port dues payable to the Crown under Section 134 of the Act of 1799, and Section 3 of the Act of 1803 above referred to. These dues had no connection with the docks, the dues payable in respect of which were, of course, payable to the dock company (Section 137 of the Act of 1799). That is to say the dues in respect of the docks were paid to the dock company but the dues payable to the Crown were not paid to the dock company. It is thus apparent that the £327,000 advanced to the Corporation by the Government under the above series of Acts was altogether independent of the docks, and was neither charged nor spent upon them. There was, therefore, no occasion for the dock company to repay them to the Government. The £120,000 paid by the dock company for the canal was, however, paid into the Consolidated Fund (*see* Exchequer Account of the 16th August, 1833, on page 5 of the "account of payments out of the Consolidated Fund, etc,"—printed by order of the House of Commons, 21st August, 1833).

See 3305.

(*The Witness handed in a Return of Payments out of the Consolidated Fund, under the Act* 39 *George III. c.* 69, *and of the several Acts passed for the improvement of the Port of London, etc., dated* 21*st August*, 1833. *See Appendix*, 16*th day, No.* 18.)

This went towards repaying to the Government part of the £327,000 advanced by it to the Corporation as above mentioned. It does not appear that this purchase was any great bargain for the dock company, since £100,000 of the £327,000 so advanced was expressly directed by the Act of 1803 to be devoted to new moorings, etc., and the purchase of legal quays, and not to the canal, and the remainder was to be devoted not to the canal only, but to divers other works for the amelioration of the port. It follows, therefore, that of that £327,000 only £227,000 was available for the canal, and a portion of that was also required for the improvement of the port. The £100,000 could not be included in that because it was advanced for other purposes. Therefore, what the dock companies paid £120,000 for was represented by that £227,000, less whatever amount of that was spent on the improvement of the port. When the Treasury asked for tenders, the dock company, I believe, were the only people who made an offer, their tender was the only one received by the Treasury. The Treasury Minute of the 24th March, 1829, is as follows: "Whitehall, Treasury Chambers, 14th April, 1829. Copy of Treasury Minute, dated 24th March, 1829, on the subject of the sale of the City Canal to the West India Dock Company. Read a letter from the Chairman of the West India Dock Company offering, on the part of the company, to purchase the City Canal at the price of £120,000. My Lords read their Minute of 3rd instant, directing letters to be written to the several parties who had expressed a wish to purchase this property, desiring them respectively to transmit on or before the 20th instant, a final offer, stating the highest sum they are willing to give, and Mr. Stewart states to the Board that no offer has been in consequence received from any of the parties, excepting from the West India Dock Company. My Lords are pleased to accept the offer of the West India Dock Company. Write to Mr. Æneas Barkly, the Chairman of the West India Dock Company, that My Lords have had under consideration his letter of the 20th instant, offering on the part of the West India Dock Company to purchase the City Canal for the sum of £120,000, and that My Lords accept the offer, and will direct Mr. Maule, their solicitor to put himself in communication with the solicitor of the West India Dock Company, for the purpose of arranging the completion of this purchase. Give directions to Mr. Maule accordingly, and direct that he will prepare a Bill for Parliament to enable their Lordships to sell this property for the sum of £120,000 to the West India Dock Company. Write to the City Remembrancer, requesting he will inform the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London, that in pursuance of the arrangement which my Lords adopted for the sale of the City Canal, which was communicated to them on the 3rd instant, my Lords have agreed to sell that property to the West India Dock Company for the sum of £120,000 and have directed their solicitor to prepare a Bill for Parliament to enable the Lords of the Treasury to carry that measure into effect; and my Lords desire he will move the Lord Mayor and Corporation to permit no measures to be taken hereafter which may in any way affect the value or alter the present circumstances of that property." The only sum known to have been advanced to the dock companies by the Government is a sum of £30,000 lent to the West India Dock Company under sec. 4 of the above-mentioned Act of 47 Geo. III. cap xxxi. This was devoted to the erection of a wall round the dock for the protection of the revenue and to guard-houses for the soldiers and Customs officers. The whole of this sum, with interest amounting to upwards of £13,000 was repaid by the Dock Company into the Exchequer on or before March, 1817. So that the only public money which the dock companies received was this £30,000, which was repaid. The "Account of payments out of the consolidated fund, &c.," above referred to is also of interest, as showing that from 1799 to 1833 nearly £1,300,000 in "canal and dock" dues payable to the Crown were paid into the Exchequer (under sec. 154 of the Act of 1799 and sec. 5 of the Act of 1803) to replace the moneys paid out of the consolidated fund under sec. 154 towards the improvements and "compensations" provided for and payable under the Act of 1799. These "compensations" were (by sec. 121 of that Act) made payable to the "owners and occupiers of and other persons interested in or employed upon the Legal Quays and Sufferance wharves, warehouses, docks, &c., rendered less valuable" by the scheme of improvement carried out by the Act. It will thus be seen that these compensations formed part of the Government's considered scheme for the amelioration of the condition of the port as a whole. They were never treated as in any sense advances to the Dock Company, though the docks, like the rest of the port, derived a benefit from them. No doubt the Government considered that the Dock Company was bearing its full share of the burden and responsibility of the scheme in supplying the capital for, and undertaking the construction of the docks, without any guarantee whatever for the success of its enterprise except the privileges granted to it by the Government in respect of which these compensations were payable. Provision was made by the Act for the repayment of the moneys so paid out of the consolidated fund by charging them on the port dues payable to the Crown; and the accounts show that at any rate the greater part of those moneys was in fact so repaid to the Government. In 1828 (9 Geo. IV., c. 95) the East India Dock Company was formally reconstituted. By this Act the docks, &c., of the company though expressed to be part

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of the Port of London are (by s. 2) absolutely vested in the company. By Section 118 the company is empowered to charge rates on ships up to 10s. a ton, a significant figure compared with the modern maximum of 1s. 6d. (*See Appendix, 2nd Day, No.* 5.) What I said about the 6s. 8d. will equally apply to this. In the same year (9 Geo. IV., c. 116) the London Company was also reconstituted (exemption clause, s. 108). In 1831 (1 and 2 Wm. IV., c. 52) the West India Company was reconstituted with similar provisions (exemption clause, s. 83). In 1836 (6 and 7 Wm. IV., c. 31) the St. Katharine Dock Company was reincorporated and the previous Act of 1825 embodied in the new Act including of course the exemption clause. In 1838 (1 Vic., c. 39) the East and West India Dock Company was incorporated by the absorption of the East India Company in the West India Company.

5584. Can you tell us what the object of the reconstitution referred to was?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) May I help your Lordship? I think the West India Dock was not really a corporate body under the first Act; it was created a corporation by the Act of 1831.

(*Chairman.*) So that really the reconstruction was formal?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Yes.

(*Witness.*) Then, in 1838, there was the amalgamation of the East India Dock and the West India Dock into one company; gradually the whole thing has been amalgamated. Meanwhile, in 1832, the important Warehousing Act of that year, above referred to, almost wholly swept away the restrictions affecting legal quays, and threw open the door to the freer wharfage and warehousing rivalry. A steady increase is also observable during this period in the number of goods exempted from duties, and the consequent diminution in the demand for bonded stores. In 1842 the dutiable goods still numbered 1,200, but in 1845, by the 8 and 9 Victoria, Chapter 12, 450 of these were struck off the list. At the present day there are but 15 remaining (to-day there are 16, because we have added sugar), and for these the bonded stores of the docks compete with very many others which have now been set up in or about the Port of London and elsewhere. According to the recent London County Council Report there are now altogether some 120 wharves and quays, besides numerous up-town warehouses of all kinds in competition with the docks; the 120 wharves I take from the London County Council's Report. In 1850 the Victoria Dock Act was passed, and a new dock of 90 acres shortly afterwards erected on the marshy ground north of the Isle of Dogs (at the comparatively small cost, it is believed, of £5,000 an acre) to meet the demands of the growing commerce of the Port, and in particular with a view to attract the collier trade. It is only fair to say that with regard to that very low cost when the Victoria Dock was opened it was much more of a pond than a dock. The south side was certainly not fitted with any quays at all, in fact, it is only within the last few years that we have been putting any quays on the south side. I am not sure that in that estimate of £5,000, quays and jetties such as exist now on the north side of Victoria Dock were included. It was really a floating pond. It was not, however, very successful, and in 1864, by the same Act by which the London and St. Katharine Dock Companies were amalgamated it was purchased by the Amalgamated Company. In 1853 came the Customs Consolidation Act, yet further extending the bonded warehouse system and legalising the appointment of fresh station and sufferance wharves. The history of these years since 1827 when the last of the monopolies expired is, it will be seen, marked by the material growth and legislative encouragement of free trade and free competition, both of which tended more and more to remove the after-effects of the monopoly so long enjoyed by the dock companies. The rivalry of the outside wharfingers and warehousemen, at first compulsorily minimised by law, and then for a time practically crippled by the restriction to the dock warehouses of the bonding privilege, had gradually assumed the proportions of a very serious danger to the future of the docks. It had long been the policy of the dock companies to look to their warehousing for the main source of their revenue. We contend that warehousing was really the prime original business for which the docks were started. They accordingly attracted goods to the docks by minimising their charges on shipping, for it was presumably then as now the shipowner and not the consignee who chose his port. And it must be remembered that in those days of large fleets of sailing vessels supplies would come over in huge quantities far in excess of the immediate need and remain for weeks in the dock warehouses. While the special privileges attaching to these warehouses lasted the revenue obtained from the high charges made for their use enabled the Dock Companies to earn a good return on their capital, and it was not in fact then necessary to make the Dock waters pay their own way. The docks were a prosperous institution, and the inroads of free trade were not as yet foreseen or only to a slight extent. I may point out that in those days when practically the whole of the trade was carried on by sail all the trades were much more of a season trade. I might point to two trades; take the sugar trade, for instance, which in those days was a West Indian trade. Practically the whole supply of sugar came into England in the early part of the year. Consequently very large stocks of sugar had to be held in this country. In the same way I may take the tea trade. In those days we were entirely dependent on China for all our teas. Tea used to arrive at the end of June or the beginning of July, and practically the whole of our supplies were marketed in the last six months of the year, so we had to carry a very large stock of tea. Now if you take the position to-day both as regards sugar and tea, you find that owing to the development of beet sugar, it is coming into the port the whole year round: that applies not only to the Port of London, but to every port. As regards India and Ceylon, Ceylon especially, they are sending their tea for, I suppose, nine months at least through the year, and the supplies are coming in throughout the year, so that there is no longer the same necessity to carry the stocks as formerly. These remarks practically apply to nearly all trades. Now, however, by 1855 the Dock Companies had realised the serious fact that their warehousing business was slipping from them. They alone could accommodate the larger vessels, but then as we have seen their shipping dues were not enough to fall back on; on the other hand, others were successfully competing for the warehousing business so long enjoyed by them without a rival. And the reason why up-river wharves and warehouses were able to attract goods as they did was because by virtue of the exemption clause (formerly overlooked) lighters and barges could come into the docks, without restriction as to size or number, and take away goods from ships inside without paying anything either for their own use of Dock waters or for the goods, the dues on which were thus lost to the owners of those waters.

5584a. (*Chairman.*) Can you tell us whether, in addition to the competition for the warehousing business, the warehousing itself was diminishing at that time?—I could not speak to that time. I do not think at that time the warehousing was diminishing. I should say to-day distinctly it is.

5585. But in 1855?—No, I do not think I could say that.

5586. You only put the point of the competition?—Yes, I could not say whether warehousing was diminishing then; I should rather doubt it. Take the case of China, for instance; China was still supplying all our tea; and also beetroot sugar was practically non-existent. At that time we were still depending to a very great extent on sailing ships, so that the stocks had to be carried on. If your Lordship wishes I will try to get some figures, but it is going back a good many years.

5587. I think we need hardly trouble about it?—The Dock Companies accordingly appealed to Parliament in 1855 for the repeal of these clauses. Their Bill was rejected by 249 votes to 26. The report of the debate in Hansard shows that two facts principally caused the rejection of the Bill almost without hearing—(1) That the vested interests opposed to the companies were too powerful to be easily removed; (2) that the companies were still in a sound financial condition. The result was that the rights of the question at issue were not then threshed out. The Dock Company now submit that if the prosperity of the docks was a good reason for the rejection of the Bill that at least cannot be urged against them. If the changes in the conditions of commerce that had taken place between 1802 and 1855 were not of sufficient importance to make the clause, originally

See 6081-2.

equitable, then no longer applicable, the Dock Company hope to show that the revolutions that have occurred between 1855 and 1900 at any rate have removed all doubts as to the applicability of the clause to the conditions of commerce at the present day. Lastly if vested interests are strong, equity is stronger; when the first dock was authorised in 1799 vested interests were interfered with of longer standing than those which the dock companies have now to oppose, and what the Dock Company now ask is not to sweep away vested interests, but to be allowed to make a small charge for the use of their own legally vested property, which would enable the dock companies not only to live, but also to bring the docks of the Port of London up to a state of high efficiency. In 1864 (27 and 28 Victoria, Chapter 178) the London and St. Katharine Dock Companies were amalgamated, and the Victoria Dock acquired by them as above stated (exemption Clause Section 136). In 1875, by the London and St. Katharine Docks Act of that year, the amalgamated company was authorised to construct the Royal Albert Dock (which cost £2,300,000), and later Acts of 1878, 1882 and 1884 conferred further powers upon the company, including powers to make an entrance to the Royal Albert Dock (1884), and to maintain a railway to Galleon's Reach (1882). In 1882 the East and West India Dock Company's Extension Act authorised the construction of the Tilbury Dock (exemption Clause Section 26) some miles nearer the estuary of the Thames than the rest of the dock systems. This great dock has been a favourite source of argument for opponents of the dock companies. Its construction marks the commencement of a very keen trade rivalry between the London and India Companies; for the necessity of obtaining an immediate return on the very large capital sum (nearly £3,000,000) expended by the India Company upon their new dock led the company to try and attract the shipping which would not come of its own accord, by cutting down their shipping charges to starvation price. The London Company replied with a similar lowering of prices, and an internecine struggle ensued. In 1888, however, a working union was negotiated, and after a severe struggle sanctioned by Parliament, and the Joint Committee was constituted. The terms upon which this working union was based need not be here specified, since an unopposed Act for the amalgamation of the London and India Dock Companies into a single company as from the 1st January, 1901, has been passed. Since 1888 the Joint Committee have carried out among others the following large works:—(1) The erection of a new Blackwall entrance to the West India Dock (in 1894) at a cost of over £200,000; (2) the erection of a large cold storage depôt at West Smithfield, and another at the Victoria Docks, at a cost of £76,000 and £116,000 respectively. They also purchased in 1897 for £26,000 the Victoria Graving Dock on the south side of the Victoria Dock. (*See Appendix, 2nd Day, No. 6.*) In connection with this expenditure I may mention that in the last 20 years the London and St. Katharine Dock, the East and West India Dock Committee, and the Joint Committee have expended altogether on improvements on the port £3,700,000. When I come to consider the return to those companies for this expenditure, I find that during those 20 years the net income of the two companies has increased by £54,000, or barely 1½ per cent. on the capital expended. I mention this because I think it is only right to show that in the past the dock companies have endeavoured to the best of their ability to do everything that was necessary for the docks. It might have been expected that the working union, by putting an end to the warfare of rates, and economising the expenses of management, would have brought about a very material improvement in the financial position of the docks. This, however, has not been markedly the case, as the figures for the first half of 1899 clearly show. It is true that the transport business brought by the war made the record for the year as a whole favourable; but the exceptional causes which account for this make any reliance upon the figures, as an indication of permanent improvement in the present condition of affairs, altogether fallacious. The following statistics show that even by the most economical and careful management no such steady improvement in income as was hoped would result from the working union has been obtained, though the shipping has increased enormously.

See 6098-115.

—	Foreign Trade Ship Tonnage to the Joint Committee's Docks.	Increase on 1890.	Import Goods Tonnage on which the Joint Committee received dues.	Relation to Ship Tonnage.	Gross Income from Import Goods.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
		Per cent.		Per cent.	£
1890	3,009,976	—	994,156	33	1,031,413
1891	3,181,485	6	968,605	30	1,019,067
1892	3,454,114	15	1,131,471	33	1,111,669
1893	3,303,270	10	856,893	26	1,006,657
1894	3,520,674	13	840,469	24	1,005,036
1895	3,517,553	13	904,279	26	1,003,911
1896	3,788,848	26	956,439	25	1,024,921
1897	4,102,433	36	1,078,053	26	1,060,180
1898	4,224,312	40	1,097,816	26	997,563
1899	4,281,389	42	1,085,820	25	994,327

See 6116-21.

I should like to draw the attention of the Commissioners to this table. I venture to think it is very instructive. If you take the year 1890, and the foreign trade coming into the Joint Committee's Docks, you will find that it was 3,009,976 tons. The goods landed in that year on which the Joint Committee received charges were 994,156 tons or 33 per cent. Then take the year 1899. The foreign trade ship tonnage coming to the Joint Committee's Docks in that year was 4,281,389 tons, an increase of 42 per cent.; but the import goods tonnage on which the Joint Committee received dues was only 1,085,820 tons, or a little more than in 1890, and the percentage in relation to ship tonnage had fallen from 33 per cent. to 25 per cent. Now I have gone back another 10 years. We took 1890 for the purpose of this table because although 1889 was the first year of the Joint Committee that was disturbed by the great dock strike, so that we thought it was not right to take in any figures dealing with that year. If I go back to 1880 I find that the foreign trade ship tonnage coming into the Joint Committee's Docks was 2,372,000. Out of that we had charges on 982,000 tons of goods or 41 per cent. of the whole; so that in the last 20 years the percentage on goods delivered from ships in the Joint Committee's premises, on which the Joint Committee received charges, has fallen from 41 per cent. to 25 per cent.

5588. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you tell us the gross income from the import goods?—I am just going to give it to the Commissioners. I have not the figures for 1880, but I will give you the figures for 1890. I find in 1890 the gross income earned on those 994,000 tons was £1,031,000, which works out at 20s. 9d. per ton. When I come to 1899 I find that the 1,085,000 tons only gave us £994,000, which works out at 18s. per ton. So that not only during that period of 10 years has the percentage of goods on which we earn charges fallen from 33 per cent. to 25 per cent., but the value of every ton of goods on which we earn charges has fallen from 20s. 9d. to 18s. I might answer your question in another way. If in 1899 the percentage of goods on which we earned charges had been unchanged we should have had 1,427,000 tons instead of 1,085,000 tons. Taking it at the same rate of 18s. per ton—that is, the reduced rate—we should have had £1,284,000 of gross revenue as against £994,000. To illustrate the point that was taken just now about the way the goods remaining in warehouses have fallen off, I may say that in 1880 we landed 982,000 tons of goods for which we received charges. At the end of the year our stock in warehouse was 370,000 tons. Twenty years afterwards, although we had landed 1,085,000 tons of goods on charges—that is to say, the proportion on which we received charges, which is 100,000 more—the stock of goods at the end of the year had fallen to 231,000; so that with 100,000 tons more on which we earned charges the stock had fallen by 140,000 tons. The goods come in and pay us charges, but they do not stay. When you have to work goods across a quay, or when they stay for a short time in a warehouse, all the expenses are incurred. The rent is the profitable thing, and it is the falling off in rent which has to a very great extent reduced that 20s. 9d. to 18s.; it has cut away the most profitable part of the warehouses.

See 5820.

5589. Can you give us the corresponding figure to the 20s. 9d. for 1880?—I have not got it here, but I can

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give it to you. If you will allow me I will put it in next time I come here.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) There may be a difficulty about that return that Sir Robert Giffen has asked for, in consequence of the system which the East and West India Dock Company adopted about that time. I do not think the figure could possibly be got out of the books.

(*Witness.*) I was forgetting that in those days the two companies were quite separate, and we were working in competition, and the accounts were kept perfectly separate. The immense expense constantly incurred, not only in meeting the increased demands of commerce, but in keeping the dock premises in proper and efficient working order, makes the successful working of this great enterprise impossible unless a reasonable charge be exacted in respect of all vessels and goods which enjoy the use and benefit of those premises. In 1896 the Joint Committee decided on an attempt to improve matters by introducing into London the custom of the Port of Liverpool. The following account of this attempt is taken for the most part verbatim from Mr. Douglas Owen's pamphlet of February last, which is quite accurate:—"The custom of Liverpool, like that of most other ports, is this: that on goods being delivered from the importing vessel on to the quay, the contract of affreightment is fulfilled; the contract is to land the goods at the port of destination, and does not extend to hand them over to the consignees. In Liverpool, and indeed in most other ports except Hull, lighterage is very little resorted to, the river front is practically occupied by the docks, and there are few wharves. London, on the contrary, has always been a port of wharves, and no doubt the fact accounts for the difference between the London usage and that of other ports. The usage of the Port of London is that, if so required, the goods have to be delivered not merely on the quay, but to the consignee's barges; in fact, the shipowners have to follow the consignee's instructions with reference to goods. This makes a great difference, for it is one thing for a cargo of mixed goods to be shot pell-mell on to the quay, and another for it to be sorted, collected together, examined, and put on to lighters. The difference between the two processes varies in cost according to circumstances, but as a convenient figure it may be put at 2s. or 1s. 6d. per ton. Theoretically, to put goods overside into a lighter is a simple process, but with a ship 100, 150, or even 200 yards long, loaded with a mixed cargo, and having perhaps five to six hatchways, to give delivery in this way is so to impede and delay the discharge that the shipowner finds it cheaper to pay his 2s. or 1s. 6d. per ton to get the sorting done on and the delivery made from the quay, than to suffer the inconvenience and money loss caused by the detention of his costly ship through discharging overside." I may say that really it is impracticable for any ship to-day with a mixed cargo to deliver that cargo overside to craft without using the quays. The ship's decks are not sufficiently large to sort the cargo. When you get a certain amount of running cargo it may be different, but taking an ordinary mixed cargo it is absolutely impossible for the ship to deliver those goods to the barges without making use of the quay, without putting up with a loss of time which practically makes it impossible. "In thus using the quay as a stepping-stone between the ship and the lighters, however, the shipowners render the goods liable to be charged quay dues and the lighters shipping dues by the dock companies, inasmuch as the 1799 section applies only to delivery directly overside. That is, that if we like to exercise our statutory powers to-day, if a shipowner puts any goods whatever on to the quay, and then takes these goods from the quay and puts them into a barge, we are entitled to levy our rates on those goods and dues on that barge. It is, therefore, quite within the power of the docks to levy quay dues on all goods landed on the quay, that is to say on the bulk of the import cargoes, and also to charge shipping dues on all lighters taking goods from the quay. But the companies did not wish to levy further dues from shipowners, for any charges attaching to the goods in course of transfer from the ship to the consignees' lighters, fall, by the usage of the port, on the shipowners." The reason for that is that the quay being used by the shipowner, instead of the dock charges falling on the goods, in consequence of being placed on the quay, it would be for the account of the shipowner, of course, unless he protected himself by altering his bill of lading. "The only way, therefore, to place a toll on goods so as to make it bear on the goods-owners, and not on the ship-owners, was to introduce the custom of the Port of Liverpool, under which custom the shipowners' contract is fulfilled as the goods leave the ship's tackles. In the case of steamers from North American ports, the shipowners themselves have succeeded in incorporating in their bill of lading the Liverpool conditions of delivery, by what is known as "the North American bill of lading clause," or, more shortly, "the American clause." But their case is the exception. The dock companies determined to try to make the American trade conditions general, to take the sorting and delivering into their own hands, and to charge a profit on the transaction." In other words, this was to follow out the Liverpool system of master porterage—a ship doing all the work and delivering on to the quay, and then independent people stepping in and doing work on the quay. "The 1799 section only protects barges going to and from ships, so that if the dock companies chose to charge tonnage dues on barges loading from the quay, as well as quay dues on goods momentarily or temporarily landed on the quay, they would be within their rights. Such a charge formed, however, no part of their 1896 proposal. And the companies saw the less obstacle to making the Liverpool custom general, inasmuch as it would relieve the shipowners of an obligation and an outlay which had long been a grievance urged by them against the Port of London." In passing, I may say that I know that many shipowners were in support of that charge we proposed in 1896. "No sooner, however, was this programme announced than there arose from the wharfingers and lightermen a storm of indignant protest. A meeting at the Cannon Street Hotel was unanimous and enthusiastic in its condemnation of the docks. The Liverpool system, with its double-handling, delays and expense (to consignees) was loudly denounced, while the dock companies' misfortunes were ascribed to over-capitalisation, mismanagement, and improvident competition. London, it was declared, was already being boycotted, and trade driven elsewhere by reason of the dearness of the port, and now the docks were proposing fresh taxation." I may say, so far from that being true, London is to-day the cheapest port in the world for goods. It is the only port in the world, I believe, where any goods can be landed and go away without paying anything to the docks. As I have pointed out, 76 per cent. of the goods brought into the docks pay nothing at all. On the question of the relative dearness of the port, I believe the Commissioners have had some figures showing a comparison between a ship in Liverpool and a ship in London. I have had it all printed, with the various correspondence, if you would like me to put it in. Perhaps you would like to consider that.

See 6251.

See 5989-5996.

5590. (*Chairman.*) Is it referring to evidence which has already been given?—No; it is referring to the case of a ship. When the Commissioners visited Liverpool, they were given particulars of the cost of discharge of a ship in Liverpool and in London. These figures were put before me, and I was asked to check them. I did check them, and I added to them so as to carry out the comparison, and show it in what we considered a true light.

5591. If you like to put in anything which you know of your own knowledge we shall be glad to receive it, but I think the evidence might come more properly from the shipowner himself?—It has been sent to the Royal Commission.

(*Chairman.*) We will consider the matter.

See 5608-14

5592. (*Mr. Peel.*) Can you tell us when the American clause was introduced?—In 1888. Ultimately the dock directors gave way, and contented themselves with the concession, for whatever it might be worth, of an increased rent to be paid to them by the shipowners for sorting sheds. That the proposal of the Joint Committee in 1896 was a sound one is shown by the effects of "the American clause" previously mentioned. In 1888 the shipowners had this clause inserted, which practically embodied the Liverpool practice, and made the shipowners' contract completed when the goods were put on the quay. They were thus enabled to collect from the consignee a sum of 1s. 6d. per ton originally—now it is from 1s. to 2s. 6d. per ton according to circumstances (I believe since the beginning of this year it has been increased), for the discharge of the goods, an expense which had previously fallen on the shipowners themselves. It was said at the time that the change would ruin the trade of the port, but it has been far otherwise. In spite of the imposition of this additional tax, the North American trade has shown a steady increase, while other trades have practically stood still, as the following figures show. In 1888 the

See 6035-38.

total tonnage entering from North American and Canadian ports was 683,000 tons; in 1899 it had increased to 1,497,000 tons, an increase of 813,000 tons, or 119 per cent., while the increase in the same period from all other foreign ports was only 13 per cent., other foreign ports adhering to the old custom.

5593. (*Chairman.*) Will you tell us whether the American clause is used by all companies who deal with North American ports?—I believe by every company, and not only by every company, but the various tramps which do not come regularly have adopted it.

5594. How many such companies have you coming regularly to your docks?—About half-a-dozen.

5595. And they all use it?—Every one of them. This is, it is urged, a very strong argument in favour of the proposal of the dock companies to try and shift some of the burden of taxation on to those interests which at present pay nothing, and absolutely disproves all the arguments raised at the Cannon Street Hotel meeting against the 1896 plan of putting all goods on the quay, which plan was only another way of saying that all goods brought to the docks should be charged just as the dock companies have power now to charge goods put on the quay. I may say all goods brought should be charged, and not only those which are landed on the quay, for which we have to render service. Only unfortunately for the dock companies the charge imposed on the consignee by the clause goes into the shipowners' pockets, and not those of the dock companies. On the question of the American clause, which I think it would have been better possibly for a shipowner to have answered, but certainly our opinion with respect to the working of the docks is that it would be absolutely impossible for the American lines to get through their business in the way they do. Take the Atlantic Transport Company, which brings the largest steamers. They will bring their steamers in, and in a week they will discharge and load. They do not take very much export cargo, it is true, but they will turn round and go out, and I do not think you can beat that in Liverpool. I have a letter which appeared in the "Times." I do not know whether you would like me to read it. It is from the Atlantic Transport Company, showing what they could do.

5596. We have already had evidence as to what they have done?—The repeal of the exemption clause would bring about the same result, only in another form. All goods which go overside would pay something towards the maintenance of the docks, instead of nothing as at present, but would pay it to the Dock Company instead of the shipowner. The shipowner at the same time would reap the advantage of getting quicker despatch. No further step was taken by the Joint Committee till in the session of 1900 they brought in the Bill to repeal the exemption clauses. That Bill was negatived without a division on the 15th of May of last year, and as a result this Commission was formed. I may mention that this year we did reintroduce that Bill, and in that Bill we incorporated certain clauses which exempt all *bonâ-fide* transit business—that is, goods in transit to other ports—from charges, and made certain exemptions in favour of goods which were not shipped on a through bill of lading, but which were sold previous to arrival. We did that because we recognised it was our duty to encourage all that business. When we found it was quite impossible to get any report from the Royal Commission in time we withdrew that Bill, because we knew it was hopeless to go on with it without having such a report. The fact that the London Company are now earning some 2½ per cent. on their share capital, and that the shareholders of the India Company have only received 13s. 4d. per £100 on their capital in the last 13 years (*see Appendix, 2nd Day, No. 6, Tables XI. and XII.*), are not the only differentiating circumstances which lead the dock companies to hope for a better result from the present inquiry than the fate which overtook the Bills of 1855 and 1900. The whole of the conditions of commerce have changed not only during the century, but especially during the last 45 years, and the nature of these changes may best be appreciated by the classification of them under the following heads, which will presently be considered more in detail:—(1) The introduction of modern steamers of vast and increasing size and draught. (2) The growing increase in the tonnage of ships and steamers entering the docks. (3) The growing increase in the size and number of barges and lighters entering the docks. (4) The increased tendency for goods to be delivered direct by the nearest route, without calling at London for transhipment. (5) The increased tendency for goods to be taken into immediate consumption, and consequently to be delivered overside. (6) The expansion of free trade and spread of bonded stores. (7) The reduction in freights payable to shipowners by merchants. (8) The introduction of modern business arrangements outside the scope of the Dock Acts, enabling wharfingers and warehousemen to compete with the docks at an advantage.

(1) The modern steamer has revolutionised commerce. It has been shown that in the early years of the exemption clause the average tonnage of the big sailing ships then in use was less than 200 tons, although in the West India trade exceptional vessels of 400 and even 500 tons were known, and in the East India trade vessels of even greater size. In 1814 there was one steam vessel of 69 tons owned in the United Kingdom; in 1825 there were 153, averaging rather over 100 tons each. So that if you take the "Oceanic" of 17,274 tons, which is not the largest steamer, it would be larger than the entire steamship fleet of those days. In 1830 there were 298 of about the same average tonnage; in 1840 there were 771 of a slightly increased average tonnage, but these steam vessels formed only about one-thirty-second in tonnage of the steam and sailing vessels owned in that year. These figures have been obtained from the Board of Trade, and are useful as showing the size and relative numbers of the ships and steamers in these years, though they relate only to those owned in the United Kingdom at these dates. The following figures relate to ships in the foreign trade, which, of course, affords the best test of general national prosperity:—In 1861 the number entering the Port of London were 8,594 sailing vessels, averaging 273 tons, and 2,373 steam vessels, averaging 343 tons. At this time, therefore, the sailing vessels outnumbered the steam by nearly four to one, and were of about three-quarters the size. In 1899 the numbers were 2,052 sailing vessels, averaging 405 tons, and 9,217 steam vessels, averaging 946 tons. The ratio in numbers is 1 to 4½ instead of 4 to 1, and in tonnage about 2 to 5 instead of 3 to 4, showing the complete turn round there had been in the whole shipping trade. These changes have been wrought during a period commencing six years after the India Docks Bill was thrown out. (*See Appendix, 16th Day, No. 19, for the corresponding figures for earlier years.*) The following comparison of the number of vessels of all kinds in the foreign trade entering and clearing from London in 1798 and 1898 is submitted to be instructive:—

Year.	Foreign Ships.	Tonnage.	British Ships.	Tonnage.
1798	3,?71	429,162	2,970	707,459
1898	8,305	5,123,989	11,399	11,472,213

In that table we have dealt with foreign and British ships separately; you must add them together to get the total tonnage coming into the port.

In 1899 the average gross tonnage of steam vessels of over 200 tons was 2,844, and of sailing vessels 1,612. (*See Appendix, 16th Day, No. 23.*) There were in that year 23 German, nine British, four American, and one Dutch, merchant vessels of 10,000 tons and upwards. In the Appendices on ships and shipping, which I shall hand in, will be found statistics showing the gradual increase in the size and tonnage of steamers in recent years, from various points of view, including (*see Appendix* 24) particulars of the tonnage, dimensions, and draught of some of the largest steamers built during the last ten years; the increase in the average size of steamers between 1890 and 1898 (*see Appendix* 23), the increase in the proportion of gross tonnage to net (*see Appendix* 25), and other statistics of various kinds. Not the least important feature of this increase in size, and consequently in value, of the modern steamer, is the increased necessity for dispatch in delivery, owing to the added expense caused by every day's delay. I would remark that the rapidity of dispatch, which is absolutely essential to these enormous steamers, cannot be obtained while the London custom goes on as at present. It is absolutely impossible, with the continuance of the present London custom, that you could ever get the rapidity of dispatch which is required. I would confirm everything that the shipowners have said about the necessity of rapidity of dispatch. It is not only a necessity from the point of view of the shipowners themselves, but it is a necessity from the

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point of view of the dock owners. The average time that ships coming into the docks occupy their berths is about three weeks. Now, if you take the American lines, for instance the Atlantic Transport Company, which work their business so well, their average would be about a week. We get 1s. for that week. I think it is very evident that it is very much better for us to have a ship in and out in a week, with the payment of the shilling dues, than to have a vessel come in and stay an average of three weeks and often more, when we still get only 1s. dues. So that we are entirely with the shipowners. Anything that will facilitate the prompt dispatch and the more rapid handling of steamers is an advantage to the shipowners and an advantage to ourselves. The Dock Companies have always recognised this, and have assisted to get an alteration of the bill of lading in the face of the most strenuous opposition. I have pointed out how under that bill of lading the American trade has advanced, but that change was only carried with the very greatest difficulty. I may take it that everybody outside the dock companies opposed it. There was an idea outside that the change would be a very great benefit to the dock companies, but it has been of very little benefit. We get nothing out of the charges which the shipowner makes at all. That simply goes to the shipowners; we get nothing out of it. We would do everything that would facilitate the alteration of the custom of the port so as to make rapidity of despatch greater. I am quite aware that Sir Thomas Sutherland, I think under a misapprehension, said that if we attempted to follow the Liverpool system in our docks we could not do it. Now, I recognise at once that if the shipowner comes alongside our quays and says: "I am going to try and block you," he will do it, and I do not care whether you have a quay with one-floor sheds or two-floor sheds, or ten-floor sheds, if the shipowner is going to put everything on to that quay as rapidly as he can and we have no powers to compel people to take it away as they have in Liverpool, that quay must be blocked. But in Liverpool they have very great powers of making the consignees take away the goods, and in Liverpool you will see what their powers are and how much more rapidly they can work by figures which our manager, Mr. Hardy, will put in when he gives his evidence, showing that per foot of space they deal with a very much larger quantity of cargo than we can, simply because they have this power of compelling people to take away their goods. Then also I do not think it is quite fair to say that if we alter our system the quays could not do the business. At our quays we are working to-day to carry out a certain business. If you are going to alter that custom and change that business surely it is only fair to give us time to make the necessary alterations and if the shipowners would only alter their bills of lading so as to alter the custom, there would be no difficulty on the part of the dock companies in making every change necessary so as to carry out the alteration. But the introduction of these vast steamers has, not for this reason only, brought very clearly into prominence the natural disadvantages of London as a port. These disadvantages are common with all other ports which are some way up the river. You will find that at Hamburg it is exactly the same. Big steamers cannot get up at all. In 1895 I was in the "Tantallon Castle" at the opening of the Kiel Canal. She is not a ship of enormous size, but we did remain up at Hamburg one night, and most anxious Sir Donald Currie was to get her back, and we went back the first thing in the morning, simply because they had not the water there. The expenses of the dredging, deepening, and widening constantly necessitated by the growing size and draught are very great, and yet greater expenses and deeper docks will shortly be necessary to keep pace with the growing need. But the docks can reap no compensating advantage for their outlay, for, as will presently be seen, the goods which these steamers bring in are to an increasing extent taken out of the docks again without paying a penny, although each year the tonnage of vessels entering and using the docks shows a steady increase. (*See Appendices* 26 *and* 27.)

(2) Then with regard to the increase in the total tonnage of ships and steamers using the dock, Appendix 20, which I shall hand in, shows the number and tonnage of vessels in the "foreign" trade that entered the Port of London, including vessels in ballast, in each year from 1861 to 1899, and the percentage of increase. It gives instructive indications of the yearly decrease since 1861 in the number of sailing vessels and increase in the number of steamers in the foreign trade entering the Port of London, and also of the steady increase of the total tonnage, which in 1899 is over 200 per cent. more than that of 1861, although the actual number of vessels has scarcely varied. The immense capital expenditure on the docks in the past, however adequately remunerated it might be if the goods that entered those docks paid dues as well as the ships, cannot possibly produce an adequate return if the revenue derived from goods continues at the average of the last ten years, whilst the probability is that it will decrease despite the great increase in the amount of goods entering the port. It is the goods and not the shipping that pay. The shipping entails and has entailed vast expenses for maintenance and the like, nor are these expenses capable of diminution, for the goods cannot come without the steamers, and accommodation must be found for the steamers. Moreover, the total tonnage of the ships and steamers entering with cargoes is little more than one half of the estimated total tonnage of the lighters and barges that enter the docks in the course of the year as will be seen.

(3) With regard to the increase in the size and number of barges and lighters that use the docks I shall give in Appendices 33, 34, 35 and 36 some yearly figures, but figures as to barges are not readily obtainable. It has been seen that about the time when the exemption clause was first drafted the average size of the lighters, hoys, and craft in active service in the river was 32 tons; the total number in use was about 3,500. In 1823 the number in use must have been very insignificant for reasons previously given. That is with regard to the evidence given by one of the witnesses before the Select Committee on Foreign Trade. There could not have been a very large number of lighters and barges employed in taking goods from and to the docks, because if the lighterage business had been a very flourishing one in those days that man would not have wanted to sell his barges for an old song. Of course if they were of any value they would not have been sold.

5597. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is that quite so? I wish to put you upon your guard on that point?—Well, as the value of the exemption clause to the rivals of the docks became more and more apparent, they must have sprung rapidly into prominence again; for in 1855, when the Bill for the repeal of the clause was thrown out, according to the statement of the opponents of the Joint Committee's recent Bill in one of their Memoranda, no less than 40,000 barges entered into "one dock," which, of course, must have meant one dock system, probably the West India. In 1855 the average barge is believed to have been about 25 tons register, the craft known as hoys, which were of a larger tonnage, having then gone out of use. About 140,000 have entered the docks in the last three years, of an estimated total tonnage for each year of some 9,000,000 (taking the average lighter to be only about 60 tons register), or nearly double the total tonnage of the foreign trading vessels entering the docks during the same period. I am speaking from memory, but I think one of the lightermen witnesses put in that the average size of a dumb barge was nearer 80 tons than 60. Mr. Jacobs said that the average was 79 tons, so that of course I have very largely understated these figures. I should like to remark that practically all these barges have to be worked in and out, and proportionately to their tonnage involve the docks in at least as much expense for locking as ships. Ships come into the docks for their ordinary purposes, and then perhaps they have to go out to a dry dock. We make for that a special charge of 3d. for locking and unlocking, and our contention is that if it is a fair charge simply for the services that we have to render, it is not an unfair thing to ask that the barges which put us to at least as much expense should pay the same. If the exemption clause was oppressive in 1855, it follows therefore that the burden has been increased tenfold since then. For nowadays barges of 150 or even over 200 tons register are not uncommon (*see Appendix* 35), and even larger ones are in contemplation. Some idea of the quantity of goods they carry out of the docks for nothing is given by stating that a single barge equal to carrying 180 tons of goods will hold the contents of an ordinary goods train of 20 to 24 trucks. It is thus apparent that as steamers

See 6436-67.

See 6466.

have increased in size, so the barges which come into the docks to receive their cargoes have kept pace with them, and these are taking away from the companies in ever-increasing quantities the goods for whose reception they were originally designed. A circular issued on July 21st, 1899, by Messrs. James Cook and Co., is typical of the growth of the lighterage trade, for it states that Messrs. Cook have added to their fleet to meet their customers' demands 15 open 125-ton and 15 open 150-ton craft. The increase in the actual number of lighters in existence, so far as this can be accurately gauged, appears to be shown from the following figures. The reports on the navigation of the River Thames, 1879 (pp. 21 and 447), show that the number of barges registered for use on the River Thames between 1868 and 1877 was about 1,017 per annum, averaging about 47 tons each, and that the number of barges remaining on the books of the Watermen's and Lightermen's Company was, in or about the year 1879, 7,283, which is probably in excess of the number actually owned by barge owners, owing to the system of registration under which, in certain cases, the same barge appears more than once. Even at this time more than 700 barges entered and left the London and India Docks every twenty-four hours. It is 350 in and 350 out. I do not wish it to be thought that it is 700 each way. That is the total. In December, 1895, the actual number of barges on the river was 8,374, and in 1899, 9,000, the average tonnage being of course much greater than in 1877, as the rapid increase in their size would suggest.

See 6627

(4) Then as to the tendency for goods to go more and more direct to their ultimate destination this is a natural tendency, for only the exigencies of port accommodation would compel the delivery of goods at London, when there may very likely be a port much nearer their destination. Quickness of delivery and saving of expense are the two great objects which the narrow margin of profit now allowed by modern competition must keep constantly before the eyes of the shipowner and merchant. Again it is in the natural course of things that the business of the transhipment of foreign goods, formerly almost monopolised by the Port of London, must continually decrease. I may refer to the statement I gave just now, as showing what the competition for this business is, that the Germans to-day have 23 steamers of 10,000 tons, as against nine English. Those are the figures for 1899. It is notorious that almost each year fresh docks and fresh improvements in the old docks in foreign ports are being made largely with State and Municipal funds. Thus the competition between shipowners must tend to divert the transhipment business to other ports under the system of "through" bills of lading, in consequence of which agents at some English ports quote cheaper rates *viâ* Continental ports than *viâ* London, although in London transhipment is as cheap as it can possibly be. I say it is as cheap as it can possibly be because so far as the docks are concerned we levy nothing. The only charge is what the shipowners have to pay for their own services. They are absolutely free so far as the docks are concerned, and under our present proposals will continue to be free. Moreover, the geographical position of some Continental ports, that is, Hamburg, is partly responsible for this diversion. Goods can be more easily shipped from Leith or Dundee to Hamburg, and there transhipped for South America, then sent down to London for transhipment. If you take a map and look at the position of Dundee and Hamburg you can see that it is a simple thing for them to send across and get transhipment. They get cheap freight from there, so naturally they do it. With the expansion of foreign merchant navies, too, it naturally follows that goods are sent more and more direct to their port of destination, and encouragement is given to this system by the higher duties put upon goods brought, for instance, to Havre *viâ* London, than those put on goods that come direct. In many instances foreign governments give a premium for direct importations by penalising goods that are transhipped.

(5) Then with regard to the increased tendency to take goods into immediate consumption; this is a part of the general expansion and perfecting of the trade of modern times when steamers are timed to the day and prices gauged to a pound. Increased railway facilities have also helped largely to do away with the necessity for warehousing, goods being now supplied according to the demand and not brought over in huge quantities by fleets. I have endeavoured to explain that when goods are brought over in these huge quantities they have to be stored somewhere. Every day gained in transit is a consideration, and cheapness is everything. This tendency is shown by a comparison of the following figures. In 1880 for every two and a third tons of foreign shipping entering the docks to discharge, one ton of goods was there landed for warehousing. In 1898 for every 4 tons of shipping entering the docks only one ton of goods was there landed upon charges, and 40 per cent. of the goods so landed were for immediate delivery and not upon full warehousing charges. The following are some carefully worked out figures for 1899 showing that over 75 per cent. of the goods that use the docks pay not a penny for such benefits. Here I have a statement giving the figures worked out as we thought as closely as we could for imports and exports:—

See 6403.

LONDON AND INDIA DOCKS.

Estimated Tonnage of Imports and Exports for the Year 1899.

—	Number of Vessels discharging or loading.	Net Registered Tonnage of Ships.	Estimated Tonnage of Goods discharged or loaded.	Tonnage of Goods on which landing or wharfage charge levied.	Tonnage of Goods discharged or shipped overside on which the Joint Committee got no charge whatever.	The percentage the Goods discharged or shipped overside bear to the Total Tonnage of Goods shipped or discharged.
Imports -	2,800	4,281,389	3,946,527	1,085,820	2,860,707	72
Exports -	1,860	3,203,098	2,413,037	453,431	1,959,606	81
Total -	4,660	7,484,487	6,359,564	1,539,251	4,820,313	76

I have put in a table which gives actual figures for imports. (*See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 14.) We have not been able to get actual figures for exports. But while the actual figures show that while the imports were 76 per cent. against my estimate of 72 per cent., I think we may take it that the figure for the exports, 81, is practically correct. And though no doubt the effect of the tendency indicated is to render cheaper the necessaries of life, it is among the hardships of their case that the Docks which have been the real means of bringing about this salutary result should suffer from it. I do not know really that it has been cheaper in Liverpool. They have to pay dues that are not charged in London. I think the things are just as cheap in London.

(6) Then with regard to the expansion of Free Trade and its effects on the business of the docks, these have already been indicated. It is sufficient to repeat that whereas in 1845 there were still 750 kinds of goods liable to duties, at the present day there are 15, the remaining 735 being in consequence practically free to be taken and stored where the consignee pleases.

(7) Then with regard to the reduction of freights *Appendix 37* which I shall hand in, shows the fluctuations in freights between 1869 and 1899, and illustrates the fact that the shipowners' profits have been narrowed to a minimum in recent years, and with it the necessity of every possible economy has arisen.

(8) Then going to the question of the business practices of the wharfingers, as the total of goods to be warehoused diminished and the competition for what remained became more keen, the wharfingers and warehousemen naturally availed themselves of various devices for attracting goods to their wharves and warehouses which were not legally open to the Dock Companies. Among these may be mentioned cash advances on goods warehoused or to be warehoused, offers to importers of shares in the wharfage and warehousing businesses, and acceptance of part interest in produce operations with the importers, and such other business negotiations as were most likely to cement the ties of mutual interest. Of course, I do not blame the wharfingers. It was perfectly open to them to do that, but it was not open to us. It will thus be seen that the exemption clause,

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by reason of its accidental survival some eighty years ago, has come to be applied to a state of things differing altogether from that for which it was originally intended. The Dock Company submits that the time has now come when an anachronism such as this should be done away with. Looking only to the positive arguments in favour of its abolition, and leaving out of consideration altogether the objections urged against it, they submit that they ought no longer to be called upon to maintain and find interest on the capital expended on private waterways of the most costly nature covering many hundreds of acres of land acquired at great expense without receiving any payment in return from about two-thirds of the tonnage of the vessels that use those waterways. The exemption was granted for a definite purpose, to counterbalance definite privileges, and under conditions in which it worked not inequitably. The purpose for which it was granted has ceased to exist. The privileges which it was designed to counterbalance have long since been removed, not only by the letter of the law, but by the effects of untrammelled enterprise and competition and the different conditions of trade now existing. Some idea of the expense and labour enjoyed by the wharfingers and lightermen, and imposed upon the docks by these exemption clauses may be gained from the following figures. As instances of heavy and increasing expenses to which the Dock Companies are put in respect of the Docks may be taken the annual sum of £21,000 expended on police, and the £92,000 or more on rates and taxes. The latter is a constantly increasing item as the following figures show. In 1889 the sum expended by the Joint Committee on this account was £64,653 0s. 1d., which had increased in 1894 to £85,820 11s. 1d., and in 1899 to £92,385 7s., and in 1900, £101,115. The following table shows the number of police employment by the Joint Committee:—

Dock Police.

Superintendent	1
Inspectors	9
Sergeants	19
Constables—	
1st Class	124
2nd Class	129
Barge Searchers	10
	292
Foremen Firemen	3
Firemen	11
	306

All this very heavy expenditure is incurred annually by the Dock Companies in respect of property which the wharfingers and lightermen treat as their own without contributing a penny. And other expenses for maintenance and other matters stand of course on the same footing. With respect to labour, the following figures are pertinent. In 1899, 2,800 ships from foreign ports of an aggregate tonnage of 4,281,389 tons entered the Docks of the Joint Committee to discharge. The number of barges entering during the same period was 137,193, as against 142,217 in 1898, of an estimated tonnage of nearly 9,000,000 tons. I do not know whether the number being rather smaller is accounted for partly by the increase in size. This traffic has to go in and out. Sometimes as many as 150 lighters have to be locked either in or out at one entrance in one tide. If these lighters were detained until they could go out on high water, the congestion of traffic would render the access to the docks by the ships themselves impossible, and the safe navigation of the Thames would be imperilled. Consequently, locking out has to be commenced three or four hours before high water. Every time the lock is emptied comparatively clean water is withdrawn from the dock, which has to be replaced by muddy water from the river, and this when stationary deposits the mud which has then to be dredged and removed to Barrow Deeps. We estimate that for every £1 that we spend in pumping water into the docks to make good this waste we have to spend £4 in removing the mud deposit. The sum spent by the Joint Committee under this one head of dredging during the last eleven years amounts to nearly £300,000. Further, the craft using the docks are usually ill found with ropes and gear. They have only one man on board (sometimes, indeed, only one man to look after two or more craft), and without the assistance of ropes, tugs, and hydraulic power at the pier heads and locks it would be absolutely impossible for the barge traffic to be dealt with at the entrances within the limits of a tide's work, even when extended as above mentioned. Although the barges only have very few men to look after them the Conservancy bye laws require when those barges are in the river that for over 50 tons they shall have two men, and for over 150 tons three men. Moreover, anyone who has ever witnessed the operation of locking and unlocking at a dock entrance can testify to the absolute supineness and disregard of the dockmaster's orders by the bargees, who never stir a finger to assist the work in the least degree. Then, in addition to that, the absence of men or the shortage of men on board the barges makes it quite impossible for us to marshall the barges. If we could marshall the barges it would be possible to let a certain number of barges out, and then when we have to refill that lock so as to let more barges out, we could take a certain number of barges in; but the block of barges coming down to the entrance of the lock makes it absolutely impossible to do that. We have to fill the lock with water again, without making any use of it, and then take out more barges. When the barges on the inside have been exhausted, then we are able to take barges from the outside, but not before. I have here some photographs of the barges taken at different times. (*The witness handed in photographs to the Commission.*) In addition, owing to the public necessity of letting these barges out before high water, at the Victoria and Albert, the London, and the West India Docks, extra pumping due to the necessity of docking and undocking lighters has to be resorted to, to keep up the head of water in the dock and prevent ships from going aground; this being specially the case when the tide is not a high one. If you take the Albert and Victoria Docks, which are practically one dock, the pumping for those two docks is all performed by the same set of machinery, and we find that even with that pumping, and running the pumps, which are very powerful ones, to the fullest extent possible between high water springs and high water neaps there is a loss of water in the dock of about 2ft. That is entirely due to this barge question, and the consequence is that the value of that dock is enormously diminished. Take the Victoria Dock to-day. If we could always ensure having that full extra 2ft. of water we could take in very much larger ships to-day, but the value of a dock is not what it can take in at the best tides; the value of a dock is what you can always accommodate there. We could not agree to take ships in there which we could only take at high spring tides; we must take ships which can get in at the worst tides. Then, the services which the docks have to render to the bargees are enormously in excess of anything they have any legal right to ask. The legal right of the barges is to come in and out; but we have to nurse them; we have to help them in and to help them out, and unless we did that the whole state of the trade would be so congested that we could never get the big steamers out and the whole trade would come to a standstill. The labour and the vast expense thus involved are not obligatory on the companies, but are incurred simply to facilitate the carrying on of the trade of the port. Moreover, the police force maintained by the dock companies is in part, though not exclusively, engaged in protecting the interests of merchants whose goods are being conveyed to and from the docks in lighters to wharves and warehouses on the river, and for transhipment. The tax imposed upon the dock company by these clauses has now reached such a stage in its advance as to threaten its vitality. Without the docks the trade of the Port of London would be impossible. The size and draught of the modern steamer places the possibility of its discharge in the river out of the question. When the docks were built originally that was not so. I know it has been suggested, and probably will be suggested again, that it is all very well to say that the docks are necessary but a system of river quays would answer equally well. I should like to give you a few facts on that point. The quays in our docks extend 21 miles. If you take in the riverside on the north and south from London Bridge down to the Albert Dock you have about some 11 or 12 miles, so that, practically, if you had no docks at all our river quays would extend from London Bridge down to the entrance to the Albert Dock. But, of course, to have any quays like that would be impossible. The cost of having 20 miles of quays like that, with an average width of certainly 100 to 150 yards, would have

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been prohibitive altogether. You could not have done it. Then, if, instead of doing that, you had a huge system of river quays below the Albert Dock—take the ten miles again—it would spread down to such a distance that it would be almost impossible to carry on the business. To-day, we find that the Albert Dock is the extreme limit of cartage. There is an enormous quantity of goods to go down by cart. A cart can go down there and back in a day, but once you get beyond that you get beyond the day's work of a horse and cart, and if you are going to extend your river quays beyond Albert Dock it means that you do away with all cartage traffic. I may mention this: Outside the Albert Dock entrance, at Galleons, when that dock was built, we did put up a river quay, hoping to induce steamers to make use of it. For a good many years that river quay was never used; we could not get anybody to use it, and to-day the only use we can get made of it is by certain steamers for discharging coal. To prevent commerce from being driven away to other ports, and to enable even the opposing wharfingers to continue to carry on their business, the Dock Company submit that the best and simplest course is to free the docks from hampering and unfair restrictions, and so enable them to earn a living wage, and be in a position to meet the demands of commerce as they arise. It is submitted that lighters should not, without giving a return, or corresponding benefit of any kind, use freehold property which has cost millions, and enjoy the benefit of the police and labour systems generally of the docks, and that, too, not only without paying rent or due of any kind on their own account, but without paying a penny on the goods which they are occupied in diverting at the dock's expense from the dock quays and warehouses. One course open to the Dock Company, and one that was strongly urged on them by the opponents to their recent Bill, is to raise their shipping rates from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per ton, which is their statutory maximum charge; besides this, they could charge a rent of 2d. per week per ton on ships from their date of entrance, instead of allowing them to be free of rent for four weeks, and could increase the rents of their sheds and berths. (*See Appendix, 2nd day, No.* 5.) If taking the average time that a ship remains in dock as three weeks, the dues were raised from 1s. to 1s. 6d., and the full rent charged during that period of three weeks, it would mean an increase, instead of 1s., which we charge at present, to 2s., and the money value of that to the docks would be £200,000 per annum, and we should not then have exhausted our full powers. These steps they are loth to take, because they believe that the lower the charges on shipping can be kept the greater will be the advantage to the port, and in addition they have their experience of the North American trade, which, owing to the shifting of some charges on to the sholders of the consignees, has more than doubled in 11 years, while the other trades in which the shipowner bears all the charges have barely increased at all (13 per cent.) in the same period. Moreover, the lighters are not ancillary to the ships; they are used in the service of the wharfingers and consignees, and an increase in shipping dues would not, therefore, fall at all upon the persons who now receive the benefit of these clauses. As between ships and lighters equity therefore demands that the dock companies should, if possible, fix a charge upon the lighters and goods which pay nothing, instead of raising their charges on ships which already recognise the value of the accommodation and services which they enjoy. In putting forward their present proposal to repeal the exemption clauses, the Dock Company is convinced that it is the most equitable one that can be found, and is the one most calculated to take away from London the reproach of being a slow and, therefore, a dear port, and at the same time to afford the means for providing that new and increased accommodation which is so urgently needed. It is equitable because it widens the area of taxation, and prevents the burden from being borne by only a section of the people benefited by the docks. This, it is submitted, is more just than a system which puts the whole cost on the ship (roughly, one-third only of the interests using the docks), and enables the lighters and goods shipped in them to avoid sharing the burden altogether. The dock company has power, it is true, to charge the goods which are landed on the quay for purposes of delivery from thence into lighters, and the lighters so taking goods; but they do not do so, because the result would be either that those goods would be delivered directly overside as well as the others, and discharge would be slower than ever, or the shipowners to avoid the delay would have to pay the charges so incurred. In addition to which it may be pointed out that the longer ships take to discharge their cargoes the more is the available dock accommodation for the public contracted. The quicker the ship can complete its discharge the better for the dock-owner. On the other hand, it is confidently anticipated that, if the exemptions were removed, the port would become less slow, because there would not be the same reasons for taking delivery overside, and consequently more goods would be landed on the quay, to the great advantage of the shipowner and the public generally. Unloading would be accelerated, sorting to marks and other services would be more quickly and efficiently rendered, and the docks would not be so crowded with craft. Also, the port would be cheaper, as ships would not be detained so long waiting to deliver goods to craft, and discharge would be accelerated generally. The detentions of which shipping so justly complains can never be removed until the custom of the port is changed. Further, by thus obtaining a new source of revenue, the dock company would be enabled to facilitate trade, by providing more cranes and labour-saving appliances, and increasing the accommodation generally, and would also be enabled to raise the additional capital required to construct the new and deeper docks that will inevitably have to be made in the very near future if London is to remain a first-class port, and perhaps also in time to lower the charges on ships. Personally, I think it is a very shortsighted policy on the part of those who are now opposing the docks. It is absolutely necessary for warehouse keepers and wharfingers along the river to do everything they can to get the Port of London cheap and efficient, and the only way in which you can get the Port of London cheap and efficient to my mind is by putting on all those using the docks a charge. It is a monstrous thing, it seems to me, that all the charges should fall on a bare 25 per cent. of those coming into the docks. Now, if I might be allowed to show this, I should like to turn to the accounts of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board. There is one point to which I wish to draw your attention. It is in the statement of general receipts and general expenditure. Their total receipts are £1,418,000, and our total receipts in London are about £1,700,000. Of that £1,418,000 you will find on the credit side dock rates on goods, £330,000, and town dues on goods, £269,000, making together £599,000. Those amounts represent dues on goods precisely the same as dues on ships. The Mersey Dock and Harbour Board do not services for those; they are not warehousing charges. Their warehousing receipts are shown separately. They are a toll, and a toll only, on all things brought into the Port of Liverpool. That is what we have not in London. For charges corresponding with the £600,000 we have nothing in London. I think that is where the hardship comes in. If you deduct from the receipts of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board that £600,000 you will find that the amount which they carry to sinking fund, £100,000 must go, and they are £500,000 short of their working expenses. So that, putting Liverpool in the same position that London is, although Liverpool is charging 1s. 4d. dues against the 1s. due that we charge in London, take away those dues on goods which we say we ought to be allowed to charge, and Liverpool financially would be in an infinitely worse position than London. If you take the position of the Clyde Navigation, that is even stronger. The total receipts there are £441,000, and of that £234,000 is made up of these dues on goods. Put the Clyde, again, in the same position as London, eliminating the £234,000, and the trustees of the Clyde Navigation would be in a state of hopeless bankruptcy.

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5598. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Do you say that Liverpool would be insolvent also?—Certainly; absolutely. And I say that the whole difference is that the Clyde and Liverpool, which are financially prosperous, have this power of levying charges on goods which we have asked for, and which we never have had.

Then the Dock Company are also able to show that their proposed rates on barges and goods compare very favourably with those which are charged in other ports under similar circumstances. (*See Appendix* 38.) Moreover, they have no wish or desire to get out of existing contracts, or to press unduly on the lighterage trade or goods in transit, as they have stated again and again in public. They would not necessarily charge the proposed maximum dues on lighters, and would only charge partly laden lighters according to the amount of goods carried, and not on their register tonnage. In the Bill which we have deposited this year, and which

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we have withdrawn, there are exemptions put in exempting the transit business, and making these alterations.

5599. (*Chairman.*) Would you like now to give us a summary of your arguments?—I do not think it would advance anything. You have been good enough to listen to the whole thing *in extenso*, and I hardly think it necessary.

5600. I see that the docks of London only produce a dividend of 1⅓ per cent. to the shareholder. That dividend is only on nominal value, of course?—Yes.

5601. Not on the market price?—No.

5602. Would it not be suggested by the investing public that, so far as they are concerned, the capital value has already been written off? The return per cent. would not be 1⅓ on money invested at the present price?—The investing public might look at it in that way, but I think companies always speak of the return on the nominal capital. Take the London and North-Western Railway Company, for instance; if they pay a dividend of 7 per cent., that is 7 per cent. on the nominal value; it is not on the market value.

5603. But an investment at the present moment would yield a greater dividend?—On the cost price, no doubt. May I put it in this way. I have gone into this question rather largely in the last few days. I find that 56 per cent. of the stockholders of the India Company before the amalgamation had been stockholders for something like twenty years, and their investment represents to them, not to-day's market price at all, but a price of over £100. Some of them paid £130 or £150 or £160 for their stock.

5604. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) With respect to your answers and any evidence which you criticise, do you leave that to the speech which is to be made by your counsel?—Yes.

5605. (*Chairman.*) Now will you hand in the tables to which you have referred, and at the same time make any remarks upon them which you may consider necessary?—Yes.

The Witness handed in the following tables:—

(*Table of the number and tonnage of British and foreign sailing and steam vessels engaged in the foreign trade which entered the Port of London from* 1820 *to* 1855. *See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 19.)

(*Table of number and tonnage of vessels in the "foreign" trade that entered the Port of London, including vessels in ballast, in each year from* 1861 *to* 1899, *showing the percentage of increase. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 20.)

(*Table showing the increase in the size of ships. (a) Vessels registered under the Merchant Shipping Acts in the United Kingdom. (b) Number of steamers of all nationalities of* 2,000 *tons gross and over afloat at various dates. (c) Steamers under construction in the United Kingdom. (d) Vessels under construction in the United Kingdom at the end of June,* 1875, *and June,* 1899. *See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 21.)

(*Table of the number of steamers classed of over* 5,000 *tons each, and sailing vessels classed of over* 2,500 *tons each. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 22.)

(*Table showing average size of steamers and sailing vessels, excluding vessels under* 200 *tons. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 23.)

(*Table of the steamers over* 7,000 *tons gross, built since* 1890, *and afloat on 30th June,* 1900. *(a) Built in United Kingdom. (b) Built abroad. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 24.)

(*Table of the number and net tonnage of steam vessels (not including warships) built in the United Kingdom from* 1888 *to* 1898, *and also showing the excess of gross tonnage over net tonnage. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 25.)

(*Table of the vessels with cargoes entering the Port of London and the docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee between the years* 1889 *and* 1899, *both inclusive. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 26.)

(*Table of vessels in the foreign trade that entered with cargoes into the Port of London, the Docks of London, and the Docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee respectively, between the years* 1889 *and* 1899, *both inclusive, showing the increase on* 1889 *in each year. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 27.)

(*Table of the number and tonnage of all ships entering the Docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee between the years* 1889 *and* 1899, *both inclusive. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 28.)

(*Table of the number and tonnage of vessels in foreign trade, with cargoes and in ballast, entering and clearing from some of the chief ports in the United Kingdom, showing the increase of shipping in* 1898 *in each port over that of* 1890. *See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 29.)

(*Table showing the tonnage of merchant shipping owned by different countries at different dates, showing the rate of increase. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 30.)

(*Comparative statement of earnings and expenses, and of shipping, exports, landings, and stocks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee, for the years* 1889 *to* 1899, *both inclusive. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 31.)

(*Comparative statement of vessels and tonnage entering the Docks of London and the Docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee respectively, from North American and Canadian ports, and from all other foreign ports, to discharge, between the years* 1887 *and* 1899, *both inclusive. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 32.)

(*Table showing number of lighters using the various docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee between the years* 1889 *and* 1899, *both inclusive. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 33.)

(*Statement showing the number of barges entering the docks controlled by the London and India Docks Joint Committee on the Joint Committee's account during the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 34.)

(*Table showing particulars of some of the barges having a net tonnage of* 90 *tons and upwards, which frequent the docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 35.)

(*Table showing the number, description, and tonnage of craft using the Port of London in* 1796. *See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 36.)

(*Table of freight fluctuations,* 1869 *to* 1899. *See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 37.)

(*Statement of charges leviable at certain ports to which Parliament has given powers of charging tonnage dues on lighters and craft, and on the goods carried therein. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 38.)

(*Table of the existing rates chargeable at outports on goods not landed on the quay. See Appendix, 16th day, No.* 39.)

The first remark I should like to make is with reference to Appendix No. 20, which shows the number and tonnage of sailing and steam vessels with cargoes and in ballast in the foreign trade that entered the Port of London from 1861 to 1899, and the percentage of increase in each year over 1861. Since 1861 the tonnage has increased from 3,163,000 to 9,557,000, or an increase of 202 per cent., which I venture to think does not point to a diminishing trade in the Port of London. Appendix No. 21 (A), (B), (C), and (D), and Appendix No. 23, all deal with the great increase in the growth of steamers of late years. With reference to Appendix No. 24, I would like to repeat what I said last year when I was before you, namely, that all these steamers, of which we give the list, can dock at Tilbury, and only 28 cannot dock at the Royal Albert Docks. I also include the "Celtic," the new White Star steamer, the largest steamer afloat, which can dock at Tilbury whether it is spring tide or neap tide, when she is fully loaded. Tilbury is the only dock, with the exception of Southampton, where she can dock fully loaded; and I believe that even in Liverpool, when they have completed their present alterations, she will not be able to dock at neap tides when fully loaded. Appendix No. 25 also shows another hardship that all dock companies suffer from. In 1888 the gross tonnage exceeded the net tonnage by 58·33 per cent. In 1898 (these being the last returns we are able to get) the gross tonnage exceeded the net tonnage by 64·31 per cent, so that while in 1888 the ship paid dues on about 42 per cent. of her gross, to-day she only pays dues on about 36 per cent. Appendix No. 26 shows the growth of the trade in the Port of London and in the docks of the Joint Committee. In 1889 the Joint Committee had of the foreign trade of London 38 per cent. To-day the docks of the London and India Docks Company have 45 per cent. I think this all tends to show that with the increasing size of ships it is more and more necessary for those ships to come into the docks, and not to do their work in the river.

It is a little curious that even the coasting trade, which in the ordinary course might be expected to favour the river, both because it would be cheaper and because they could get away when they liked without waiting for tides, that trade is now coming more and more into the docks. In the London and St. Katharine Docks we could take in more to-day than we have room for. I mentioned this morning that we had at Galleons entrance a river quay which we never could get any vessel to use until we used it for coal business. But we have an even more strong point than that. At Tilbury, inside the basin, there is a quay to which there are no locks; a vessel can enter or leave whenever she likes. That quay would give her plenty of depth of water, and it is fully equipped with sheds and everything, and we never have yet been able to get any large vessel to use it. If you cannot get that quay occupied, it being within the basin which is within sheltered water, is it likely that these big steamers would use the river quays exposed to all the traffic? Appendix No. 27 is another form showing the increase in the Port of London and the docks of London and the docks of the Joint Committee. Appendix No. 28 shows the total number and tonnage of all vessels entering the docks of the Joint Committee for the years 1889 to 1899, both inclusive. Appendix No. 29 is a table which I think is of very considerable interest. We have in that table taken certain ports, some municipal, some private, some railway, and some trust. Bristol is a municipal port; Cardiff is a private port; Hull is a railway port; Liverpool is a trust port; London is a private port; Middlesborough is a railway port; Southampton is a railway port; Sunderland is partly trust and partly railway; Swansea is partly trust and partly railway; the Tyne ports are partly railway and partly trust; Glasgow is a trust port; Grangemouth is a railway port; Leith is a trust port; Belfast is a trust port; and Dublin is a trust and railway port. I want to draw attention to these figures, because certain percentages which have been put forward would tend to show that London was not holding her own as a port.

5606. (*Mr. Ellis.*) These figures are being put in by a witness in a particular case. Are they official figures?—They are compiled from figures supplied by the Board of Trade.

5607. We can have your assurance that they are not your figures, but are Board of Trade figures?—Certainly; they are Board of Trade figures. When I compare Bristol, which is a municipal port, with London, which is a private port, I find that in 1890 London was 12,702,000 tons ahead of Bristol. In 1898 London was 15,422,000 tons ahead of Bristol, although Bristol shows by percentage a greater increase. On the actual figures London stands further ahead than Bristol in spite of this percentage. I mention this, because I think it is not quite fair to judge the port by the percentage; you must deal with the figures. Now I should like to take Cardiff. In 1890 London was 4,665,000 tons ahead of Cardiff. In 1898 London was 7,800,000 tons ahead.

5608. (*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) With reference to that figure, might I interpose. Sir John Wolfe-Barry knows that 1898 was a strike year at Cardiff, and that would make a great difference?—I am perfectly willing to leave out Cardiff. Cardiff is not a port that you can fairly compare with London. Cardiff is a coal port, and very little but a coal port. London is not a coal port. At Liverpool in 1890 we were 2,538,000 tons ahead. In 1898 it was 4,427,000. Then I take the Tyne ports. They are chiefly coal ports; perhaps I had better leave those out also. Then I will take Glasgow. In 1890 we were 10,631,000 tons ahead of Glasgow. In 1898 we were 12,911,000 tons ahead. The increase of percentage is put down by the side. I think it will show how the real test of the position of the port is not the increase of percentage, but is to be found in the actual tonnage. You can imagine a case of a port with one ship of 1,000 tons; the next year it might have two ships of 1,000 tons each; that port would have increased 100 per cent. Appendix No. 30 is another case showing how illusory percentages are. These are also figures taken from the Board of Trade return of 1899. I find that, lumping Hamburg and Bremen together, which represented German trade fairly in 1850, in 1850 the tonnage of the United Kingdom exceeded that of Hamburg and Bremen by 3,426,000 tons. Since that date the tonnage of the United Kingdom has increased by 151 per cent. The tonnage of Hamburg and Bremen taken together has increased by 831 per cent. Yet in 1897 the tonnage of the United Kingdom is 7,787,000 tons in excess of Hamburg and Bremen. Looking at these figures, I say to-day, if you compare London with any port in the United Kingdom, London stands further ahead of that port than at any previous time of its history. Then Appendix No. 31 gives the figures of expenses and earnings. Appendix No. 32 goes very fully into the question of the development of American trade under the London clause in the American bills of lading. There one sees how that trade has grown and prospered under that, although it was said at the time that that clause would kill the trade. The trade has doubled since. Appendix No. 33 gives certain figures as to the number of lighters using the docks of the Joint Committee during the years 1889 to 1899. Appendix No. 34 is an answer to a statement that a great portion of the barges are for account of the docks. Here we show that the percentage of the total number of barges coming to the docks which are for account of the docks is only 10 per cent.; 90 per cent. have nothing whatever to do with our business. Appendix No. 35 gives the size of some large barges in London. Appendix No. 36 gives particulars of some barges in the years 1796 and 1799. Appendix No. 37 gives the freight fluctuations to which I have referred already. Appendix No. 38 I bring forward with a little diffidence. It is scarcely evidence, but I should like to say that in getting out these particulars of the charges on barges they were compiled by our solicitor from Acts of Parliament governing the docks referred to, information as to the Acts passed in each case having been first obtained from the dock authority, and the extracts as to barges were subsequently submitted to and checked by the various dock authorities. The original correspondence can be produced. Then I come to my last table. I want to compare the rates which we proposed to charge under our lighterage with those which are authorised for other ports, showing how very reasonable our rates were. The Bill which was entered this Session was withdrawn. I will take the chief articles only. This is Appendix No. 39. Cigars in London are 1s. 6d.; in Liverpool 3s. 9d. Coffee in London is 1s. 6d.; in Bristol, 2s. 6d.; in Glasgow, 2s.: in Liverpool, 2s. Drugs in London, 1s. 6d.; in Glasgow, 2s.; in Liverpool, 5s. Fruit in London, 1s. 6d.; in Glasgow, 2s.; at Liverpool there is a charge of 3d. per package, which would work out at a great deal more than 1s. Then hides, skins and leather in London, 1s. 6d.; in Bristol, 4s. 2d.; in Glasgow, 2s.; in Liverpool, 2s. to 5s.; and in Southampton, which is a railway dock, 5s. to 10s. Meat in London, 1s. 6d.; in Glasgow, 2s.; in Liverpool, 1s. per hogshead. Spirits in London, 1s. 6d.; in Bristol, 2s. and 2s. 9d. per puncheon; in Glasgow, 2s.; and in Liverpool, 10d. per hundred gallons, which would work out very considerably more. Then tobacco, which is a very large trade done in London and Liverpool, is in London, 1s. 6d.; in Bristol, 2s. 6d. to 5s.; in Glasgow, 2s.; in Liverpool, 1s. 8d. Wines in London, 1s. 6d.; in Bristol, 2s. 9d.; in the Clyde, 2s.; in Liverpool, 2s. 4d. Wool in London, 1s. 6d.; Glasgow, 2s.: Liverpool, 2s. Flour, which is a very large article in London, 1s.; in Glasgow, 1s. to 1s. 3d. Grain in London, 1s.; in Glasgow, 1s. 3d. to 1s. Metals in London, 1s.; in Bristol, 1s. 6d.; in Glasgow, a varying amount according to the metal; in Liverpool, 1s. to 3s. 4d. Then Southampton, iron from vessel into craft, or *vice versa*, 6s. a ton, the object, of course, there being to prevent it going overside at all, and to force it over the railway. Sugar in London, 1s.; in Bristol, 2s. 6d.; in Liverpool, 2s. Those are all that I wish to draw the attention of the Commissioners to. Of course, those are all maximum authorised rates; they are not rates actually charged.

Before we adjourned for luncheon I brought forward the question of the correspondence in regard to the "Politician." I do not know whether the committee have settled anything about it. See 5589–91.

5609. (*Chairman.*) We have no copies of it?—I should like very much indeed to put it in.

5610. You wish to put it in on the point of the difference between the charges in London and Liverpool?—I do, certainly.

5611. Are the statements first-hand?—May I explain in this way? The first statement was handed, I think, to Mr. Black for Lord Egerton when the Royal Commission visited Liverpool. It was a statement made by the owners of the "Politician" as to the comparative cost of the steamer "Politician" in London

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and in Liverpool. The statement was sent to me, and I was asked to see whether I found it correct. It was correct, so far as it went; but it did not go anything like far enough, because it only dealt with a certain portion of the charges. We then, in London, carried that statement a bit further, so as to put it, as we believed, in the form of a true comparison between London and Liverpool. That was then returned by Mr. Black, and was submitted by him to the authorities in Liverpool. They again agreed with our figures. The correspondence shows all this, and the figures show that whereas if you include in London the charges paid by the ship, which are the only charges, as the consignee pays nothing, and if you dock in Liverpool, and take in the charges falling on the ship and the charges falling on the consignee, that is, if you take all the charges which the goods in some form or other have to pay before they get to the consignee, London is very considerably cheaper than Liverpool. You will find in this the whole statement set out. It shows that the charges in London falling on the ship for dock dues, stevedore, etc., in connection with the delivery and discharge of the cargo amounted to £1,001 9s. 10d., all of which was paid by the shipowner, and nothing by the consignee. In Liverpool, the total charges amounted to £1,347 4s. 8d., or £346 more. Of that, only £552 was paid by the shipowner, £794 being paid by the consignee. There is the whole difference between London and Liverpool—why London is an unpopular port with shipowners, and why Liverpool is a popular one. In Liverpool, although the total cost from the time the ship arrives to the time the goods get to their destination is more than in London, yet the shipowner pays very much less, the consignee having to pay his share. I do not know that I need trouble the Commissioners with the correspondence. That is simply to show that we, in London, confirmed those charges which were applicable to London, and the dock authorities in Liverpool confirmed those charges which were applicable to Liverpool.

5612. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Is this something that arose out of evidence that has been given before this Commission?—I think so.

5613. You are not referring us to the evidence?—I could refer to Sir Thomas Sutherland, but I do not want to refer to anyone particularly. I refer to the shipowners generally, and Mr. Jones and Mr. Becket Hill in particular, who have said London is very much dearer than other ports.

5614. Is it a broad general statement, not a specific statement, by any witness?—Certainly. I will put the statement in.

(*The Witness handed in a Statement of the London Charges on the SS. "Politician," and correspondence with the London and India Docks Company relating thereto. See Appendix, 16th day, No. 46.*)

5615. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to make any further remarks?—I have one or two further remarks I should like to make.

5616. I understand you wish to limit yourself to matters which are within your province as a witness?—Certainly. I propose, in the following observations, to limit myself to that portion of the inquiry before the Royal Commissioners which relates specially to the docks of the port. Although it goes without saying that the dock companies are deeply interested in the proper maintenance and dredging of the river, I feel that the Royal Commissioners have ample evidence on that subject from witnesses specially competent to give it, and that I shall better assist them by limiting myself to matters more within my own province as a witness. I have endeavoured to set before the Royal Commission the various alterations in circumstances which make the conditions originally imposed upon the dock companies antiquated, unfair and impracticable now, and I have also, I believe, succeeded in showing that London has steadily progressed under the efforts made by the dock companies to provide for the growing wants of the port. Those efforts have undoubtedly led to much advantage to the trade of the port, but with no corresponding gain to the shareholders, and I venture to think that the progress made by the trade of London, and the ever increasing proportion of that trade which has come to the docks, is a contradiction of the statements loosely made that London is losing her trade, and that her position as the foremost port of the world is critical. Compared with other ports, British and foreign, we have more than held our own, and a port which can, and does, accommodate the largest steamers afloat, and provides facilities for trade second to no other port in the world cannot be said to be out of date. I do not claim perfection for the docks. With the growth of the port, I recognise that more dock accommodation is necessary, and for some years past the dock companies have had this in view. The necessity has been put before the shareholders, large sums have been spent in improving and enlarging the entrances to the West India Dock and the South West India Docks. Tilbury Dock was constructed in anticipation of the necessities of shipping, and is by everybody admitted to be a dock second to none in existence, and the action of the London and India Dock Company in promoting a Bill in the present Session of Parliament is also proof that the directors have not been blind to the growing needs of the port. The improvement and development of the docks is chiefly a money question. This I have considered very carefully with my colleagues, and we are of opinion—and our opinion is, I believe, shared by many shipowners—that the necessary income for this purpose can be found without recourse to the rates of the Metropolis, and without inflicting hardship on any trades by authorising a moderate charge to be made on goods and barges entering the docks. I will deal first with charges on goods. If the schedule of dues on goods as proposed in the Lighterage Bill of the London and India Docks Company deposited in Parliament this session is compared with the maximum rates authorised in the case of other home ports, it will be found that (irrespective of the very important exemptions to be found in the Bill) the proposed schedule for London is generally lower, and on this point I refer to Appendix No. 38, and instance particularly Bristol as a municipal port, Liverpool and the Clyde as ports governed by a trust, and Southampton belonging to a railway company. If these ports are not crippled by such dues, why should London be? But the whole idea of a maximum impost of 1s. 6d. per ton (equal to a 1d. on 124 lbs.) crippling the trade is absurd; freights vary 10s., 15s., 20s. per ton or more, and it is not found that trade is crippled. I can quite understand strenuous opposition to the imposition of dues being offered by private traders who have warehouses of their own, and railway companies who take delivery from the ship's side and deliver to consignee's domicile. To this I say that their overside business is a modern development, it did not exist when the exemption clauses were originally passed, and if it is no hardship to them to have to pay such dues in Liverpool, the Clyde and elsewhere, why should it be in London? Further, I say that if in docks owned by railway companies, such as Southampton, it is allowable to charge such dues, there is no reason why docks owned by dock companies, and which are an absolute necessity to the shipping and trade of the port, should not be allowed to make the charge. The question of warehousing cannot be brought in, for if it is contended that the warehousing rates in the docks are higher than in other ports, then I say that the dock companies have no warehousing monopoly of any kind; that there is, therefore, no compulsion on anybody to warehouse goods with them, and that if their rates are inordinately high then there are warehouse keepers who have no connection with the docks to whom application for storage can be made. I now come to the question, who should be the authorities authorised to levy charges if it should be considered proper to levy dues on all goods using the docks. If there were any need to fall back on the rates, I can quite see that there would be justification for control by the local authorities. But if all the required funds can be, and are, raised by the business itself, surely the control of the docks may best be left in the hands of those who have had all the necessary experience and against whom no serious complaint whatever as regards management has been substantiated. Their only offence is poverty, and that is to be attributed to the injustice (which we are now seeking to remedy) of allowing the docks of this port to be used by a very large class of the community without any payment at all. Take as an alternative a body constituted on the lines suggested by the London County Council; would it have the necessary knowledge for the proper conduct of the very difficult, complicated, and intricate business of the docks? I say at once it would not, and could not, and if it is true, as we are told, that the private wharfingers and warehouse keepers do their business better and cheaper than the docks because it is under

the direct supervision of the proprietors themselves, then I say it must be equally true that the docks managed by merchants and shipowners with an intimate knowledge of the business will do their business better and cheaper than if managed by a body of gentlemen collected indiscriminately from various other associations, and bodies without previous acquaintance with dock working and liable to lose their connection with the management of the docks for wholly extraneous reasons. I believe, therefore, that the control and working of the docks of London should be in the hands of business men who know from personal experience what the wants of the port are, and are in touch with the various trades of the metropolis. But is not this what is found at present? Taking the Board of the London and India Docks Company, with which I am best acquainted, you will find all classes of trade fairly represented by men who for years past have made the trade of London and the management of the docks their constant study. I do not hesitate to express a very strong opinion that the present directors of the London and India Docks Company are as competent a body to whose hands to commit the management of the docks as can be found. Here I ask to be allowed to give the names of the directors of the London and India Docks Company with their qualifications. I start with myself as chairman. I was 19 years member of the firm of J. W. Cater, Sons and Co, East and West India merchants, and chairman of the London and St. Katharine Docks Company and London and India Docks Joint Committee for two years; the Honorable Sydney Holland, the deputy chairman, who is a barrister, director of English, Scottish and Australian Bank, large wool importer, and chairman of the East and West India Dock Company for three years; Sydney Eggers Bates, a member of the firm of Edward Bates and Sons, Shipowners and East India merchants, and deputy-chairman of the London and St. Katharine Docks Company for two years; Edward Boyle, K.C., barrister, and deputy chairman of the East and West India Dock Company for three years; Sir George Henry Chambers, was chairman of T. Daniell and Co., Ltd., West India merchants, was chairman of London and St. Katharine Docks Company for fourteen years, also a director of the Regent's Canal and Dock Company. Thomas Du Buisson, a member of the firm of Henckell Du Buisson and Co., general merchants; John Lowther Du Plat Taylor, C.B., was secretary and manager of the East and West India Dock Company from 1870 to 1888, and was appointed a director in 1888; John James Hamilton, a member of the firm of Sinclair, Hamilton and Co., merchants; Rodolph Alexander Hankey, a member of the firm of Thomson, Hankey and Co., West India merchants, and a director of the Colonial Bank, chairman of the East and West India Dock Company for three years; William Egerton Hubbard, a member of the firm of John Hubbard and Co., Russian merchants, and a director of the London and County Bank, was chairman of the London and St. Katharine Docks Company as well as the London and India Docks Joint Committee for eight years; Sir Henry Denis Le Marchant, Baronet, a member of the firm of H. S. Lefevre and Co., merchants, and chairman of the East and West India Dock Company for three years; Sir Nevile Lubbock, K.C.M.G., the chairman of the New Colonial Company, Limited, and chairman of the West India Committee; Colonel Ben Hay Martindale, C.B., who was the general manager of the London and St. Katharine Docks Company from 1874 to 1888; Edward Samuel Norris, who was a member of the firm of S. E. Norris and Co, leather merchants; Fred Pook, a member of the firm of J. B. Barry and Son, East India merchants; Marlborough Robert Prior, a member of the firm of Henry Kendall and Sons, merchants; Robert Bruce Ronald, a director of the Australian Mortgage Land and Finance Company, Ltd., large wool importers; Seth Taylor, grain and flour merchant; John Henry Tod, was East India merchant in the firm of Tod, Durant and Co., a member of the Committee of Lloyds Register of Shipping, and Chairman of the East and West India Dock Co. for three years, and Edward Wagg, a member of the firm of Helbert, Wagg, and Russell, stockbrokers. What would at once strike anyone reading through that list is that here is an absence of shipowners. I will tell you the reason why that is so. In 1889, when the Joint Committee was formed, and there had been frequent opposition by one of the two dock companies, the shipowners—I do not blame them for it—had been trying to get the very best terms from the two companies, and were working the two dock companies together. At the time the number of directors was very largely reduced from 45 and 40 to 16 and 12 respectively, and the shipowners who had been trying, as was very natural on their part, to get the best terms they could for themselves, did not stand for re-election. So at the present moment we are short of two or three directors, and we have been keeping those vacancies for the purpose of filling them up with shipowners so soon as we see how the Royal Commission terminates. Then it is said that such powers should not be given to any private corporation. Why not? If powers have been given us to levy dues on shipping entering the docks irrespective of services rendered, why not on goods? It has not been shown that we have abused our powers of charging shipping; on the contrary, we only charge to-day 1s. per ton where we might exact 2s. 2d., made up of 1s. 6d. dues and 8d. for four weeks' rent. Why then should we be unfit to be trusted with the power of levying dues on goods? Again, since our Dock Acts were passed other Acts have been passed giving similar powers on goods to other private companies—Manchester Ship Canal Docks, for instance—and if it is reasonable to give such powers to other new companies, why not to the London dock companies, who are working now under circumstances never contemplated when the original exemption clauses were passed? I now come to the proposed charges on barges. Here again I find that we are only asking for powers similar to those given to other ports in varying amounts, and again I contend if it is reasonable to give such powers to other ports, it cannot be unreasonable and killing to the trade of London to give them to the dock companies.

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5617. Can you cite any parallel case of any port which is, as London is, essentially a barge port?—No, I do not think I can.

5618. Surely the case of London is exceptional?—I do think it is an exceptional case in that way.

5619. (*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) What about Hull?—Hull is a railway port. Hull is in very much the same position as London.

5620. It is a case in point, is it not?—It is a case in point. For the barge traffic services have to be rendered far in excess of any to which it is entitled by statute. For instance, when once in the lock we need render them no help there, but we frequently tow them in and out, allow them the use of our hydraulic capstans, doing far more of this work for them than they do themselves, and so it is from the time they enter the lock going into dock until they leave the dock again. It may be asked, why do you do this? The answer is a simple one. Unless we rendered these services the whole trade of the port would be brought to a standstill, and rather than permit that we prefer to give gratuitously services to which the barges have no statutory claim; but we consider that this fact does not shut the door to our obtaining relief. The charge which we propose to levy is 3d. per ton, although the maximum limit would be 4d., and we have arrived at this figure as it is the rate which other vessels liable to dues pay for extra docking and undocking when required. I have so far dealt with the suggested creation of a public trust only as it bears relation to the statutory powers which my company are seeking to obtain, but I ask permission to add some observations on the question of a trust from a more general point of view. First, I take it that the principal argument in support of the formation of such a trust or statutory committee as is suggested by the County Council is that, having in some shape or other the security of the rates of the metropolis to fall back upon, the money necessary for the formation of such a trust could be raised more cheaply, to the benefit of the trade of the port. In other words, that the merchants and shipowners of the port shall be enabled to work more cheaply, and consequently make more profit, at the expense, or at least the risk, of the metropolitan community at large, and possibly, though very doubtfully, to the indirect gain of that community. A short time back, when money was cheaper than at present, and the docks were in a weaker position than to-day, we were able to borrow at less than 3 per cent., and the London County Council were at the best only able to raise money at a fraction less, as the following table shows:—

See 6127–43

Mr. C. J. C. Scott.

6 May 1901.

COMPARISON OF PRICES of, and return on, Stocks of the London County Council and the London and St. Katharine Docks Company in 1896 and of Stocks of the London County Council and the London and India Docks Company in 1901.

1st AUGUST, 1896.

STOCK.	Rate of Interest.	Price.	Return.	Remarks.
			£ s. d.	
Metropolitan Consolidated Stock.	3½	125¾	2 15 7	1s. 3d. per cent. cheaper than London Company's Debenture Stock.
London and St. Katharine Docks Company's Debenure Stock.	4	141	2 16 10	

22nd MARCH, 1901.

STOCK.	Rate of Interest.	Price.	Return.	Remarks.
			£ s. d.	
Metropolitan Consolidated Stock.	3½	109	3 4 2	
London and India Docks Company "A" Debenture Stock.	3	94	3 3 10	4*d.* per cent. cheaper than London County Council Stock.
London and India Docks Company 61 "A" 3 % Debenture Stock at 94 - 72½ "B" 3% Debenture Stock at 89 - - - *i.e.* the equivalent of £100 Old London and St. Katharine 4 per cent. Debenture Stock.	4	121¾	3 5 9	

5621. (*Mr. Peel.*) I see you have given the price of the County Council stock of last year. That, I think, was issued at 97½—3 per cent.?—I was only dealing with the published Stock Exchange quotations. I think that is rather in favour of my point.

5622. They got a better price for it. You said 94 here—3 per cent.?—At what time of the year?

5623. It was issued last year?—Yes.

5624. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Of course, the figures have fluctuated since?—Yes; we have a 3 per cent. at par to-day. All I wanted to show is that on certain dates there was not a very great difference in the price of our securities. Well, on the 1st of August, 1896, our London and St. Katharine Dock four per cent. debentures stood at 131, and returned at £2 16s. 10d.; the Metropolitan Consolidated Stock stood at 125¾, and returned £2 15s. 7d., so it was only 1s. 3d. difference. Then, when I come to a later figure, I find Metropolitan Consolidated Stock on the 22nd of March returned £3 4s. 2d., and the London and India Docks is a debenture stock returned £3 3s. 10d.

5625. (*Chairman.*) Of course the figures include redemption?—No, they are irredeemable.

5626. Both of them?—I think so. I am not overlooking the fact that in the above comparison the London County Council stock is placed side by side with the best of the dock stocks, but the point I wish to emphasise is that if the docks company can show a reliable income they will be able to borrow the two or three millions necessary for meeting all the dock requirements of the port on very moderate terms, while if a trust be formed to purchase the whole dock undertakings of this port and to construct further dock accommodation as well, the trust will require to raise a sum which I put at a minimum of 30 millions, and which has been put very much higher in a debate of the London County Council. It is, I submit, very doubtful indeed whether that enormous amount could be raised on easy terms by the London County Council. Again, the scope of the trust would of course have to be decided, (1.) There might be a trust as in Liverpool to control the whole port. This would mean absorbing all the dock properties and river frontages, and as I believe that without these water frontages the river wharves would be unable to carry on their business, it seems that the wharves themselves would have to be purchased. Indeed, this must be so, for to a very great extent the warehouses themselves abut on the river; there is no margin of quay. I cannot believe that it would be to the advantage of the port to give a monopoly of docks, warehouses and river frontage to any public body, and besides, the cost of such a scheme would be so enormous that its realisation seems to be quite beyond the bounds of possibility. (2.) The idea of a trust formed to purchase certain selected parts of the dock company's property, and of leaving the dock company with no docks need not be seriously dealt with, but there might be a trust to take over the dock undertakings as a whole, disposing of the warehouses and retaining only the water area of the docks with the quays and sheds adjoining. But our docks were originally built to serve the warehouses, and in the older docks such a division is impossible on account of their construction, and it would be very difficult even at the Victoria, Albert, and Tilbury Docks. In some docks we use for the purpose of discharging ships, portions of what, strictly speaking, are warehouses, and in other docks we use as warehouses portions of sheds intended for ships discharging, it being in many cases, commercially speaking, impossible to transport cheap and bulky goods from the dock where landed to another dock or different part of the same dock for warehousing. Then, for all goods stored in the docks, as distinct from the up-town warehouses, the water frontage is vital, and the greater part of the business of the dock warehouses would go if the owners were deprived of the access by water. The business could not be worked. Numberless further illustrations can be given to justify me in saying that any such division of the property would be not only economically unsound, but from a working point of view, practically impossible, and I say confidently that if the value of the property as a whole is X the value of it divided would be much less than $\frac{x}{2} + \frac{x}{2}$; in other words the effect of division would be to seriously depreciate the value of both the portion retained by the trust and of that disposed of as being unnecessary to a simple dock undertaking. To this scheme there is also the further objection that it would not be a complete port trust after all; only 6¾ million tons out of 15½ millions coming into the port discharge in the various docks of London, and a port trust which would include less than half the tonnage coming into the port, and would have to face competition from riverside owners, would not, I venture to think, offer to seriously minded people a solution of the question of the Port of London. (3.) There is the scheme to take over the entire property of the three dock companies, with their warehousing and other business, and work the business as a whole in the name of a trust. Of course to this the objection to which I have referred above, that it really would not be a port trust at all, equally applies. In addition it must be remembered that though the docks do an enormous warehousing business the collective business of riverside and other warehouse keepers is still larger. With all of these the trust would be competing, and the result would in all probability be that the trust to secure the business would have to take unremunerative charges, the loss being provided out of the rates, to the ruin of the private wharfingers and warehousekeepers. I have endeavoured, very briefly, to summarise the difficulties which will confront the formation of a trust as they apply to the different schemes which have been set forth in various quarters. But there remains one more, common to all the schemes, namely, that to ascertain the compensation to be paid to the various parties to be expropriated will be a very long and tedious process; so that with the loss of time inevitable before the necessary Parliamentary sanction can be obtained, it would be several years before any trust could assume definite shape, and in the meantime the needs of the port constantly growing must remain unsatisfied. Lastly, I am desirous of submitting to the Royal Commissioners the views of my colleagues and myself as to what is really needed for meeting the altered circumstances and requirements of the port. Briefly I would summarise our suggestions as follows:—The London and India Docks Company to have (1.) Power to charge dues on barges with a maximum rate of 4d. per ton, estimated on the basis of 3d. per ton to produce the sum of £56,250; (2.) power to levy dues on goods estimated to produce the sum of £177,833. In consideration of the above powers the dock company are willing to agree (1.) That the reasonableness of the amount of the charges on goods as between the different classes of goods on which the rate is levied shall be subject to a right of appeal to the Railway Commissioners. (2.) That in place of the maximum tonnage dues of 1s. 6d. with rent from the date of entrance at 2d. per ton per week now chargeable on shipping there shall be substituted maximum dues of 1s. 4d. to include freedom from rent for four weeks. (2.) That the maximum dividend to be

See 6144–46.

See 6039–56.

paid on the capital stocks of the company shall be 4 per cent., and that the surplus shall be applicable only to any of the following purposes:—(*a*) In making good the deficiency of any previous dividends from the date of obtaining the above-mentioned powers. That is not the back dividends, but only from the date when the powers were given. (*b*) The redemption of loan capital. (*c*) The provision of a reserve fund not to exceed 10 per cent. of the total nominal amount of the capital stocks of the company. (*d*) The reduction of charges on goods and shipping. (4) The dock company to undertake to complete with all despatch the proposed extension to the south of the Royal Albert Dock, if authorised by Parliament. Then I give a statement showing how I make out an estimate of the amount which this would produce, and with that I complete the statement I put before the Commission. This is the estimated additional income to be derived from the rates and charges proposed to be authorised by the Bill promoted by the London and India Docks Company in the session of 1901, but since withdrawn to await the Report of the Royal Commission on the Port of London. Dues on barges:—In the year 1899, 137,193 barges entered the docks. Taking these as of an average of 60 tons, the aggregate tonnage would be 8,231,580 tons.

See 6043.

	Tons.
Ten per cent. of these barges were employed in the London and India Docks Company's work	823,158
Ten per cent. carried coal (based on a fortnight's experience), estimated at	823,158
Ten per cent. were barges which passed from one of the company's docks direct into another, estimated at	823,158
Barges exclusively employed in conveying transhipments, estimated at	350,000
Total	2,819,474

See 6306-12

It is not proposed to charge dues in any of these cases. The tonnage upon which dues would be leviable would therefore be about 5,400,000, giving at 4d. per ton £90,000. It is not proposed that the tonnage rate shall be charged on any greater tonnage than the weight of the goods carried. It is estimated that this would reduce the tonnage by say 900,000 tons (assuming that one-half of the barges only carry full weight), and the revenue would be reduced by £15,000. The maximum powers sought would therefore give £75,000. But in the carrying out of their powers the London and India Docks Company would, in the absence of necessity for a larger income, charge at the rate of 3d. per ton only—a deduction of £18,750—leaving a net income from barges of £56,250. Dues on Goods:—It is estimated that in the year 1899, 2,860,707 tons of import goods and 1,959,606 tons of export goods passed through the docks on overside conditions without contributing anything to the dock revenue. These are the goods that the dock company seek to tax. The maximum rates proposed are 1s. a ton on certain descriptions of goods, and 1s. 6d. a ton on the remainder. It is impossible to say in what proportions the goods would fall under the several rates, but probably an average rate of 1s. 3d. a ton would be leviable. It is proposed to give special consideration to transhipments. These are of two kinds, viz.—(1) Goods brought to London upon a through or optional bill of lading for a Continental or other foreign port, or for an out-port, and transhipped in London from the import to the export ship without being landed, and without any operations being performed on the goods. The tonnage of these goods is not great in comparison with the total imports; probably 10 per cent. of the overside import tonnage, or, say, 286,000 tons is the extent of it. These goods it is proposed to exempt. (2) Goods consigned originally to London but sold before, or within 24 hours after, arrival for immediate shipment to the Continent or coastwise, and which are not landed in London. The tonnage of these goods is considerable, probably amounting to 20 per cent. of the total imports dealt with on overside conditions—say, 572,000 tons. On these goods half-rates only would be charged. The tonnage upon which ordinary charges would be leviable would therefore be, say, 3,822,000 tons, and half-charges on 572,000 tons. This would produce £266,750. In the actual assessment of the charges as between different classes of goods the docks company would have to consider the conditions under which the trade is carried on, and the relative values of goods, and, after giving due effect to these considerations, the average yield would probably not exceed 10d. a ton, say £177,833. The total additional revenue anticipated from barges and goods under the powers sought, with modifications, would thus be £234,000, against a proposed maximum charging power of £341,750.

See 6147-50; 6642-45.

5627. (*Chairman.*) With reference to the dues on goods you tell us that it is estimated that in the year 1899, 2,860,707 tons of import goods passed through the docks. Will you tell us, if you please, whether those figures include coal?—No, because we exempt coal altogether. Coal and all goods in transit are exempt. One very great reason for exempting all goods in transit is this: take the lines from the East, bringing goods to London and also to Continental ports. They cannot get for their goods to Hamburg, say *viâ* London, a higher rate than the rate ruling from the China ports, say to Hamburg direct. That rate is practically the same as to London, so that the shipowner who wishes to fill up his ship coming to London has to take the same rate of freight to Hamburg, *viâ* London, as Hamburg direct. Therefore we thought we ought rather to help the shipowners to get their business, because it is our business to encourage shipowners to come to the port. We have put in a copy of our proposed Dock Extension Bill, which was read the second time last Friday week, and the Lighterage Bill, which was withdrawn, in which we set out all these exemptions of coal.

5628. To which you have referred in your evidence?—Yes. Then another matter to which I should like to refer is a statement of Sir Thomas Sutherland's, in his evidence at Question 2009 of the Minutes of Evidence, and a statement of Mr. Jones in his evidence at Questions No. 4832 to 4837. Sir Thomas Sutherland compares certain charges in Antwerp, and Mr. Jones took certain charges at Avonmouth, Liverpool, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp, and Bremerhaven, and compared them with those at London. As suggested by Sir Robert Giffen at Questions 2015 to 2017, it seems on examination that the comparison really put forward here is between a ship at Antwerp entering light and to load at a quay, and a ship in London entering loaded and to discharge in a dock. In London, a ship entering light pays 3d. a ton only. If she loads she pays a further 9d. a ton on the quantity of goods loaded, the total of both payments not to exceed 1s. per ton net register. The comparison will, therefore, in many cases, be unfair, and not between like and like. Mr. Jones in Appendices 4 and 5, 14th day, shows the charges on vessels of 2,202 tons and 5,146 tons at London and various ports on the Continent, including Antwerp, to be much the same. Either Sir Thomas Sutherland or Mr. Jones has made a mistake somewhere in comparing the Antwerp charges with those in London, since Sir Thomas Sutherland gives the Antwerp charges on the "Candia," a vessel of 4,000 tons net register as being £54 3s., while Mr. Jones puts the Antwerp charges on his vessel of 2,202 tons register at £55. So that Mr. Jones, with his smaller vessel, puts his charges at £1 higher than Sir Thomas Sutherland with his larger vessel. I am quite sure that Sir Thomas Sutherland is the last man to come forward and state anything that he did not think was correct; but I do not think he has the circumstances quite before him. Perhaps the term "quay dues" used by Sir Thomas Sutherland does not comprehend all the charges which Mr. Jones has more properly included in his figures which he describes as dock and quay charges, and that further charges are incurred if a dock is used. Then Mr. Becket Hill, at Question 2256, said: "Of recent years the Millwall Dock has been subsidised by the amalgamated docks, so that there is really no competition whatever." Then at Question 2257 he was asked: "How do you know about the Millwall Dock being subsidised?" and he says: "That is a matter of common notoriety, but it is a matter upon which you could obtain exact information from the Secretary of either Dock Company." The Secretary of either Dock Company knows nothing at all about any such form of subsidising. My answer to that is that the only foundation for this statement lies in the fact that there was a private working agreement (which has now expired) between the Joint Committee and the Millwall Dock Company, under which ships from certain ports were assigned to each party,

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and mutual payments made if ships assigned to one party went to the docks of the other, the shipowner, of course, being free to go to whichever dock he liked. Then Mr. Becket Hill further goes on at Questions 2257 to 2292: "It follows that berths in the Royal Albert Dock are very much sought after, and there is nothing to prevent favouritism in their allotment." This statement is devoid of foundation, except that, other things being equal, the Dock Company prefer a large and regular customer to a small and intermittent one. Then Mr. Becket Hill stated that the directors were turned off the Board. As a matter of fact, the shipowners who were members of the Board at the time of the passing of the Working Union Act resigned, and did not offer themselves for re-election. There were several of them who, if they had come forward, would have been re-elected at once. I may mention that the first chairman of the Joint Committee was a shipowner, Mr. Norwood, so that it is incorrect to say that these shipowners were turned off the Board. Then Mr. Becket Hill says at Question 2258: "I have attended some of the meetings, and pointed out that in some respects the docks seem to be managed in an extravagant way. There are large pension funds, and very large amounts are paid for stationery, which, perhaps, is caused by what some of the witnesses will tell the Commission is the red tape system of the docks." My answer to that is that the pension scheme is founded on the Government scale, and is also similar to that of many railway and other great companies. It was most carefully considered, and there is no question that an assured pension is an attraction which enables the company to pay lower salaries than would otherwise be the case. Moreover, a pension fund was set on foot in the year 1890, and is gradually accumulating in the hands of trustees, the income of which will ultimately pay all pensions. This fund appears in the company's accounts, and already amounted on the 31st December last to £97,732 7s. 2d. Then with regard to stationery, a good many shareholders at times have made that a question, but they must forget that a great deal of our stationery goes in the enormous quantity of papers that we have to use in wrapping round samples, which are delivered to the trade, and the more of that paper that is used the better, because we are paid for it. On the question of pensions it may be mentioned that, at the time the West India Dock Company were in difficulties, Mr. Justice Chitty allowed the payment of these pensions out of moneys coming into the hands of the Receivers. I can put in a report of Mr. Justice Chitty's decision, and also a print of the deed providing for the superannuation allowances if the Commissioners would desire to receive them. Then Mr. Matthews at Question 2343 stated that although the London and St. Katharine Docks are full, it is not done on payable terms. In answer to Question 2344 he said: "They do not levy their 1s. a ton dock rate, and, therefore, they cannot get that profit." And in answer to Question 2343 he said, *inter alia:* "The docks" (that is the London and St. Katharine) "were nearly empty for a long time, and then they took up this system of placing themselves in the position of wharfingers sub-letting to me." My answer to that is that I have put in tables showing, with regard to the London and St. Katharine Dock what their tonnage was for a great many years past, and I am quite certain that if Mr. Matthews would be kind enough to examine those figures he would have to withdraw that statement. The tonnage has scarcely fluctuated at all. It is quite true that, so far as a lot of these coasting steamers are concerned, we do not charge them the full shilling. What we do both in the London Dock and the St. Katharine Dock with regard to these coasting lines is to say: "You pay us a certain amount per annum." That covers the use of the quay and a certain amount of shed space, and it also covers the right to bring in a certain number of steamers each year. It would be quite impossible for these coasting steamers to pay a shilling every time they come in. Here you have vessels trading from the Clyde to the St. Katharine Dock. They come in perhaps every fortnight. If they had to pay a shilling for every time they come into the dock they could not do it; but we get the equivalent. We get a rent for our quay and warehouse space, which we consider is remunerative. Then Mr. Moore at Question 2772 said: "If I had a 50-ton barge with only 20 tons of freight in it, according to the dock companies' proposal you would tax the barges according to the tonnage of the barge, and I should have to pay as if I had 50 tons in the barge." If Mr. Moore had taken the trouble to read the Dock Company's Bill, he would have seen that when a barge does not carry a full cargo we only charge her on what she does carry. Then Mr. Humphrey makes this statement with regard to transhipment at Question 2906: "If you are going to tax barges, that would throttle the transhipment trade of the Port of London effectually. That is a point which does not appear to have been touched on at all." By this very Bill which we have deposited—and it was all public last year—the transhipment trade is specially exempted; so that all these remarks come to the same thing. If these witnesses had carefully read the Bill, they would have seen it was not so. There were other statements made to the same effect by Mr. Greig at Questions 3532 and 3536, and Mr. T. W. Jacobs, jun., at Questions 3776, 3804, and 3805, and Mr. Deering at Question 3959. Then Mr. Jones at Question 4837 says: "The following figures are interesting as illustrating the ability of the various ports to deal with the big ship of to-day, which will be even larger in future. London: There is accommodation in the Millwall Docks, where we are compelled to take our cargo, for six steamers of 470ft. long, 56ft. beam, and 18,000·40 cubic feet tons, whereas at other ports the whole range of the docks is open to us. Liverpool: 31 steamers (12 in the Langton Dock alone) of this size can be accommodated. Bremerhaven can, or will shortly, be able to accommodate nine steamers; Avonmouth, nine of 400ft.; Hamburg, 48; Rotterdam, 30; and Antwerp, 21." I contend that that is most misleading. In giving these figures Mr. Jones actually treats London and the Millwall Dock as convertible terms. There was, at the time, no vacant accommodation in the London and India Company's system except at Tilbury, which he would not accept. That does not justify him in saying the whole of the range of docks is not open to him, but only shows the need of more accommodation, which the dock company is anxious to provide. As to the accommodation provided in London for ships of the size mentioned, the London and India Docks Company alone could take between 70 and 80, and the figure to be compared with Liverpool's 31 is really much nearer 100 than six. On the question whether Mr. Jones is quite correct in saying that the whole of those 31 berths in Liverpool are available for him, in Liverpool they have exactly the same system of appropriated berths that we have in London, and Mr. Jones could not take a man's appropriated berth.

5629. May I ask you to turn to the evidence of the British Vice-Consul at Hamburg, at Question No. 5512. Have you anything to tell us with reference to the statement that the shipment of sewing machines direct from New York to London was more expensive than *viâ* Hamburg?—We have no definite figures so far as regards Hamburg. We have checked it so far as London is concerned, and that is correct; but I should like to point out that the Vice-Consul of Hamburg gave us to understand that he gave us that information from his own knowledge. It was all second-hand.

5630. I think I asked him the question?—Yes; it was all second-hand. In fact, I do not mind saying that we asked him to give us the particulars so that we might check them, but he could not, and could not give us the name of the firm that was concerned in it.

5631. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You have mentioned Hull, have you not?—Yes.

5632. Do you happen to know whether any attempt has been made within the last few years to get rid of the lighterage clause there?—Yes.

5633. Did it come before a Private Bill Committee?—I said that they had. I am not quite sure that they did, but I do know that they are under a statutory obligation not to apply for a repeal of that exemption clause.

5634. How did that arise?—The manager tells me that it is an arrangement between the railway companies.

5635. Possibly it was when the railway company took over the dock?—Yes, that was when it was.

5636. What expenditure of capital do you contemplate as necessary for the Port of London, either in improvements of the docks, or new docks or equipment?—For this new Albert Dock extension which we contemplate, the engineers' estimate was £1,500,000. Our shareholders had a meeting, and I told them I thought it would be more advisable for them to go on a basis of £2,000,000. For that we provide berths for twenty ships of 500ft., or seventeen ships of 600ft. each. The lock will be 750ft. long.

See 5662-3.

5637. We have had a description of it, but I wanted to get from you, as Chairman of the dock company,

what amount of capital you had in view as necessary, within, say, the next ten years, for bringing the Port of London up to what may be called modern requirements?—I think the £2,000,000 will quite cover all we want within the next ten years.

5638. You do not then include any alteration of existing docks?—No, nothing very much. We are, at the present moment, altering the entrance to the South West India Dock, and we have altered the Blackwall entrance to the West India Dock. What we might do is that in the West India Import Dock we might put quays on the south side which might make that more available. That would amount to £100,000. We might have to do that very soon. We are going to dredge the West India Dock to a further depth of 2ft., which will give us about 27ft. there always.

5639. Do you include anything for improved equipment of existing docks?—I do not know really that it is necessary. In London, at the present moment, although it is said that we are so short of cranes, we have over 500 hydraulic cranes, and in Liverpool they have, I think, under fifty. In fact, in Liverpool they do not ask for the facilities, but in London we give them; and we are perfectly willing to do it. But the rates we get for it do not pay. So, although the shipowner will insist upon having the cranes there, he only pays for them if he wants them.

5640. You propose an additional charge on the barge traffic of something like £235,000 a year?—Yes.

5641. What I wanted you to lay before the Commission was how much of that money, supposing it was available, would go in interest on new works or improved docks, and how much in other directions?—First of all, you have the £2,000,000 for the new docks, and then you will, from time to time, have a considerable amount of other capital expenditure. We are just authorised, and are going, to carry out the beginning of a very complete system of silos for grain on the American principle. In the case of a great many of these works, we are paying for them out of revenue. The silos for grain we spread over twenty years, although it is capital expenditure. And a great many of these improvements we charge to revenue. We have a regular scale by which we charge them to revenue.

5642. I am not challenging what you are doing. All I want to know is what programme you wish to lay before the Commission as likely to be carried out, supposing you were in funds?—First of all, there must be undoubtedly this big extension of the Albert Dock. Then before very long—ten years very soon goes in modern business—you would certainly have to extend it, or you could not get on.

5643. Are we to take it that about £2,000,000 is going to be spent in new works, supposing these powers are granted?—Certainly. That is what we undertake to do at once.

5644. I wanted to ask you another question. You said there was no monopoly of warehousing in London under the present conditions, but under those conditions the wharfingers pay nothing for the use of the dock. If you add these charges of £235,000 a year, the terms of competition would be greatly altered, would they not?—That will not come out of the wharfingers. A great deal of that is on goods which go away by barge to consumers at once. Some of it is done by the railway companies. The railway companies send their barges in, and take it away by railway direct to the consignee, and certainly a great deal goes away to the consumer at once.

5645. Whatever impost is put on will modify the present competition between the private wharfingers and the dock companies' warehouses?—Probably it would have that effect.

5646. Therefore would it not have the effect of sending a larger percentage of the goods into the company's warehouses?—I do not know that it would send a very much larger quantity. It would rather have that tendency. Our rates are now higher than the wharfingers. We have an agreement with the wharfingers. They claim from their present position that they ought to charge less than we do, and they do charge less than we do. Their justification for that is that their rates of fire insurance are less than ours. We admit that, and they do charge rather less than we do.

See 6249.

5647. The dock would get then not merely the £235,000, but the increased traffic of the warehouses for the traffic deflected to their warehouses. That you have not included in your estimate?—I could not estimate it.

5643. In the comparison of raising money you have only compared the debentures of the dock company with the public funds?—Yes.

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5649. You could only raise, I suppose, one-third, or something of that sort, of any capital you wanted to expend, by debentures?—I have already said I am not overlooking the fact that in the comparison I gave the London County Council stock is placed side by side with the best of the dock stocks. What I wanted to point out was that the comparatively small amount that we should want to borrow—two millions to three millions—we could raise on fairly reasonable terms; but if you have to make the whole thing into a trust, and raise not only these two or three millions, but also the amount necessary to buy up the existing docks—at least thirty millions—would you be able to raise that thirty millions as cheaply as we could raise our two millions or three millions without having the support of the rates?

5650. But taking the raising of the necessary money for your purposes, you could not raise it at anything like 4 per cent. over the whole capital, because a great part of it must be share capital, and the rest debentures?—We should raise some of it as preference capital. These powers are to put us into a better financial position, so as to facilitate our object.

5651. You mean if you get the increased power of charging?—Yes. You must remember that without the increased powers given us by Parliament we have already our unexhausted powers of charging. If we put up our dues 6d. there is £100,000 at once.

5652. There is one other point which I did not quite understand, though I dare say it is quite clear in your mind. You spoke about the North American trade, and you said approximately a million and a half tons is dealt with under those particular conditions of landing?—In 1883 the total tonnage entering from North American and Canadian ports was 683,000 tons; in 1899 it had increased to 1,497,000 tons.

5653. All that is landed on the quay, is it not?—Entirely, with the exception of grain, which is delivered overside to craft.

5654. Then, legally speaking, you could charge for the use of those quays?—Certainly, we could.

5655. And you could also charge the barges that come and take that cargo away?—That is so.

5656. Then what stops your so charging?—Simply because it would upset the whole trade. As I have said, if you did that the ship would probably try to deliver more and more overside, and that would make the work of the ship slower, and make London a still more undesirable port. The rapidity of the despatch which the Atlantic Transport Company have, arises from the fact that they do put everything on the quay.

5657. Under the conditions of the North American trade the shipowner has done his work when he puts the cargo on the quay?—Yes, but the shipowner, under the North American bill of lading, by his bill of lading, is entitled to make a charge for doing that, and there is a considerable amount of profit hanging on to that, so that the shipowner is anxious to put it on the quay.

See 6254-78.

5658. Then being on the quay you can charge for it?—But by his bill of lading he has to deliver it so that any charge we made would be against the shipowner, not against the goods.

5659. Your charge then would be against the shipowner?—Yes.

5660. And that is what you say would upset the trade?—Yes, certainly it would. It would be against the shipowner, not against the goods.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) My Lord, might I make an application? This witness has put before the Commission a large number of figures which are in appendices. Many of us have not had an opportunity of seeing them, and have not read the figures. They were not read out to the Commission fully, and if there is to be any effective cross-examination it is essential that we should see those figures first.

(*Chairman.*) I think you will have an opportunity. You will have them detailed. They will be in the notes to-morrow.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I am told we shall not be able to get the notes to-morrow.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) It is suggested that the cross-

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examination of this witness might be deferred if you thought it was necessary, until this day week. All this is fresh matter to us, and certainly so far as the lightermen are concerned a great many suggestions have been made which want to be looked into. If I am to be allowed to cross-examine, and am to cross-examine shortly, I should like to have two or three days in which to get it up.

(*Chairman.*) I think you will find that the matter will take care of itself, because the Commissioners have still to ask the witness a good many questions, and then there will be the examination by the learned counsel representing the dock company. I do not think the cross-examination will take place before this day week.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I am told by my friend Mr. Wallace that his examination will be very short.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I was going to suggest to your Lordship that probably it would be more convenient if I examined in chief as shortly as possible. There will be three other witnesses from the dock company. What I was going to say is this: it is most important that whoever is here for the dock company should have full time for the re-examination after we have heard what has been put in cross-examination. That is very important from my point of view.

(*Chairman.*) Would it be more convenient to you if we were to take another dock company's witness before the cross-examination of Mr. Scott takes place?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) It would be very much better, my Lord. Then the cross-examination will stand over until this day week?

(*Chairman.*) Till at least this day week.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) There will be the evidence of Mr. Hardy, the manager, Mr. Baggallay, the engineer, and Mr. Broodbank.

(*Chairman.*) As far as the evidence of Mr. Broodbank is concerned I do not think we shall feel ourselves in a position to take any evidence as to foreign ports which may be second-hand.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I think your Lordship will find when the time comes that it is not really second-hand at all. He has been and made personal inquiries throughout.

(*Witness.*) Might I mention that even in our poverty it has always been our practice to charge a very considerable amount of our expenditure on new works to revenue, and with an improved income we shall undoubtedly continue the same policy.

5661. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) That all appears on the tables, does it not?—Yes. Recalled 5662.

(Adjourned to Wednesday next, May 8, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

Wednesday, 8th May, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. Lord REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Docks Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. K. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES CATER SCOTT recalled and further examined. *Mr. C. J. C. Scott.* 8 May 1901.

5662. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to add anything to what you said on the last occasion?—At the close of my evidence on Monday, Sir John Wolfe-Barry asked me a question as to what my company proposed to do in the way of improving the docks and their equipment for the purpose of giving extra facilities to the trade of the port, if we receive increased income coming from charges levied on barges and goods. I am afraid that at the moment I did not quite appreciate the bearing of Sir John Wolfe-Barry's question, and also coming after four hours of examination, I was perhaps a little tired, and I mixed up to a certain extent the works which we are contemplating now, and in respect to which we have applied for Parliamentary powers, and those works which under our present powers we are able to carry out without making application to Parliament. There have been a great many things which we have discussed very fully, and at times we have done more than discuss them, which we consider necessary for the advantage of the port. If you will give me your permission I propose to supplement what I then said by stating what some of these extra works are. I would like to say, however, that I could not pledge myself to-day to say that we are going to deal with all these various items, some of which may be varied of course as time goes on. But with your permission I would like to mention some few of them. They are all important works, and although each separate item may not be of very large amount, the total would come to something very considerable. With your permision I will take them dock by dock. First of all I refer to the London Dock. At the present moment all the business of the London Dock is worked through the Shadwell Basin. Vessels can get into the Shadwell Basin, but are then stopped by a cut from getting up into the main dock. We have had in contemplation the formation of a new entrance where the Hermitage entrance is now, but of course that is a matter involving considerable expense, and at present as our finances go, it is quite out of the question. Then when I go further down the river I come to the West India Dock. There we have two docks, the export dock and the import dock. The import dock by the erection of a quay along the north side, we have made available for ships of very considerable size, but to make that dock still more valuable, it requires further dredging, and that we are now discussing and will carry out. Then I come to the export dock. By the expenditure of a certain amount of money we can make that dock a very much more valuable property than it is at present. We have gone so far as to instruct our engineer some four or five years ago, or even more, to get out plans showing how this should be done, and also to prepare estimates. The estimates came to something like £100,000, but I think probably before the work will be complete it will be nearer £150,000. That work has not been carried out because in our present financial condition we do not see our way to do it. Then I come to the Victoria Dock. Underneath the passage between the Victoria Dock and the Albert Dock, is a railway tunnel. The normal depth of water at the dock over the tunnel, is only some 24 ft., and of course it is impossible to increase that, but when you get across that tunnel, you could increase the depth of the dock very materially, and we have discussed from time to time the advisability of making a new entrance to the Victoria Dock, so that vessels coming in at the western end

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would be able to get into deep water. Then in the Victoria dock we are to-day erecting grain silos with the most modern machinery. The amount we are spending over that, to begin with, is some £22,000, but if that is successful (and we are advised by the people who are thoroughly acquainted with the trade that it will be successful), then the expenditure on those grain silos will certainly not be limited to an amount of £22,000, but I think £100,000 may very easily be spent. Then also in the Victoria Dock, which is the centre of our refrigerated meat business, we are seriously considering the question of putting up more accommodation for frozen meat. In the docks to-day our accommodation amounts to something like 500,000 carcases, and by the way that trade is developing, we believe that is not sufficient. But here again we are practically stopped by the question of ways and means. Then I come to the Albert Dock. I might mention perhaps here that in the new dock we propose a system of barge ponds. I believe in dock construction that will be something quite novel, and it will give to barges all the facilities for which shipowners, bargeowners, and wharfingers are asking. If we find that meets the demands of the trade, we have drawn our plans so that on the south side of the Albert Dock we can also carry that out. That would be a very large expenditure; it is impossible for me at the moment to say how much, but it would certainly be a large expenditure, and it is possible that for that we might have to go to Parliament for further borrowing powers. Then in the East India Dock we would wish to make a new connection between the basin and import dock. If that were done the import dock would become of very great value, far more value than it is at present to the Port of London. I think I am right in saying that as far back as ten years ago we got out estimates for this expenditure, which roughly speaking came to £100,000, but we felt at the moment that was not within our powers to carry out, again undoubtedly owing to financial means. Then at Tilbury Dock, last year I was down there with the President of the Atlantic Transport Company which Company brings more tonnage into the Port of London than any other line, and I gave him a plan of the side of one of the docks which is now occupied by his business. That plan showed berths for four ships which they use now, and at my request he sent out that plan to New York so that their engineer in New York might draw on that plan his suggestions of working it with the most improved labour-saving machinery. I saw Mr. Baker, the President of the Atlantic Transport Company, one day last week, and he told me that he hoped very soon to let me have those plans. When we receive those plans we will go into this question of dealing with this trade in the most economical way but there again the financial question will crop up of course. There are other matters too, generally, in the docks which require attention. For instance, with the great increase in the size of ships, the old-fashioned tugs are no longer what we want. Sir Thomas Sutherland, I think, described them as little better than Noah's Arks, though I do not think that is quite correct. We have in the course of the present year ordered two new tugs, but if we could see our way clearly in respect of the financial means, we would certainly at once order more. Then there is undoubtedly from time to time, to meet the very varying and growing demands of the trade, a necessity for more equipment. I do not say more cranes, because our cranes even now are not anything like fully occupied, and we can show that all the very large number of cranes that we have in the docks, taking them all round, are not occupied for half of the time. The shipowners require them to be there, and if we wished to move them they would object to it, because they may want them, but at the same time they are not occupied for six months out of the twelve in the year. But we have to keep them there. Of course we are only paid for the time they are really worked by the shipowners. Then there is another matter in connection with barges. If we get this charge for barges we undoubtedly would then be in the position that the facilities which we give now voluntarily, because we consider they are necessary for the trade of the Port, would devolve upon us as a duty, and I think the haulage that we give the barges now by our hydraulic appliances and by our men we should then certainly have to give as a matter of right. With that would also come the necessity for increased dredging. At the present moment we spend on an average something like £34,000 a year on dredging, but with this increased business more dredging would be necessary, and it will certainly in the future be necessary to keep our docks dredged down to their maximum depth. That at once means more expenditure, because it is very clear that if you are able to allow the water when it gets in to deposit its mud, and that mud becomes firmly solid before you lift it, it is much more economical to dredge mud that is fairly solid than mud which is simply to a great extent slush. In the one case you are dredging almost all solid matter, and in the other case you are dredging a good deal of water.

5663. Can you give us any estimate of the additional sum which would have to be spent in dredging?—I do not know whether Mr. Baggallay could give it to you. I should not like to speak off-hand, but it might be certainly a very considerable amount. See 6744.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I might inform the Commissioners that the engineer will be better able perhaps to give those figures.

(*Chairman.*) We shall have the opportunity of hearing him.

(*Witness.*) These are matters which would come before us if we were in a proper financial position, and would be carried out by us as necessity arose. But looming before us in the distance we see a very much bigger matter, for which we should require Parliamentary sanction. It is impossible for me or for anyone else to say when that will come, but that is another dock extension at Tilbury. Some years ago people laughed at Tilbury, and said Tilbury was a white elephant, and that it would never be any good. To-day we find that Tilbury is practically full, and if the trade of London goes on developing in the coming ten years, as it has done in the past, I am perfectly certain that it will be necessary to take into consideration an extension of Tilbury Dock as large as that of the Albert Dock, which we now contemplate. We have gone into this matter very carefully; we have drawn out plans and we have had estimates for it, but of course that matter must stand over for the future until we find it is absolutely necessary. In our present position an extension of the Albert Dock is quite the outside of what we can see our way to do. That is all I wish to say by way of supplementing my answer to Sir John Wolfe-Barry on Monday last; but I wish to point out that these questions are matters which are constantly arising before us, and that we deal with them as we can. During the first four months of this year I may mention that we have authorised expenditure on new works necessary for the Port to the extent of £60,000. All that expenditure, I believe I am correct in saying, we charge to revenue, because our policy is whenever we can not to burden the capital, but to charge to revenue. We do it by spreading it over a certain number of years, according as we think the works are of a more or less permanent character, and also consider to a certain extent whether they are likely to be very remunerative. Mr. Hardy reminds me that there is yet another question we have had before us for, I think, some seven or eight years, and that is the question of sorting sheds for this frozen meat trade, which is assuming gigantic proportions. At the present moment the ships carrying frozen meat discharge their cargo either alongside our frozen meat sheds or else at the berths appropriated to their particular business. The shipowners for a long time have been very desirous, and some of the large meat importers have also been desirous, that we should provide refrigerating sheds; that is to say, not sheds where we should keep the temperature down as low as in our meat storing sheds, but sheds that would be cool and where the meat on being discharged from the ship would go directly into a cool atmosphere, and not suffer from being exposed to the weather and sun upon the quay. This would involve a very large expenditure, because you will at once see it will not answer the needs of the trade to put such a shed in one dock only; you would probably have to have such a shed at Tilbury, at the West India Dock, and at the Albert and Victoria Docks. That is entirely hung up on the money question. That is all I wish to say in supplement to what I said on the last occasion.

5664. You mentioned just now that one-half of your hydraulic cranes were very often unoccupied?—Yes.

5665. Let me refer you to question 4848 in the evidence of Mr. Alfred Jones, who told us that he considered London was at a disadvantage compared with other ports in the matter of hydraulic machinery. Do you agree with that?—Most distinctly not. My reason for saying that I do not think so is this. I take a return of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, where

they show they have 95 hydraulic cranes of all sorts. We in London have 576. But where the question comes in is this; in Liverpool, steamship owners practically use their own winches and cranes for doing their own discharging; they very rarely ask the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to give them cranes. In London we have always given them cranes. That has arisen in this way; in the old days, when the London and St. Katharine Dock Company and the East and West India Dock Company were in great competition, our dock authority tried to see what facilities they could give to the shipowners. But there the fact remains that in Liverpool to-day of hydraulic cranes of all kinds—they have under 100 and we have nearly 600—comparing those cranes, crane for crane, London has nothing to be ashamed of. I might remind your Lordship that Mr. Jones said he had only had experience of the Millwall Dock. I am only speaking now for the London and India Docks.

5666. At Question 4843 he complained of the continued breaking down of the hydraulic cranes, which put them to considerable loss?—That must have been at Millwall. Of course, I admit at once that where you have a great amount of machinery like this, sometimes machinery will get out of order, but we are always watching it, and we have very few complaints. I do not say that we have no complaints; sometimes a crane will break down at an unfortunate time, but taking them all round our cranes work very well indeed; and they do not pay us; at the rates we charge they are not remunerative.

See 6423-6.

5667. Will you tell us your opinion with regard to the requisite depth of channel in the river?—That is perhaps rather a question for a shipowner, but I should say that coming up to the Albert Dock a depth of 30ft. would certainly be sufficient for all requirements; I am not quite sure that that might not be in excess. What I think you do want for vessels coming up is some sort of places where they can lay-to, so that if a vessel coming up the river gets to the dock at a time when she cannot dock, she should be able to lie somewhere in safety until the next tide, and not have to go down the river and lie at Gravesend. Of course, you must consider in all these questions your limits. Take the Eastern trade, for instance; you are limited by the depth of the Suez Canal. The effectual depth of the Suez Canal is certainly not in excess of 26ft. Then when you hear of all these big vessels coming and how they load in some ports, there are really very few ports where they can load to anything like these great depths. Take the Argentine ports, where a very large business is done to-day, vessels cannot load down to anything like that there, and I think it is almost practically impossible for them ever to do so. Mr. Baggallay, our engineer, has had very considerable experience out there, and he could give you from his own positive knowledge what he believes is the greatest depth that vessels could load down to there. Even taking New York, a vessel coming across from New York, I suppose, will lighten on the voyage by burning her coal certainly 18 inches, possibly 2 feet. I do not think vessels coming from New York can load to more than 32 feet there, which would mean that when they got here their maximum draught would be only some 30 feet. So if you take practically all the ports of the world, with very few exceptions, it is not possible for these vessels to load down to these gigantic draughts. There are some exceptions, but there are very few.

5668. Your remark, I suppose, would refer less to the trade, which you have told us yourself has most increased, which is the North Atlantic trade?—Certainly.

5669. That is the trade which shows the greatest increase?—That is the trade which shows the greatest increase, and that is the trade which we hope gradually to accommodate.

5670. And it would be less affected than others by limitations of depth?—Certainly.

5671. Looking at your book on rates of shipping we notice that vessels laden with phosphate of guano, nitrate of soda, bones, or bone ash, are charged rent from date of entry instead of four weeks from date of entry as in other cases. Can you tell us how that is?—They do not load out at all, so that there is no necessity to give them the extra time. As a matter of fact, we do not get any of them; they do not come to us.

5672. It is purely theoretical then?—It is purely theoretical, we do not have them.

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5673. Will you tell us whether an agreement has been entered into between the London and India Docks Company and the North Atlantic Steamship Company making it obligatory under their bills of lading for shippers forwarding goods by the North Atlantic line to load all the goods on the quay of the dock?—No, there is no such agreement and there never has been.

5674. Do the companies forfeit the right of free delivery over-side?—Distinctly not, except so far as they arrange by their bill of lading. They arrange by their bill of lading that everything shall be put on the quay, and they usually do it. But that is a matter arranged between the companies and the shipper.

See 9595-6.

5675. Have you entered into any agreement with any wharfingers to the effect that neither the company nor the wharfingers shall charge less than certain specified prices for certain things?—Yes, we have certain agreements in that way. I will tell you what they are. There is a wine and spirit agreement of the 19th November, 1899; there are general produce agreements of the 27th December, 1839, and the 31st October, 1893, and a memorandum of the 5th July, 1899. There are granary keepers' agreements of the 13th May and 20th November, 1890; there is a tea clearing house agreement as revised 2nd October, 1899; there are frozen meat and produce agreements of 25th January, 1899, and 22nd May, 1900. Most of these agreements were entered into after the great dock strike, when we thought it was necessary, in order to recoup advance in wages, to raise our charges. Up to that time there had been all sorts of discounts, and we found that the only way by which it would be possible for us to establish anything like uniformity of rates would be to bring the principal warehouses into line with ourselves. This was done. There is no secret about it; it is generally known.

5676. Do these agreements prevent free competition in the port?—Oh, no, because there are a great many people outside the agreements. In tea practically it would prevent competition, but then the buyers of tea are parties to this, because, to meet the wishes of buyers and to facilitate their business, we established a tea clearing house, and that was of such convenience to the buyers that the buyers said: "If you will do this we will undertake not to buy tea in any warehouses that are not members of the Clearing House." In the old days the buyers had to send round clerks to all the different tea warehouses. When the Tea Clearing House was established it was a centre through which all their work was done.

5677. Have you agreements with any steamship companies whereby the companies are afforded certain positions and wharf space in the docks?—Yes.

5678. And are accorded the right to do their own labour?—Yes, there are generally two sets of agreements; we have agreements for appropriated berths similar to what they have in Liverpool; they are all terminable at three months' notice. Steamers take certain specified spaces; within that space they do their own work and they use the quay there as a portion of the ship's deck, the ship's deck being now absolutely impossible for sorting cargo. Then we have another agreement for a ship that wants temporary accommodation. Take the case of a tramp steamer which comes to London perhaps one voyage, and goes to Liverpool or Antwerp or some other port another voyage. When the owner of that ship comes to London, or through his agents, he can arrange to have an appropriated berth for a shorter period, the period that he requires. Then further we have certain agreements with lines which I have already mentioned to you. Take the Clyde line from Glasgow, where we let them a certain portion of the St. Katharine Dock. That gives them the right to use the quay and a portion of the warehouse, and we also commute the dues payable on their ships, so that by paying a lump sum per annum they have the right to bring in a certain amount of tonnage, and to do their work there. We have a similar arrangement with the Argo, which is a German line. Then at Tilbury we have arrangements with another German line and an Ostend line, which comes in every other day, and there are a good many small lines which all have their agreements in that way, but I think all those agreements are all very largely to the advantage of the trade. A good many of these lines used to come into the river, but they prefer to come into our docks and pay these charges rather than discharge in the river. Mr. Hardy reminds me that Mr. Cattarns, who was at one time Manager of the General

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C. Steam Navigation Company, said that these agreements were distinctly an advantage to the trade.

5679. Have you any agreement with large importers of goods to allow them any special discount beyond the rates published in the Rate Book?—I should like to say a little on that. Our warehouse business amounts to £957,000 in the course of a year. We do make special allowances to certain firms to the extent of £2,000 a year. Those are allowances and discounts which are not published in our books. In reference to that I should like to say, that £1,000 of that £2,000 is in one particular trade where all the firms in that particular trade get a further discount. That accounts for £1,000, and of the remaining £1,000 something like £400 goes to another firm who require their business worked in a particular way. It is, of course, a discount, but there are different circumstances in connection with their business.

5680. Are those discounts allowed on the export or import trade?—I am speaking of the import trade now exclusively.

See 6646-49

5681. Are there any allowed for the export trade?—Yes. Out of our export business of £176,000 there are special discounts allowed of £1,700. Those special discounts are practically not allowed to the merchants, but they are allowed to the agents who take charge of the business for the merchants, and it is really not so much in the form of a discount as a sort of rebate to those agents for bringing their business to us.

5682. May we take it that those two sums are the only discounts you do allow?—Yes.

5683. On both the export and the import?—I have not included at all the railway companies, because we give all the railway companies the same terms, and they have special rates, and it is to the interest of the port that it should be so, because you will see that supposing a railway company is serving a town—I take Birmingham as an instance—suppose a railway company is serving Birmingham to Liverpool and Birmingham to London; if we were to exact our full export rates on the trade coming from Birmingham, it might mean that the trade would be diverted to Liverpool. We are in competition with Liverpool and we have to do it. All the railway companies get a reduction in the export rate.

5684. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Are you debarred from giving any railway company any preferential treatment by any statute?—One railway company as against another, do you mean?

5685. Yes.—Certainly we are. We are under a very strong clause, we cannot give any preferential treatment, and all the discounts that I have named to you both for the import trade and the export trade and the railway companies are all well within what we are authorised to do by our Acts of Parliament; we are not transgressing any of our clauses.

5686. Since your Acts of Parliament, Acts of Parliament have been passed giving certain railway companies access to the docks?—Yes.

5687. Does the same condition apply in those cases?—They all have the same discount. The clause in our Act compels us to give the same terms to everybody under the same conditions. Of course, with varying conditions you can have varying terms.

5688. (*Chairman.*) Have you any other agreements of a similar character to those to which I have referred?—In discount?

5689. Not specially in discount, but any?—Of course, our whole business to a certain extent is worked on the agreements.

5690. I would like to ask you whether you have any agreements which afford one set of persons an advantage in preference to another set of persons?—No, except so far as it allows by our Acts of Parliament where the different conditions warrant a difference of treatment.

5691. May we ask you to put in copies of the agreements you have referred to in your evidence?—Personally I have no objection whatever to do it. But a good many of these agreements concern other people as well. Take, for instance, the wharfingers' agreements; they are all parties to these, and it would be to a certain extent disclosing our business to the public.

5692. You can give us the dates?—Yes, I can give you the dates, and I shall be perfectly willing to assist as far as I can. Some of those agreements certainly I could put in, if you would not mind, without disclosing the actual names.

5693. Rather than do that, I think if you mentioned the dates and particulars it would be better?—I have given you the dates of the wharfingers' agreements. I could not give you the dates of the shipowners' agreements, but I can just say that it is a regular printed form for the letting of berths. I can put in a copy of that at once.

5694. The Commission will be satisfied if you will assure us those are all the agreements that you have?—Yes.

5695. You have mentioned them all?—Yes, I have certainly mentioned them so far as I know, and since you were kind enough to instruct us that this question would be gone into I have got all the information I can. I have seen different people about it and we have threshed it out, so as to get everything.

5696. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) With regard to those works that you mentioned this morning as being in contemplation, are those works which you are prepared to come under obligation to construct provided you get the relief you seek?—Some of these most distinctly. There are others where there might be difficulties. Take the new entrance to the London Docks, for instance. I am not quite sure, in my own mind, whether the expense would warrant that. My manager does not quite go with me, but I have a little hesitation about it. But when you come to the other works, such as a connection between the East India Dock basin and the Import Dock of the East India Dock and the West India Dock and the refrigerating sheds and such like, we certainly are prepared to do it; in fact, we should have done it a long time ago if we had seen our way to the means.

5697. It would be well that you should define specifically what you are prepared to come under obligation to do provided you receive the relief that you ask for? Of course, you would have to have time?—If you would kindly leave it over until next week I would put in a statement showing exactly what we will undertake to do.

See 6603-12.

5698. I see that in your evidence the other day you communicated an opinion that the size of the barges might be indefinitely increased, and they might benefit by the free water clause?—Yes.

See 5581.

5699. I think you said some barges of 1,000 tons might avail themselves of it without your being able to prevent them?—Certainly.

5700. I see the definition clause is extremely wide—It says "Lighters, barges or craft." Have you ever had occasion to test the question legally as to what craft are embraced by that term?—Yes, I think we may say that we have. I think there was a case which the Chamber of Commerce mentioned and they took credit to themselves for having taken up the case. There the question was raised, but was not argued because it was said it was useless for us to argue it; the scope of the clause was so wide that it covered everything.

See 6358-66.

5701. It was not a decided case, but you gave way on advice?—We had to. It was decided against us. We did not argue it; we were told it was useless.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Might I assist Mr. Lyttleton in regard to this? I was Counsel in the case and you will find a report of it in Appendix No. 9 of the 4th day. It was a sailing barge that came from outside the Port of London as at present constituted. The question was raised, in fact, on the pleadings whether a sailing barge was a craft within the meaning of the section? With regard to the advice that was given to Mr. Scott, if you will forgive my saying so, it was not only my advice, but there was other advice.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I think we have had it mentioned in the evidence.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Yes.

(*Witness.*) Independently of that, we have been advised that size has nothing to do with it. As to-day you have big ocean steamers of five thousand and more tons without any mast, and simply propelled by steam, I do not see very much difference between them and barges of 1,000 tons.

5702. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I was not challenging it at all; I only wanted to know whether you had actually had a decision on the point. I understood from your historical evidence that the free water clause was a provision by which the barge owners were compensated?—To a certain extent, certainly.

5703. There is a reference in your evidence to a

See 5581-2. witness who spoke to a sale of lighters for £20 which had cost him £800 or £900. This same witness was compensated to the extent of £3,327 for the loss of his business occasioned by the institution of docks?—Yes.

5704. Is that a simple case of compensation accorded to barge-owners and lightermen in addition to the privilege which they obtained by the exemption clause, or is it an exceptional case?—They were all compensated. That was included in the amount given variously as £1,000,000 and £1,600,000.

5705. It occurs to me that this gentleman might have been a wharfinger as well as a lighterman?—That is quite possible.

5706. And that the compensation was in respect of his wharfinger business, and not in respect of his lighter business?—Possibly.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I may say that I have the evidence of Mr. Drinkald before me. He states that to within the last two and a half years he had been a lighterman, but that he was a wharfinger as well.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Then so far as that goes it is ambiguous. It might be one way or the other.

5707. But have you anything you can point to definitively showing that the barge-owners obtained compensation in cash as well as the privileges of the exemption clause. If you have it would be a part of the case, that I should like to hear?—What I understand you want to know is whether lightermen, *qua* lightermen, received actual money compensation.

5708. Yes. I infer from this paragraph that as a lighterman he received a large compensation, and, of course, as a lighterman he would receive the benefit of the free water clause. However, it may be looked into?—I will try to find it. See 6070.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) If your Lordship has a copy of the Report you will see that Mr. John Drinkald, who is mentioned, described himself as a shipowner and lighterman. He does not say that in fact he is a wharfinger at all.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) If you read the whole of his answer to the second question it shows.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) "Till within the last two and a half years I have been a wharfinger"; but he was speaking as a lighterman.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That means he was a wharfinger between the Act of 1800 and 1823, which is the time he was speaking of. He had been a wharfinger in that time. Of course the compensation to him as wharfinger or lighterman was at the date of the Dock Company's Act, which was in 1800 or 1803.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) That may or may not have been. It does not appear when the compensation was actually assessed. And it would not have been assessed at the beginning, because, of course, the docks were not opened at first.

5709. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) However, Mr. Scott, if you can get anything more specific you will do so?—If I can I will.

5710. You will see at once the inference to be drawn from this paragraph is not satisfactory?—I agree with you at once. From that paragraph I drew the inference that that amount was compensation for his business as barge-owner. I admit that at once.

5711. He being a wharfinger it may have been for that?—Yes. I am informed that this information came from the Treasury. The question was, what compensation was paid to lightermen, and this came from the Treasury in answer.

5712. That quite absolves you, but it does not get quite final proof of the matter. I do not want to amplify it; we understand the case that you make as regards the large expenditure of capital and so forth that you made in consequence of your Acts. Now, in consequence of the free water clause, did warehousemen also embark a large capital in the erection of large wharves and warehouses as distinct from the docks in this hundred years—as a matter of history?—Certainly.

5713. I think the point of Sir John Wolfe-Barry's question the other day was this. If you get a relief from the burden of the free water clause because you have spent large sums of money which have been rendered unproductive, would you not by having that done, be enabled to institute a much sharper competition with warehousemen?—Undoubtedly we should have the benefit of a certain toll which would be levied on all goods coming into the docks. Unless the wharfingers put up their rates, I will take it that will have to come out of their pockets. They could not put up their rates without us. If we put up our rates they could put up their rates, but not without. At the present moment it works like this. We provide the wharf accommodation, and for our warehousing business we make a charge. That includes collection from the ship's side and lightering from the ship's side to the warehouse, which is what wharfingers do. But whilst our rate has to cover the cost to us of that water accommodation, the wharfinger, who charges the same rate in many cases and sometimes the same rate less a discount, has nothing whatever to pay for it. So that to-day he is charging practically the same sum for services nominally the same as we render, but really he does not render the same service because he does not provide any water accommodation.

5714. You render gratuitously the services to the barges, and the barges supply the wharfinger, but you only charge one rate for those services, which exclude all the services that you render for the barges?—Precisely.

5715. But if on the basis of the free water clause a large sum of money has been spent by the wharfingers and by the warehousemen, this abolition would render that expenditure fruitless?—It could not do that. We do practically, I suppose, one-third of the warehousing business, and we could not take the whole of the warehousing business at all; it would be impossible for us, so that there must always be a very large amount of warehousing business going outside. Then, I think, you must remember there is a very important thing that since the free water privilege a different class of business has grown up altogether. Take along the river. An enormous number of people have their own private warehouses, where they do not warehouse for the public at all; it is simply their own trade, and they have all that benefit. The railway companies send their barges into the docks. They take the trade away from us; they pay nothing for it; in fact, I think it is a very unfair competition. It is a matter we are trying to settle now before the Railway Commissioners that the railway companies can send in their barges and charge lower rates and pay nothing for our water.

5716. You see in connection with that question, that is to say the result of the proposed change, to enable you to compete with other persons more sharply, it at once becomes relevant to see what you will propose to do or what obligations you will propose to come under in consideration of that change?—I will give you an instance. We are prepared in this new dock, as I said just now, to institute a system of barge ponds, which would enable the goods to be taken from the ship and delivered straight to the barge very much more rapidly. We have the plans drawn up, and we contemplate applying that to the Albert Dock.

5717. You need not trouble to go into details with regard to that, because you have promised that you will give us a statement of what you propose to do in the event of the relief being granted?—Certainly, but do not think for a moment that I do not see all the difficulties of the question.

5718. I have no doubt you do?—Nobody realises more than I do the difficulties which surround the question on every side.

5719. Speaking for myself, I only wanted your assistance in trying to meet some of them. You have spoken of the great congestion of traffic owing to the barges in the docks. I suppose you have power to regulate the traffic under your Acts?—We have the power, but it is a power that it is almost impossible to exercise.

5720. Why?—Because all we can do to regulate traffic like that is to put a man on board a barge and to navigate it, and to charge the owner with the expense. When you have some hundreds of barges there, and you have to put a man on each barge, it is almost impossible to do it. We should have to keep an enormous staff to do it, and we could never get back the cost.

5721. Does your power to regulate traffic extend to regulating the admittance of barges into the dock?—We claim so most distinctly, but supposing we said: "We are going to regulate the admittance of barges now, and we will only let you come in in such-and-such an order, and go out in such-and-such an order," a great many barges could not go in and out, and we should See 6368-84.

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bring the trade of the port to a stand-still, or we should have such a congestion of barges at the entrances of our docks that we should never get the ships in and out.

5722. Your case is not that you will not use those powers, but that you cannot use them?—Without interfering very seriously with the trade. I will give you an instance. Barges have no business whatever at the present moment to moor inside our privileged water, and they not only do moor there but they moor right in the mouth of our entrance. A little time ago matters were becoming so serious that we thought we would take steps to see what our rights were, and it was shown at once that we had the right to do that. But at once there was a great uproar amongst the barges, and whilst the Commission was sitting we said: "Well, the thing has gone on so long, do not do anything to disturb the custom; we do not want to upset the trade"; we have a right undoubtedly to say to a barge: "You shall not moor within our privileged water." If we enforced that I think it would be very difficult for a barge to get into a dock or to get out of it.

5723. The fact of an uproar among the lightermen does not seem to me to be very conclusive upon the matter. If it is for the regulation of the docks, if it is for the proper carrying on of the business that you are bound to carry on, I do not see that such an uproar should have any effect upon you?—May I read a bye-law that we made for the control of barges. It is this: "If any vessel, barge, lighter, craft, or other vessel, or any float of timber shall be adrift or be not properly and securely moored, and made fast within the docks, otherwise than by the proved negligence or wilful act or default of those employed by the Joint Committee, the master or other person in charge thereof, or the owner or owners thereof shall be liable to a penalty of £5." During the lightermen's strike we had a case where a great many of these lighters were cast adrift. We believe it was done intentionally by some of the people who were out on strike. The result of these lighters being adrift was that one of the P. and O. steamers got blocked and so could not get out, and so lost the tide. The P. and O. Company naturally felt very much aggrieved—I felt for them very much—and they threatened us with all sorts of penalties for this. We thought it was getting so serious that we then gave the barge owners notice, I think it was a fortnight's notice, and after that we said we should enforce this bye-law rigorously against them. They still went on, and the thing was just as bad. We then tried to enforce the bye-law, but although this bye-law was approved by a judge, I believe, and also by the Board of Trade, when we got before the magistrate the magistrate declined to convict. Mr. Wallace was our Counsel in the case, and he will correct me if I am wrong. The magistrate said that we must prove that these things were insecurely moored, or that they were cast adrift by somebody, and that the bye-law also was unreasonable.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) That, of course, you could have tested.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Might I assist the Commission upon the last point as Mr. Scott has referred to me? He has stated perfectly correctly as far as he has gone, but I think one of the reasons was (the learned Counsel who was against me before the magistrate can correct me if I am wrong) that the bye-law really went further than the Act of Parliament of 1882 under which Tilbury Dock was made, and the effect of that was that the bye-law transgressed the Act of Parliament, in the magistrate's opinion, and he thought it was bad. The power given by the Act of Parliament was not so extensive as the power claimed by the bye-law, in the magistrate's opinion. I ought also to add that we have got a case stated by the magistrate, and I suppose it is down for hearing in the ordinary course of justice.

5724. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) The point I really wish to be clear upon is whether you refrained from using the power which you undoubtedly had because you did not think you were strong enough to use it, or because it was in point of fact nugatory in its results?—I should think a little of both. It would be almost impossible for us with the enormous number of barges—I suppose taking the year through there are perhaps 2,000 barges in our docks at one time. The greater part of these are practically left unattended.

5725. We have heard of course of the Liverpool Bill of Lading?—Yes.

5726. We have heard of the North American Line successfully adopting that Bill of Lading. What was the power which enabled them to secure this advantage for themselves as contra-distinguished from the other shipowners of the port?—Combination. They combined and the reason why the other lines have not been able to do it is that they did not combine.

5727. Do you think that a little pressure from your side might induce other shipowners to obtain a similar advantage for themselves. I will define what I mean by "pressure." We understand that if the ship unloads the cargo upon the quay only temporarily and then the barge takes it away, you have power to make a charge?—Certainly, both on the goods and on the barge.

5728. You do not make either one or the other?—No.

5729. The reason being because you fear that charge would fall upon the shipowner as it would do at present according to the custom of the port?—Yes.

5730. The custom of the port can of course be abrogated by special agreement?—Yes.

5731. And has been so in the case of the North American Line?—Yes.

5732. Supposing that you charged that sum which would fall in the first instance upon the shipowner, do you not think that that might be a pressure which would induce him to at any rate agitate for the Liverpool Bill of Lading?—In 1896 when we tried to carry through this scheme, and when the scheme was drawn out with the approval of some of the largest shipowners, we did everything we could in the way of putting pressure on the shipowners to get them to carry it out.

5733. But you gave in upon the threat of a new dock. It seems to me that the docks——?—Want a little backbone.

5734. Exactly, in failing to use the powers which they undoubtedly had. Before you get fresh powers, it is always a good thing to see what you can do with your existing ones?—Some of my co-directors shared your view, and thought we ought to have stood fast. But we came to another opinion, and thought if we did this the burden would undoubtedly fall on the shipowner, and the shipowner would say: "I cannot afford to pay this charge, and I shall deliver everything I can overside." That would have meant great delay to the shipowner and great expense to the port.

5735. I think you pointed out in your admirably lucid statement how the discharge of big ships overside is a practical impossibility?—Yes.

5736. Therefore they have to come to the quay. You can then charge; it does occur to me that there is a screw there by which you might squeeze this payment that you want out of the people who ought to pay—the consignees—assuming that they ought to pay. However, you deliberated, and you thought you could not do it?—We did. I have a memorandum showing that the P. & O. Company now discharge direct overside 80 per cent.; that includes everything. What you say, remember, would not affect export goods at all. Eighty per cent. of the export goods now come into dock by craft and are delivered straight from the craft into the ship.

5737. I want instruction and information; I should like to have any reason you have for apparently having given way in a contest in which you had a good many cards in your hand?—Well, we went into the question very carefully indeed, and we considered, looking at the question all round, that it was not to our advantage to press the question. We knew all along when we raised that question that the Dock Companies were not strong enough to carry it. We believed, if we got the active support of the shipowners, we could carry it, because we should then have only to face the riverside opposition and the opposition of a great many merchants, because a great many merchants are largely interested in wharves, and they naturally would fight us on this. Well, we thought, if we can carry the shipowners with us, we can manage the rest of the opposition, but if we are going to stand up by ourselves against riverside interests, shipowners, merchants, the Chamber of Commerce, and everybody, I do not see exactly where we should be.

5738. Even though you were so far masters of the situation that you could legally impose the charge?—Undoubtedly we could legally.

5739. And although the experiment made by the North American Line largely increased the trade and greatly expedited the dispatch of the ship?,—Certainly.

5740. Therefore the trade increased and the shipowners benefited by a more rapid dispatch?—How it expedites the ship I could point out to you. I have a statement here. There was a White Star steamer, the "Afric," which came here from Australia with a large cargo consisting of a general cargo and frozen meat. She had to discharge 2,000 tons of general cargo, and about 1,300 tons of frozen meat in London. This frozen meat comes forward in innumerable small quantities, which all have to be sorted. The owners of the "Afric" said they could not afford to do this, and she went into Tilbury, and they arranged with us that they should deliver from the ship as fast as they could do it, only, we said, that as we had to work this out and sort it, we must put some limitation on the number of carcases per day. In the ordinary cases with such a cargo as that, I think I am quite safe in saying she would have been at least ten days in discharging, possibly a fortnight, or longer. As a matter of fact, although it was a mixed cargo (they had to take out a certain amount of Liverpool cargo so as to get at the London cargo, and re-stow it), she was not five days. She began on the first day at 8 a.m. and finished on the fifth day at 3 p.m., and the White Star Line expressed their complete satisfaction at the way in which the work was done, although they admitted it was not a fair test. This is right away from the American trade. That shows that when a ship will break away from the custom of the port, she can get much greater rapidity of discharge, and she saves an enormous amount of money. I went into this question very closely at the time, and, roughly, I estimated the "Afric," by the saving of time, saved something like £900 to £1,000.

5741. That seems rather to enforce the point I was endeavouring to make?—Quite.

5742. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have given us a return showing the estimated amounts of new stocks that will have to be issued by the amalgamated London and India Docks Company on the 1st January, 1901, to replace the existing issues of the separate companies and the Joint Committee. Has that financial operation been carried out?—Yes, that was carried out on the 1st January. This is how we stand to-day. The old companies, the London and St. Katharine Dock Company and the East and West India Dock Company have disappeared. The first column in that table, marked "Existing Issue," has gone.

See App., 16th Day, No. 13.

5743. You do not state against the first line—the Debentures, £247,325—the interest. Can you give me that?—They were varying amounts, generally something, I should think, from 3 to 3¼; possibly a very few at 3½.

5744. It is not a very large amount?—No. All that amount of £247,325 runs off within certainly the next four years, and by the Act of Parliament has to be paid off, and to find that money, we have either to use our Debenture Stock or our Preference.

5745. Perhaps you can give me in a word the total amount of interest that the concern at this moment has to bear for Debentures. If you cannot do that at the moment perhaps you will give it afterwards?—In round numbers, about £240,000 per annum.

5746. For Debentures and Debenture charges?—Yes.

5747. Can you give me the same sum for Preference?—In round numbers about £112,000.

5748. Then those two charges have to be met by your concern at the present moment, before you come to any dividend on stock?—Yes.

5749. You explained to us so clearly that I will not take you over the same ground, but I wish to ask you one question:—Is there any sum in the indebtedness or share capital of your concern now that arises in any way from a contribution from public funds?—No.

5750. Everything has been discharged and paid off with interest?—Everything. Of course one must speak from what one can find out; but we have carefully searched everywhere, and we cannot find a record of a single sixpence of public money in the concern.

5751. You have given us the detailed story in your evidence?—Yes. In my evidence on Monday I put in a minute, in which the Treasury stated that everything advanced to the Dock Companies, with interest, had been repaid.

See 5583.

5752. The Treasury is one thing and Mr. Scott is another; I wanted to get it from you. You are the chairman of the company; that is why I want to get it on the note. Now I turn to the Parliamentary aspect of the matter for a moment. Did you have a Bill before Parliament in 1855?—Yes.

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5753. Did the Bill come on for second reading on February 19th, 1855?—Yes.

5754. Was there a discussion in the House on it?—Yes.

5755. Did Mr. Bouverie, the then Chairman of Committees, interpose, and suggest it should go to a Select Committee in the ordinary way?—Yes.

5756. Then did Mr. Cardwell, the then President of the Board of Trade, interpose?—Yes.

5757. Did he say that although it was not generally the practice for Government to take part in discussions on the second reading of Private Bills, there were some circumstances that rendered it necessary that he should make a statement in this particular case?—Yes, he said that.

5758. We need not go through his speech; but really the vital part of his speech, I think, is in these words—I ask you whether he used this language—"There was at the same time an express enactment that no charge should be made for lighters or barges. There was, in fact, what was known in law as a complete dedication to the public of the newly-created water space in as far as lighters were concerned. Now I conceive that before a bargain of that kind is altered by the House, a very strong case should be made out by the parties seeking the alteration." Did he use those words?—Yes.

5759. Then the discussion was continued by various persons, with the result that the Bill was rejected by a vote of 249 against, and 26 for. Was not that so?—Yes.

5760. You suggested to us the other day, I think, that the Bill was not considered on its merits?—Yes.

5761. May I put it that that interposition of the then President of the Board of Trade, on behalf of the Government, was on the grounds of what we may describe as a Parliamentary bargain?—I do not quite follow.

5762. I cannot put it better than in the words that Mr. Cardwell used: "He interposed because the Government did not consider it a mere matter of private interest, of an ordinary public Bill, but a matter of high public policy." I am not wishing to put any words into your mouth. I do not wish to suggest any reasons; I am only asking you questions?—Do you not think that what you have been reading out and saying rather supports my contention, that the Bill was never discussed on its merits? The Government intervened, and said: "This is a matter of high public policy, and it cannot be altered unless strong cause is shown in favour of an alteration."

5763. I take your answer; I only want to get it?—I take it that the only place where you could have shown strong cause was in Committee, and the Bill never got to Committee at all; it was thrown out on Mr. Cardwell's intervening.

5764. By merits, you mean "details"?—Yes, you could only show the merits when you went into details.

5765. You mean really that the whole reasons for your concern coming within that clause of the Bill were not gone into?—No; they were not even disclosed.

5766. (*Mr Lyttelton.*) May I interrupt my hon. friend for a moment? I was asking a question with regard to Mr. Cardwell's speech, because it is not an accurate statement of the law. At that time there was not a complete dedication to the public of the newly-created water space. It is only a limited dedication?—I was going to take that point. I am not a lawyer, but I have it before me, and I was going to take that point presently.

5767. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I take it that that sums up your view of the debate of that day?—Yes.

5768. At all events, Parliament did reject that attempt by an enormous majority?—Yes.

5769. You have made no further Parliamentary application till when?—Last year, 1900.

5770. Then, again, the President of the Board of Trade intervened, and that is why we are here to-day?—That is why the Commission have got this very knotty question to deal with.

5771. I do not think you gave us the summary of the arguments advanced by the Joint Committee in support of their case for the repeal of the exemption

Mr. C. J. C. Scott. clause. I think it will be well if you give us that?—Certainly.

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(1) The whole history of the docks which shows them to be and to have been from the first a public benefit and necessity, and an incalculable saving to the revenue.

(2) The history of the wharfingers and warehousemen's businesses, which shows that when they first received the privilege of exemption it was in return for the compulsory diversion of business from their premises, that when the dock monopolies expired, the unimportance of these claims left them unnoticed either by the Dock Companies or the Government, but that when the expiry of the monopolies was followed by the extension of the legal quay and bonded warehouse system those clauses largely assisted to enable the wharfingers and warehousemen to compete with the docks on advantageous terms, and had therefore become both inapplicable and inequitable.

See 11793.

(3) The wholesale revolution that has taken place in the conditions of modern shipping by the introduction of steamers.

(4) The growing size and draught of steamers, and their growing numbers.

(5) The growing size of lighters themselves and their growing numbers.

(6) The growing tendency for steamers to bring goods into the docks for shipment overside into lighters with a view to delivery elsewhere, or to be taken into immediate consumption.

(7) The loss of business resulting to the docks through the development of free trade, and consequent diminution in the number of dutiable goods, and of bonded warehouses necessary for the accommodation of those that are left.

(8) The lowering of freight payable to the shipowners for the carriage of goods renders it inequitable to raise the shipping charges which would fall upon the shipowners, while the wharfingers, warehousemen, and consignees get the use of the docks for nothing. At the same time the low price of goods enables a small charge to be imposed, which, even if it should eventually fall on the consumer would not be felt.

(9) The vast outlay of capital on the docks on which interest has to be found. This, the shipping dues alone are insufficient to supply in their proper proportion, because at present so large a proportion of vessels in the shape of lighters pay no dues.

(10) The fact that the docks are by statute legally vested in the Dock Companies, and that to use their premises without payment or return of any kind constitutes in effect a trespass which, though originally sanctioned by Parliament, is no longer justified by any countervailing rights or privileges.

(11) The fact that the river is freely used by all, and that wharfingers and warehousemen have therefore spent no capital on their waterways, nor have they any dock repairs or maintenance to pay for, or growing requirements to keep pace with, or interest on dock expenditure to find.

(12) The fact that such wharfingers as have jetties or small private docks have a perfect right to charge for the use of them.

(13) The fact that the lighters that use the docks are ill found in equipment, and are not even supplied with sufficient men to work them, thus throwing on the docks a large amount of voluntary labour, which the necessities of business alone render practically compulsory.

(14) That the tonnage of lighters using the docks is nearly double the total tonnage of foreign trading and coasting vessels which enter them with cargoes—compare this with relative tonnage proportions of ships and lighters in earlier times.

(15) That the docks being the only place in which it is possible for modern steamers to discharge owing to their bulk and depth, and to the necessity for despatch, if those docks were to lose their business for want of funds to meet the requirements of the port, the wharfingers and warehousemen's business would also cease. Before the docks were opened every ship could discharge in the river.

(16) That the utmost care and economy have been unable to make the London docks a financial success in face of wharfage and warehousing competition carried on against them with all the advantage on the side of their opponents.

(17) That the docks of the greatest port in England ought not to be so crippled as to be able to produce no greater dividend per annum than 1 1-5th per cent., which represents to the shareholders of the London company an average dividend of two per cent., or thereabouts, and to those of the India Company an average dividend of practically nothing at all.

(18) That all the conditions of commerce which were responsible for the exemption clauses in the first instance have long since ceased to exist, and that the main argument which led to the rejection of the Bill of 1855, can now no longer be argued against the companies.

(19) That a crisis has now come, and that if the Dock Companies are to exact increased duties of some kind or other, the people who obviously ought to bear the burden are not those who already pay for what they get, but those who enjoy the use of the property and gratuitous services of the docks for nothing, and complain that the latter are inadequately rendered.

(20) The fact that Parliament has at frequent intervals during the present century recognised the justice of the charges which the docks now ask to be allowed to make by granting to numerous other docks and harbours the privilege of making them under the same or similar circumstances.

5772. I wish to draw your attention to Paragraph 18 of that summary. You say that the main argument which led to the rejection of the Bill in 1855 can now no longer be urged against the company?—Yes, I do say that most distinctly. In those days the companies were to a certain extent prosperous; that was one of the main arguments against them. To-day I do not think anyone would say that they are very prosperous.

5773. You say that Parliament has at frequent intervals during the present century recognised the justice of the charges which the docks now ask to be allowed to make, by granting the numerous other docks and harbours the privilege of making them under the same or similar circumstances?—Quite recently it has granted the Manchester Ship Canal Company a charter.

5774. Have the circumstances been in all respects the same?—I do not know of any difference. They are a Dock Company doing a large business; we are a Dock Company doing a large business; I do not see where any difference comes in.

5775. There was no reason why?—So far as I know, none.

5776. There was nothing in the circumstances which made it desirable or right that these people should have free water in the Port of London that did not exist there, that existed on the Mersey, in the case of the Manchester Ship Canal?—I do not know of any different circumstances, except of course that you are dealing in London with what has been going on for a great many years, and I suppose in Manchester they were not.

5777. In your evidence at Question 5597 you dealt with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and the Clyde Navigation?—Yes.

5778. You suggested that there was a sum of £600,000 received by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—Certainly, in round numbers; £599,000 was the exact amount.

5779. Are you quite correct in suggesting that they derived the whole of that £600,000 from being free from exemption clauses?—I think so. Certainly it is absolutely true for a certain amount, and I think for the whole. They have the power of levying on everything that comes into their dock whether it is put on the dock or not. These goods are put on the quay; they do no services for it. What we ask under our scheme is, that in regard to anything that comes into the dock we should be in exactly the same position as they are.

5780. With regard to the Clyde you state there is a sum of £234,000 in similar circumstances?—I think so.

5781. You think you are right in regard to that?—Yes.

5782. They are very large sums?—They are very large sums I admit at once.

5783. At what do you put the cash loss to you in London from the exemption clause?—I could only put it at what I have estimated it. I have not worked this out on the Liverpool figures, but I have given a statement showing how this is arrived at. I say: "The

tonnage upon which the ordinary charges would be leviable would therefore be, say, 3,822,000 tons, and half charges on 572,000 tons. This would produce £266,750. In the actual assessment of the charges as between different classes of goods the Docks Company would have to consider the conditions under which the trade is carried on and the relative values of goods, and after giving due effect to these considerations the average yield would probably not exceed 10d. a ton, say, £177,833. So that I say, taking 10d. a ton on that amount of 3,822,000 tons, and half on the 572,000 tons, the amount we estimate to get is £177,833. If you were to take the Liverpool schedule rate on the whole —in Liverpool they make no exemption in favour of transit goods, it is leviable on everything—I say if you could measure our loss by what Liverpool would be entitled to charge under the circumstances, it would be immensely in excess of that £177,833 which we ask for.

5784. I see you estimate the dues on barges on the basis of 3d. per ton to produce the sum of £56,250?—Yes.

5785. That is to make a sum equal to £234,083?—Yes.

5786. That is what you would like to get?—We should like to get it very much.

5787. And that really summarises your suggestion so far as finance is concerned?—Yes.

5788. You have, or rather perhaps had, a Bill before Parliament this year; I do not know which expression I should quite use?—We had. It was withdrawn. We gave public notice that we should withdraw it.

5789. You introduced the Bill?—We introduced the Bill in the hope that we might be able to get something done.

5790. That Bill was a considerable modification of last year's Bill?—Certainly, but that Bill only expressed what we had always intended to do under the old Bill, and what we had publicly stated. In the early part of last year I had some correspondence with one of the Orient Company's directors, who asked me what we really meant by that Bill. There was correspondence at the time by which we then showed that we intended to make these exemptions precisely as we put them into the clause of the Bill this year. When we re-deposited the Bill we thought it better to put those clauses in the Bill, but it only carried out what has always been our intention.

5791. In fact, the Bill brings the Parliamentary position up to your public utterances?—Precisely.

5792. Do I gather that the obligations which in answer to my Honourable friend, Mr. Lyttelton, you expressed yourself ready to enter into are a further move on?—Certainly. These are obligations the necessity for which we have had before us for a long time.

5793. Supposing another Bill was introduced?—A great many of these special works which Mr. Lyttelton asked me about just now we can carry out without going to Parliament at all. They are covered by our statutory powers, and there is no necessity to make any application to Parliament.

5794. In answer to the question whether you were prepared to come under further obligation with regard to improvements, you only meant you were prepared to carry out certain works which were within your powers?—I meant certain works which are within our powers now, and with regard to which it is optional whether we carry them out or not. We are willing to give an assurance that we will carry them out.

5795. No further Parliamentary powers?—No. It would be an undertaking on the part of the Dock Company that we should carry out these works. As I say, we are willing to carry out this extension of the dock, and we would also be willing to carry out those further works which I will specify in the course of a very few days.

5796. In your answers you have confined yourself, for reasons which you have given, specially to the docks. Do I understand from you that you do not desire to say anything with regard to the Thames Conservancy?—I do not think it is quite my role to do it.

5797. (*Rear Admiral Hext.*) With reference to the question Mr. Lyttelton was asking just now about barges, if you insisted on the barges lying outside your limit of free water, outside your entrances, would not they be lying in a more dangerous position than they would near the entrances?—Yes, but that is not my concern. It would be so undoubtedly. I do not know how they could lie there unless there were special moorings provided for them.

See 6377.

5798. The fact of lying there would more or less congest the river traffic?—It certainly would not improve the river traffic.

5799. If you kept them outside the free space of water that you are allowed, would it not be almost impossible to get the number in and out that you do at present?—I think it would.

5800. And if the size of the barges much increased, do you think it would be practicable to work the present entrances for ships as well as barges?—It would undoubtedly increase the congestion, and make it still more difficult. It is difficult enough now; whether it would be absolutely impossible I cannot say. It would be more difficult, and certainly would involve us in more expense, because we should have to begin our locking and unlocking even a longer time before high water than we do at present. That would bring us back to the old question of more pumping and more dredging.

5801. You have told us about the pier or wharf below the entrance to Tilbury, I think?—There are two. There is a quay at the entrance of the Albert Docks, and then inside the basin at Tilbury, which is connected with a free entrance to the river—there are no gates—we have another quay but that is protected from the river because it lies within our own basin, which is our own private water.

5802. With reference to the pier or wharf outside below the Albert Docks, what was it built for?—It was built for shipping.

5803. And never has been used?—And never has been used, only we now use it as a coal wharf.

5804. With regard to the berth inside the basin at Tilbury Docks, has that wharf ever been used?—Never.

See 7934.

5805. Is it long enough for a big ship?—Yes, quite long enough, and it is in a better position really than the quay at Galleons, because it is provided with sheds and everything. It is a properly fitted discharging berth. The other was not a properly fitted discharging berth, because until the need arose we did not put up all the necessary equipment.

5806. For that berth in the basin at Tilbury would the charges be less than going into the dock, or the same?—Possibly the same. We have never really gone into it.

5807. It seems to me if you reduced the charges perhaps you might have got somebody to use the outside berth?—Even now, when we find so much difficulty in finding berths for people, they will not come to it.

5808. That all goes to tell you wharves for big ships in the open tideway or in a position like that basin at Tilbury are not suited to the requirements of big steamers?—That is distinctly so.

5809. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You said just now that you have repaid all the money that was received from the Treasury in the early part of the undertaking; but I suppose you would admit that you still retain privileges of different kinds which were given to you originally, and which make you occupy a privileged position?—I am not quite aware of any privilege that we have at present that anybody else has not.

5810. Have you not certain powers of detaining vessels until the dock dues are paid, and privileges of that kind?—Yes, undoubtedly.

5811. Which are of some value, as well as the power of making bye-laws?—Yes, we have the power of making bye-laws, which we find it very difficult to enforce.

5812. These are privileges of collecting money which give you some advantage. I do not suppose they are special to the London and India Docks Company, but they are of advantage to a dock company or any other public body for recovering its money?—Undoubtedly.

5813. So that you can hardly say that you occupy no privileged position, although you have repaid the money which was advanced to you in the beginning of the undertaking?—It is a privileged position that, as you say, every other dock company has. Naturally in our business we have to give shipowners a certain amount of credit; we do not stop the ships unless we

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believe a man is insolvent. Take all the big lines; we work their business on a regular current account, they keep paying us so much, we do not stop their ships.

5814. Originally you had some privileges in connection with the construction of the docks. I have not had time to examine all the Acts of Parliament thoroughly, but it seems to me that the whole work of construction in the early days was treated as one of great public interest, and you were obliged to present accounts to Parliament as to the progress which was made with the work?—Yes.

5815. If my recollection serves me rightly you were entitled not merely to water from the river to help you in the construction, but to sand and gravel?—From the river?

5816. Well, sand and gravel that were not your own—I believe from the river?—Yes, I am told that is so.

5817. So that in various ways you have had advantages although you have not had the advantage of receiving any public money which you have still got. You have repaid the public money, but you have other public advantages?—We have only the same privileges that other Dock Companies have, and so far as regards having a right to the water from the river we have only the same right to the water that every wharfinger or owner of a quay alongside the river has. We have no other right.

5818. I am speaking of the use of the water in the actual construction of the docks?—That we took water from the river—I have no doubt it was so. But in the same way I have no doubt that all the wharves built along the riverside took the water for their building in precisely the same way.

5819. Of course, you admit that you have had all the advantages of compulsory powers for taking land and things of that kind which other bodies have?—Certainly.

5820. I should like you to turn to Question 5588. You stated this: "In 1890 the gross income upon all those 994,000 tons was £1,031,000, which works out at 20s. 9d. per ton. When I come to 1899 I find that the 1,085,000 tons only gave us £994,000 which works out at 18s. per ton." The suggestion of your answer is that you are not getting any more goods to deal with in consequence of this over-side delivery, and you are not getting so much for the actual handling of the goods. I should like to ask you if there is not something else in the question besides this over-side delivery?—Undoubtedly. I think, as I have shewn in my evidence, what I pointed out is that the warehousing business is very much less remunerative now than it used to be. In the old days, going back even only so far as 1890, goods used to remain very much longer in warehouses, and, I think, I specified that the rent was the most profitable part of the business, and that as the rent fell off, so the earnings per ton of goods diminished. I showed that in the years 1890 and 1899 it had fallen off from 20s. 9d. per ton to 18s. per ton. I do not say that that is due to the free delivery of goods. I say that is due to the alteration in the circumstances.

5821. Is there not a corresponding alteration in circumstances of this kind: that while your income from goods is diminished, your expenses have also diminished?—No.

5822. I wish you to look now at Appendix No 31, of the 16th day. I think you will find that in 1890 your expenditure, for wages and salaries, was £968,000, and in 1899 the corresponding expenditure was £688,000?—Yes.

5823. Which shows that amongst the altered circumstances you have to reckon diminution of your outlay in earning the money, as far as wages and salaries are concerned, at £280,000, which was a good set off against the diminished income from the goods?—Pardon me, there is a very satisfactory answer to that. Up to the year 1890, we did all our discharging in the docks, and we claimed it as our right. We worked the cargo out of every ship that came into the dock, and we did the entire work for the ship. In the year 1890 we were doing that. Then we came to an arrangement with the steamship owners, under which we gave up all that work. We immediately threw over an enormous amount of labour, which we no longer paid, and we received from the shipowners a rent for our quay space instead. So that the whole of that diminution in labour arises from the altered circumstances, from our not doing the work of the shipowners which we used to do. You do not see the full force of it at once, because at first it was not possible to make all the alterations. We limited, at first, the right of discharge to shipowners, I think, to the Albert and Victoria Docks. Subsequently, we gave the shipowners the right to discharge their own ships in the West India Dock, and, I think, in the South West India Dock, and gradually, at Tilbury, we have been giving up all the labour and making the shipowners do it themselves. So that to-day, down at Tilbury, the only line which we are discharging is the Orient, and in another month or two we shall have ceased to do that.

5824. But is not that a good reason amongst others why you should have received 20s. 9d. per ton on goods in 1890 and 18s. per ton in 1899?—No. These figures, I may explain, have nothing whatever to do with this.

5825. You have just been explaining, have you not, that you were doing more work in connection with discharging in 1890 than you are now doing?—Yes. But our warehousing earnings do not include those that we get from discharging. That came out of the ship. Will you look at Appendix No. 31 of the 16th day. Take the income. Tonnage dues and rent on ships in 1890—that includes also discharge and extra rates on ships—you will find that we received from shipping £481,000, and we did in that year three million tons of shipping in the docks. Now, in the following year we began to make an alteration. If you will turn to Appendix No. 27 of the 16th day, you will find that the tonnage has gone up to 3,181,000 tons, whereas the receipts from shipping have gone down to £445,000, because we were no longer doing this service for the ship-owner. If you come to the last year, 1899, you will find that instead of our having three million tons of shipping we had 4,281,000 tons. That is an increase of 33 per cent. roughly, and our earnings from ships have fallen from £481,000 to £478,000, the reason being that in 1890 we were doing work for which we charge the steamers. To-day we are not doing that work and consequently there is no charge.

5826. Your statement is that the import rates have nothing whatever to do with this discharge?—Nothing whatever; on the contrary, I could amplify what I have said already. During the last five or six years we have seen a very great alteration in the trade, namely goods landed going away for immediate delivery instead of being warehoused as formerly; we have kept a record, and we find that about 40 per cent. of the goods on which we get charges go away immediately. I may put it, I think, in this way; that whilst to-day we get somewhere about 18s. to £1 per ton for goods that are warehoused with us, on an average out of that we have only to pay a certain amount of labour, and there is a considerable amount of profit. Where the goods go away for immediate delivery, we probably do not get more than 5s. or 6s. or 7s. a ton, and there is all the work to do, so that the margin of profit on what we call the nimble ninepenny goods, the things that come in and go away immediately, is very small.

5827. You call them dues on shipping?—No. These are included in the import rates, that is why you find that although we are doing an enormously increased amount of work according to our tonnage, our earnings on import rates are less than they were ten years ago.

5828. I thought one of the points in the table to which I have referred was that you were not turning over any more goods?—Yes, we say we have an increase. We have a larger tonnage of goods, but we have a reduced amount really for warehousing. The rest of the goods were for immediate delivery.

5829. There is no great increase in the amount of goods from 994,000 tons to 1,085,000?—There is no great increase; there is a small increase.

5830. In what form did you make the charge to the shipping in connection with the discharge of the goods?—So much per ton; it was all worked on a regular scale.

5831. Part of the tonnage dues on the ship?—No; quite exclusive of the tonnage dues on the ship.

5832. Then it was a charge on the goods?—It was a charge we made to the ship owners for landing their goods.

5833. I wish to know whether that charge was included under the heading of import rates in your account, or under the heading of tonnage dues and rent

on ships?—It was included under the heading of tonnage dues and rent on ships, discharging and extra rates on ships. It was a discharging rate.

5834. Then how does it happen that your expenditure for salaries and wages as between 1890 and 1899 was so much diminished; because it is diminished much more than apparently these extra dues would account for?—The difference arises in this way. First of all you have all the shipping business. That went. That would represent a very large part of it. Then although on the goods for immediate delivery the proportion of labour to the total charge is very much higher than the proportion on the goods for warehousing, still the actual charge for labour does not come to so much. You can understand that if you are making 20s. a ton on goods for warehousing you have to work that; there are many labour things which may run up.

5835. It is quite fair that we should ask whether there was a corresponding diminution of the net income from the goods. You see that in 1899 or thereabouts, you got 20s. 9d. for handling goods. This was the gross sum which you obtained?—Yes.

5836. What I am asking now is, was there this corresponding diminution in the net sum?—Certainly; most distinctly. There must be that, because the warehousing business is so much less profitable. The item of rent has disappeared to such an enormous extent. When you earn rent it is simply good money; there is no charge against it. You have your capital account, and your rates and taxes going on just the same, whether you are earning rent or not.

5837. Still, take the whole income. In 1890 you had an income of £1,715,000, out of which you paid £852,000 for wages—I am keeping the wages alone now?—Yes.

5838. In 1899 you had a gross income of £1,687,000, but instead of paying £852,000 in wages you paid £566,000?—Yes.

5839. So that you have a saving of no less than £300,000 of wages to set against practically the same income?—Yes. You must remember that 1890 is not quite a fair year to take. We had the great dock strike in 1889, which only came to an end in September, and throughout 1890 labour was extremely disorganised. It would make a very considerable difference.

5840. Take 1892. You have an income of £1,776,000, and you have an expenditure for wages of £713,000, which is still a very large sum, much larger than the expenditure in 1899 of £566,000?—Yes, but you must remember that with regard to shipowners so much of our income from them is now net. Before, we used to get an amount which covered our labour. Now it is in the shape of rent for the quay space which they take. We are getting a reduced amount, it is true, from the shipowner.

5841. That comes into you net now?—Yes. It comes into us net; there is no deduction whatever. Whereas we used to take on one side receipts from the shipowner, and on the other side put labour, now it comes into us net. The result is that with this very large increase in tonnage we are to-day receiving net £478,000 against what was the gross figure in 1890 or 1892—there is only £12,000 difference between them. That was a gross figure then, subject to any deductions for labour.

5842. What would be the net figure, do you think, in 1892?—I really could not tell you at all; it would be quite impossible to say. I quite admit that what you say at first sight does look very astonishing, but the whole system has been completely altered since then, and whereas we used to discharge every ship that came into the dock, and claim as our absolute right that we should do so, to-day we only discharge a portion of them.

See App., 16th day, No. 17.

5843. I wish now to refer to the table you have put in, separating to some extent the warehouse income from your other business. I do not propose to ask you to repeat any of the figures which you have given in the statement, but I should like to ask you whether in your opinion it is the warehousing business which pays you best of all the departments of your undertaking. Would that be a fair conclusion that you would like to put before us—apart from the figures?—In other words, whether the warehousing business is more remunerative than the shipping business? I do not think I could possibly answer that. I do not think anyone could, because to do that you must first of all calculate how much of your property is used for warehousing business. Not very long ago we went very seriously into the question of one trade—I do not mind mentioning it—the tobacco trade, because it is a trade of which we had an absolute monopoly. The trade believed that we had a very paying business, and we found that, taking into consideration the amount of space which was occupied, it was not a very paying business. I think, if you take the warehousing space generally on the river, it is not such a remunerative business.

5844. I put the question because these figures which you gave us, and upon which you throw—very properly, I should say—some doubt because you cannot separate some of the items, appear to show that almost all your net income came from the warehousing business. I do not wish to repeat the figures, because they may be misleading?—I cannot agree with you there. I think I should say the greater part of the gross income, because the difficulty comes when you come to separate what are the fair charges against them.

5845. That is what I wish to have your opinion about, apart from the figures. I wish to know what the opinion of the company is as to their business?—We have every desire to give you every information, and we took an enormous deal of trouble to try to get out these figures to give you information. I really do not think I could answer the question, and if I did answer it I do not think my own opinion would be of very much value. The whole thing is so much mixed up.

5846. I should like to ask whether it is a true statement that most of your shipping business belongs to the docks down the river—the Victoria and Albert Docks and the Tilbury Docks—and most of your warehousing business is done at the docks up the river?—That is undoubtedly the fact, because we have put in tables where we show that the bulk of the shipping is done at the lower docks, where only the big ships come, and the warehousing is put down in the upper docks because it is practically impossible to get the trade to go down to the lower docks.

5847. Would it be possible to separate the up-river business from the lower river business?—I do not think so. See 6659-61.

5848. Suppose you were asked to make a sale of the one business or the other, could you make such a division as to enable it to be done?—I do not think it is possible—honestly I do not. I have gone into it very carefully, and I do not think it is possible. The whole thing is so mixed up together, and there are so many ramifications that it is almost impossible to say. You find that you are giving facilities perhaps to shipping to get goods; goods get the benefit of that. I believe it is impossible for anybody without altering our whole system of book-keeping, as it has been for years and years, to bring out any nearer statement as to the relative values of our warehousing and shipping business, than we have given in this statement, and even in this statement a great many of the figures which we have put before you are estimates; they are as near as we could get them, but personally I should be very sorry indeed to take these figures even as correct.

5849. I think, in answer to Mr. Ellis, you rather hesitated to express an opinion as to how money was to be found for improving the river and harbour generally, apart from the docks?—I have my own ideas, but I do hesitate rather to express them.

5850. I should like to press it a little, for this reason—that you are one of the experts in the matter, and this is one of the general subjects with which we have to deal, and whatever body is constituted to deal with the river, might have to deal with the Dock Company?—Roughly, I think it is not a difficult question at all. At present the Thames Conservancy do collect certain rates, and I would give the Thames Conservancy, or whoever is the river authority, the power to continue to collect those rates. I think shipping should pay perhaps a trifle more, but I think that all goods coming into the river should also contribute. I think that body should have the power of levying a small toll not only on goods coming into the docks, but on all goods brought into the port or exported from the port. To simplify matters, if the dock companies continue separate, I think that it should be put on the dock companies that, so far as the goods coming into the docks are concerned, they should levy and collect for the river authority that portion of the dues. See 6421-2

5851. That would be an addition to the burdens upon

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the trade of the port more than you propose for yourselves?—Yes, but it would be something so infinitesimal that I do not think it would really matter. The charge that we ask comes to one penny on 124lbs.; that is the maximum charge. The river authority would not want as much.

5852. But it would be necessary for your purpose, in making these big improvements which you contemplate, to have the river improvements going on side by side with them?—Certainly. It would be folly for us to build a dock such as we contemplate putting on the south side of the Albert Dock, a dock which, so far as we can see, will accommodate anything that can ever come up the Thames, unless the river were improved to such an extent as to allow these big ships to come up. Our object was, and our instructions to Mr. Baggallay were, to design a dock that, so far as we could see, would take in anything ever likely to come so far up the river.

5853. I should like to ask you one or two minor questions now. One of them is with reference to that date of 1823, in regard to which you quoted from a witness, Mr. Drinkald, a statement which seemed to imply that the lighterage business of the river had at that time diminished. It is with reference to the inference you draw from that statement that, "I have sold some at £20 that cost me £800 or £900 since the docks have been in operation." I think your suggestion was that the business of the lightermen altogether had diminished from the formation of the docks?—That was my inference from the question. It seems to me not altogether an unreasonable inference, because if a man is willing to sell for £20 or £30 barges which have cost him £800 or £900, it rather points, I think, to his having very little need of them.

5854. I think you suggested that very soon after the lighterage business must have increased. This was in 1823?—Certainly. Since 1855 it has been increasing. Whether it increased much between that and 1855 I cannot say.

5855. My question to you is whether it is the case that any part of the business of the river could have diminished between 1800 and 1823, because we have it in evidence that a large increase of coasting and other shipping did in fact take place?—Yes, I admit that. Of course I simply drew my inference from the fact that a man was willing to sell for £20 something which cost him so very much more. I think the ordinary inference is that if he was willing to sell them, as he found he had no employment for them, their occupation was gone.

5856. I think you will observe that what was said was in answer to a question: "Are barges or lighters most used?" He said: "More barges than lighters." But is not a barge in this sense practically much the same thing as a lighter. Is not there some technical point in the distinction?—I should be very sorry to try to define the difference between a barge and a lighter.

5857. But if a man says that he uses more barges than lighters, it does not follow that the whole of the business has been diminishing, but there has been a certain technical change in the business?—I suppose that at that time there was some distinction between a barge and a lighter, but to-day I think in practical use the two terms are interchangeable.

5858. I have been trying to find out whether there was any distinction; I am sorry to say I could not find out, but evidently there was a distinction at that time?—Evidently there was at that time.

5859. Then he was asked to state what the circumstances were which prevented or inconvenienced the passage of a vessel from the West India Dock to the London Docks, and in reply to that question he said, "In the first place the want of sufficient water to navigate; in the next place, the bad state of the Pool almost constantly, which I think is now worse than it was when the whole of the West India trade passed through it." Then he was asked, "Do you mean that it is more crowded?" and he replied, "Yes, from the increase of colliers and coasting vessels since that period, and the bad arrangements for the mooring of the vessels by the harbour masters." That all points to a continuous increase of the trade of the Port from 1800 to 1823?—Yes.

5860. I suppose you are aware that in 1836, which is 13 years after 1823, there was a committee upon the state of the river at that time. I do not know if your attention has been drawn to that?—I do not think so, it has escaped my memory if it has been.

5861. You may take it from me there was a very elaborate inquiry into the state of the river at that time, because the business of the river had been continually increasing. What I suggest is that it is quite impossible to believe that the business of barging and lightering (putting the two together) could have been diminishing all that time?—Perhaps I ought to say I am rather sorry now I spoke on the question of the barges.

5862. It is merely rectifying a small point in the history?—Yes.

5863. That brings me to a point I was going to ask you a question about, namely, in reference to what Mr. Ellis asked you with regard to the debate on the Bill of 1855. Is it not the case that all through the century Parliament has been careful to insert in every Bill creating docks this exemption clause?—Docks in London, yes.

5864. In that very debate in 1855—I think you have it before you that in 1853 at the time of the passage of the Victoria Dock Bill a question had been raised and the exemption clause was put into the Victoria Dock Bill?—Yes.

5865. Then I think about 1863 some attempts were made to get rid of the exemption clause, and they were refused. So that it has been a continuous policy on the part of the Government to insist upon that exemption clause?—Yes.

5866. I do not suggest for a moment that Parliament in 1855 were well advised in refusing to hear the Dock Company's case, because I think when an important company comes and makes a case of that kind it is better to hear it than to refuse to hear it. I merely wish to get out now that you admit that all through the century Parliament has continuously and steadily insisted upon the insertion of this exemption clause?—Of course, I must admit it, and I must admit that in all Dock Acts passed since 1855 there is practically no option. People had to accept this clause. Parliament had refused in 1855 to reconsider the matter at all, and insisted on the exemption clause, and so in all the following Acts of Parliament it necessarily had to be inserted.

5867. But the thing was not done as a matter of course. There were debates and questions at different times?—Mr. Turner, the solicitor, tells me that in nearly all cases the clause was put in by ourselves when the bill was deposited. The reason, of course, why we put it in was that having failed in 1855 to get the exemption clause repealed we found ourselves bound to go on with it. In our bill for this dock extension last year in the first place we put it in without the exemption clause, but when we found there was no chance of the Commission reporting before that bill had been dealt with, we stated at once that we should put in that exemption clause, and the exemption clause will go in.

5868. In 1863—I will not say what company's bill, but I have it on my notes—a clause exempting lighters was omitted from one of the bills, but it was inserted in the House of Lords in 1864, and there were debates?—Yes.

5869. So that it has not been done merely as a matter of course, one Bill following another, but there have been debates at different times?—I am not sure whether one would be right in saying that the matter has been debated.

5870. I am merely putting the question to you to raise the point, that it has been done, not merely as a matter of course, but that the House of Commons and the House of Lords have steadily insisted upon this exemption clause?—I think they had to until the whole question was settled. No doubt they did insist. Having failed in 1855, it would be very difficult I take it, in another bill for a new dock to get that exemption clause repealed and not repeal the clauses in the old Acts.

5871. I wish to ask you a question with reference to your statement as to vesting and as to the claim about freehold. I think at one part of your evidence you said that docks are freehold property. My question is whether you maintain that docks are freehold property in the sense that the dock companies could give up the business and sell the property or whether it is a complete property of that kind?—Whether it is an absolutely private property without any restrictions attaching to it? No, I do not think so, for this reason. If we wanted to sell one dock I do not think it would be possible to sell it without getting Parliamentary sanction.

See 6690-

5872. You could not refuse while the docks exist to accept any vessels that come to enter them?—Exactly. The obligation is upon us, and we have to do it. It even goes so far as this, that to-day if there is room in a dock we cannot say to a vessel, "You cannot go into that dock; you must go into another dock." If there is room in any particular dock the vessel can say, "I will go in there," whether we like it or not.

5873. So that not much turns upon this claim that they are freehold property?—Yes, I think a good deal turns on it.

5874. I should like to know, then, what it is you mean by that claim. You do not refuse to submit to the control and regulation of Parliament?—No.

5875. And you admit you have certain public duties to discharge?—Yes.

5876. Then what is the advantage of claiming freehold property, as you call it?—What we mean by that is that it is not open to anybody to go in there and do anything they like. We can stop a man going in there and doing any particular work. We can make regulations for carrying on a trade.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) It is the same as a railway company's right to a station, I suppose?

5877. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That would follow naturally from the ownership of property under the Act of Parliament without claiming that it is freehold. You seem to attach great value to the vesting, and to the fact that it is freehold property?—We bought it and we paid for it, and a good many people think they have a certain right in it besides ourselves. We say, "No; you have certain rights which we give to you by statute. You can come in and exercise those rights, but you are not entitled to anything more."

5878. There is no claim to anything more, is there?—Pardon me, I think there is a great deal. At the present moment we are being asked to give all sorts of facilities to barges which they are not entitled to. We have correspondence going on now. Even the facilities that we are giving now to barges are undoubtedly far in excess of what they are entitled to. They are not satisfied; they want more.

5879. That will hardly be a public right?—The public have no right to do this without payment of anything. Even in the present instance, as Mr. Lyttelton has pointed out, the barges to-day in taking goods from their quays are going right away from any powers that they have.

5880. But that does not affect your general admission that you have special privileges, and you admit that you have public duties in the matter of the use of the property?—We have special privileges for serving the public at our own cost.

5881. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You are a statutory body, in fact, with all that that means?—Yes.

5882. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) In the bills that you have laid before Parliament you do not ask for any extra powers to regulate the lighters?—No.

5883. You see no advantage or public advantage in doing that?—I will tell you frankly, in this bill in which we have applied to Parliament for the extension of a dock we wanted to make it as little controversial as possible. We saw the great necessity of completing that dock as soon as possible, and we felt that if we put into that bill anything at all that was going to bring us into conflict with wharfingers, lightermen, or anybody else, we should run the risk of that bill being hung up, and in the interest of the port we wanted to get it through quickly.

5884. You attached the greatest value to your own income?—Which bill are you speaking about?

5885. The bill in this session?—There were two bills in this session. I was referring to the bill which is now going on for extending the dock, and not to the Lighterage Bill, which is dead.

5886. In the Lighterage Bill you simply proposed to increase your charges?—Yes.

5887. You think that is a more important matter to be dealt with in comparison with lighterage business?—Certainly, because we recognise that if the lightermen pay us a certain sum for the service we render, naturally a certain obligation must fall on us which to-day does not exist, to do things for them, which to-day we are not bound to do.

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(*Chairman.*) With reference to what was said yesterday, we gather that it would be more convenient to the learned counsel who are representing various bodies in this inquiry, that the cross-examination of this witness should not take place to-day. Do I understand that is so?

(*Mr. Harper.*) That is so, my lord.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I have not seen the shorthand notes of the last day's proceedings yet.

(*Chairman.*) Does that apply to the re-examination of Mr. Scott?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I should very much prefer, if it is convenient to your lordship, to reserve Mr. Scott's examination once and for all till after the cross-examination.

(*Chairman.*) You do not want to examine him before the cross-examination?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I do not want to, it would only waste your lordship's time.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) May I say that I am in the hands of the Commission. I am quite ready to go on now if the Commission think fit; or to postpone it. I understand that the Counsel who appears for the wharfingers is not in a position to cross-examine at present.

(*Chairman.*) As far as we are concerned it would be more convenient to us to entirely dispose of one witness before we take another.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) What occurred to me was that I may not finish to-day, and perhaps it might be convenient that I should commence after your adjournment.

(*Chairman.*) We have only practically an hour at our disposal to-day. Mr. Wallace, you do not want to submit anything now?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) No, my lord, I think not.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Might I make an application? Mr. Scott, in his evidence, has referred to certain agreements which practically divide themselves into two classes, one which has according to his evidence very seriously affected the usage of the port, and the other being agreements of a secret character, giving preferential rights either to individuals or to particular groups of traders. I will not comment upon the evidence, but what I ask is that those agreements should be put in and be accessible to the parties represented here, for the convenience of the tribunal. If it is incumbent upon us to obtain the details and the nature of these agreements by question and answer in cross-examination, it will take up a great deal of the Commission's time, and I think it would not be for the general convenience. What I ask is that those agreements should be put in and placed upon the notes, and be generally accessible at the earliest possible moment. Mr. Scott said that some of the agreements were in the nature of trading agreements which they did not wish to disclose, but if I may say so, speaking on behalf of the traders, the secrecy of those agreements is one of their vitiating features, and we ought to know them, and I submit they are very relative to the inquiry which the Commission are making.

(*Chairman.*) We shall consider that.

(*Mr. Harper.*) Might I draw your attention to Section 58 of the London and St. Katharine's and East and West India Docks Act, 1888, which provides specifically that after the passing of that Act they shall not make any agreement or renew any agreement existing at that time by which preference should be given.

(*Mr. Lyttleton.*) Mr. Scott's point was that they did not give preference.

(*Mr. Harper.*) I mention merely one case—the Orient Company; we should like to have some information about that.

(*Witness.*) That is an agreement before that date which was specially provided for by Act of Parliament.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) That section carefully excludes any prior agreements that there were.

(*Chairman.*) I think it is hardly the moment now to enter into any argument on the subject.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

(*Chairman.*) With reference to the question which was raised this morning by the learned counsel representing the London Chamber of Commerce, the Commissioners wish to say that they are not prepared to

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make any general order for the production or disclosure of agreements. If any document be required to be produced by any interest represented before the Commission, application must be made for it in writing, with particulars thereof, and the reasons alleged for its production.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) And you will decide then, I suppose, when occasion arises, upon the admissibility of it?

(*Chairman.*) Yes. With reference to the cross-examination of witnesses by counsel, the Commissioners desire to say that they are not prepared to admit questions involving matters of opinion; the cross-examination must be limited to matters of fact. They will also be obliged if the learned counsel engaged in cross-examining will first indicate the topics upon which it is proposed to cross-examine.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I appear for the Corporation of the City of London. I desire in the first instance to get more in detail from Mr. Scott the great change of system which has been referred to by the questions of Sir Robert Giffen and I think referred to for the first time, which has taken place in the last 12 years, because I think it will appear that that has a great deal to do with the present position of the docks. I do not know whether that is the sort of intimation that meets the wishes of the Commission.

(*Chairman.*) Certainly.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) That will take some little time. When I have got to the end of that, I shall be prepared to make a similar intimation with regard to the next point.

(*Chairman.*) That meets our view entirely.

5888. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) It is the fact, is it not, as the figures that Sir Robert Giffen asked about show, that within the last eleven years almost a revolution has taken place in the docks in the way of dealing with goods coming in?—Yes.

5889. I want to get a little more in detail from you exactly what is the change that has taken place in those 11 or 12 years, and how it has come to take place. I do not want to go further back than the Tilbury Dock date. I want to ask you to see whether I correctly understand what was the system which prevailed say from 1882 to 1887 at the time when the Tilbury Dock was being built. You were charging a tonnage due on ships. Can you state shortly to the Commission what you were giving the ship simply for the tonnage due—that is the 1s. per ton?—It was the right to go into the dock and remain there for four weeks.

5890. Was there any right to use the quay?—No.

5891. Simply the right to lie in the water of the dock for four weeks?—To come alongside the quay.

5892. I suppose they might moor to the quay for the shilling?—Yes.

5893. And people landing from them might walk on the quay?—Yes.

5894. But nothing further?—Nothing.

5895. That was the first due you were charging? You were charging on goods landed on the quay and brought to your warehouses a landing rate or consolidated rate?—Not charging the ship.

5896. But charging the goods?—Yes.

5897. In addition you were claiming the right at that time to do all the discharging work yourself unless it was done by the crew of the ship?—Yes.

5898. You were charging that in the case of discharging, but in the case of loading you were allowing the shipowner to do the work, and indeed requiring him to do the work by his own men, the stevedores?—Yes.

5899. For the work you were doing for the shipowner and compelling him to let you do, you were charging him a discharging rate?—Yes.

5900. That would be the third rate; a tonnage rate on the ship paid by the shipowner, a discharging rate for the labour of discharging paid by the shipowner, a rate on the goods landed for warehousing paid by the goods?—Yes.

5901. And under those circumstances, at that time were all the large shipowners adopting the practice of turning out all their goods on the quay which were wanted in barges, and then delivering them to the barge?—We were doing the discharging.

5902. That was the system that was being used?—I think that was the system practically. It was practically so; but in many cases we did deliver goods overside to barges.

5903. But in a large number of cases and with a large number of ships between 1880 and 1890, you were putting the goods out on the quay, and where the consignee required his goods overside you were delivering into a barge?—Yes.

5904. But in other cases you were charging the shipper a rate—a shipper's accommodation rate, or overboard-to-craft rate?—Yes.

5905. So that as things were at that time there were the four rates?—Yes.

5906. If the consignee asked to have his goods overside direct from the ship, as it was very often not convenient to give it, the dock company would put the goods out on the quay and deliver from the quay to the craft. They would not charge the goods anything; they would not charge the barge anything, but they would charge the ship a rate over quay to craft?—Certainly. We were acting for the ship.

5907. At that time you were claiming an absolute right to do all the discharging, and to exclude the shipowner?—Certainly.

5908. That was the position, I may take it, up to 1889?—And I think practically up to 1891.

5909. I will give you the exact dates presently. I am coming to that in a moment. But between 1880 and 1890, certainly, that was the position?—Yes.

5910. Also before 1882 there were the two separate big dock companies, the East and West India, and the London and St. Katharine?—Yes.

5911. At that time, before the Tilbury Dock proposal was made, they were living in peace and unity?—Yes.

5912. Charging the same rates?—Yes.

5913. In 1882 the Tilbury Dock Act was obtained?—Yes.

5914. Was the immediate result of that a competition on the most vigorous scale between the two dock companies?—In 1882?

5915. Not, of course, in 1882, because the Tilbury Dock was not ready, but we will say about 1887 or 1888?—Yes, about 1887 or 1888.

5916. Each company was bidding for the big lines?—Yes.

5917. I think from the evidence it appears—it is so, is it not—that both dock companies were very much hampered for the next seven or eight years, or longer, perhaps, by the agreements which they had made with shipowners in that time of competition?—No; the East and West India Dock was hampered for a considerably longer period, but the London and St. Katharine Dock Company was not hampered.

5918. The East and West India Dock Company was very much hampered?—Yes.

5919. This is an instance. The Orient Company came down to the Tilbury Dock on an agreement, I think, which gave them a rebate of 50 per cent. on the rates for 10 years?—Yes.

5920. Which expired in 1896?—Yes.

5921. The P. and O. Company stayed in St. Katharine's Dock?—Yes.

5922. Under an agreement?—Under an agreement but their agreement, if I remember rightly, ran out in 1892.

5923. In looking at any of the figures from 1885 to 1892, 1893, 1894, and 1895, the Commission must bear in mind that as to the big lines, there were agreements which had been made when the two companies were in competition with each other?—And you would infer from that, that the earnings were reduced accordingly; but that was not so.

5924. So that 100 per cent. would have been paid to somebody had it not been for the inducement to go to Tilbury with 50 per cent. rebate?—But the India Dock Company had to bear that.

5925. I am not going now into what was the condition after 1889?—But it does not affect that, because the figures which I have put in are the figures of the Joint Committee, which are not affected by this

5926. You mean it is only the division of the tw

companies? The India Dock suffered in 1889 for the agreements that were made. The St. Katharine Docks suffered for the P. and O. agreement up to 1892?—I forget what the exact date was.

5927. The exact date does not matter, but there was an agreement in which the P. and O. stayed in the other dock instead of going into the Tilbury Dock?—Yes.

5928. In 1889 the companies made up their quarrel?—Yes.

5929. And amalgamated?—No.

5930. Put themselves under the Joint Committee?—Yes.

5931. The amalgamation was in 1900?—Yes.

5932. Competition then was removed?—Yes.

5933. There were docks outside—I will not call it the amalgamation, because you object to that—but outside the combination?—Yes. There were the Millwall and Surrey Docks.

5934. Did the Joint Committee make agreements with the Millwall and Surrey Docks to avoid competition between the docks?—Yes. The Surrey Commercial was doing a business in soft wood which the docks had never done, and we were doing a business in hard wood which the Surrey Commercial had never done.

5935. What was the date of the agreement?—I think it was after the dock strike, but I think it was about 1890.

5936. The dock strike was 1889?—Yes.

5937. Is that agreement still continuing with the Surrey Commercial?—No.

5938. When did it expire?—Speaking from memory, I should think about three or four years ago.

5939. Is there any agreement now between you and the Surrey Commercial as to rates?—None whatever.

5940. That was an agreement by which you kept clear of certain classes of goods and the Surrey Commercial kept clear of certain classes of goods?—Yes, and the Millwall Dock Company was brought into it.

5941. As you have mentioned the Millwall, let us have the Millwall. What was the agreement with the Millwall Dock Company?—Practically the same. They were made parties to it.

5942. It was not timber with them?—Yes, they do timber. It was for everything—that they should follow our rates.

5943. Was there not some agreement as to the American ships. What is the date of the agreement with the Millwall?—The same date as with the Surrey Commercial. It was somewhere about 1890.

5944. Was there not some agreement designed to keep the American grain trade, I think it was, for the Millwall?—No, not the American grain trade.

5945. What was it?—They did a very large grain trade, for which they had certain facilities. We had not those facilities, and we were willing that they should keep that.

5946. So that, although, on the face of it, to the public, you were competing docks, there were, as a matter of fact, agreements between you which destroyed competition?—Precisely as there are amongst shipowners.

5947. You mean rings?—You would call them rings; I call them combinations.

5948. "Rings" is a shorter word. Do I understand that those agreements have now stopped? Are there any agreements now between you and the Millwall, or between you and the Surrey?—None.

5949. But there were between 1889 and 1896?—Somewhere about that.

5950. Have you any objection to produce those agreements to the Commission, now they have expired?—It also deals with the Surrey Commercial and the Millwall Docks Company.

5951. I am only asking you to speak for yourself. Have you, for the Joint Committee, any objection to produce them?—No.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I see counsel for the Surrey Commercial present.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I think one ought to consider what the agreements are. Personally, I am not in a position to decide about it. All I know is that the agreement expired about five years ago.

(*Chairman.*) I do not know whether you will insist on that, Mr. Scrutton. It is ancient history, and, in one sense, it is remote.

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(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I am quite willing that your Lordship should decide presently, when you have heard the rest of the cross-examination; but I cannot help thinking that the whole of the last 15 years will be material for the Commission in deciding whether this company shall have any further powers.

(*Chairman.*) Then will you bring up the question again?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes; I will not press it at present, if your Lordship will bear it in mind. I have asked this gentleman, the chairman of the Dock Company, and he says he is willing to produce the agreements.

(*Witness.*) Yes, I was speaking purely my own personal opinion. I have no objection to produce them. I have no wish to keep anything back.

5952. In 1888 is the Act which constitutes the Joint Committee?—Yes.

5953. In 1889, was the dock strike?—Yes.

5954. That was a strike of the dock labourers employed in discharging, against the Dock Company, their employers?—It was not only dock labourers employed in discharging.

5955. But it began with the labourers wanting their 6d., and then there was a sympathetic strike?—It began with a certain portion of the dock labourers.

5956. And then extended to all of them?—Yes.

5957. One of the results of that strike no doubt was a suggestion whether the shipowners might not do the work of discharging. Up to that time, as the Commission may remember, you had claimed the sole right of discharging. You had claimed it as a right?—Yes.

5958. Did you discover, in 1889, that you had been mistaken in your view that you had such a right?—No.

5959. You think still you had such a right?—Yes, it was never disputed. The shipowners had never tried it.

5960. You think still you had such a right?—Yes.

5961. Can you suggest to the Commission under what Statute you had such a right?—No, I could not say that.

5962. You claimed it?—We claimed it, and it had never been disputed.

5963. In December, 1890—perhaps you could give me the exact date—did you give everybody notice that after the 1st January, 1891, you would do none of the discharging?—We certainly did not give what you would infer was a four weeks' notice. We gave a proper notice; but we certainly did not do as you suggest: give notice in December that on the 1st January we should alter it.

5964. When was the notice given?—It can be ascertained. And, prior to that notice, I may say there had been a considerable amount of communication between ourselves and the shipowners.

5965. I will read from the statement in the "Law Reports." The case is reported in "Law Reports," 3, Chancery Division, 1892, on page 242, under the name of the London Association of Shipowners and Brokers v. the London and India Docks Joint Committee. I will read the statement of facts there, and ask you whether it is accurate:—"To carry out the alteration the defendants, the Joint Committee, in December, 1890, issued a printed code of regulations dated '1st of January, 1891.'" Do you say that those dates are inaccurate?—No, I do not say that those are inaccurate. You are asking me now to speak from memory of a great many things that happened, and, although we may have issued that notice on the 1st January ——

5966. The notice was issued at the beginning of December, to take effect on the 1st January?—What I would wish to say is that although that particular book of rates may have been dated the 1st January, and would come into force on the 1st January, it does not at all follow from that that the shipowners had not had notice prior to that.

5967. I agree it does not follow; but I am asking whether it is not the fact that it was not put out till the beginning of December?—I have not got it before me.

5968. I have?—That is dated 1st January, and you say it was put out at the beginning of December.

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5969. Yes?—If so, I think it is extremely probable.

(*Chairman.*) The question, whether shipowners had or had not proper notice in December, 1890, is not, perhaps, matter for inquiry before us. We must keep as closely as possible to the terms of the reference.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Of course, my Lord, I do not want to try any cases over again.

(*Witness.*) May I mention, in passing, that there was an enormous amount of correspondence prior to that with the shipowners. I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Scrutton's father on several occasions to discuss these matters. It may be true that the printed book dated the 1st January, 1891, was issued in December, 1890. There had been correspondence with the shipowners for months and months before that, and it was simply at the last moment, when everything was settled, that we gave notice what the rates would be on a certain date. There was no question, and I do not think Mr. Scrutton would say that we sprang a change in December, of which the shipowners had heard nothing, and which was to come into force on the 1st January.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) It is a very minute point.

5970. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) The book that you put out, professed, on the face of it, to require every shipowner to comply with it, did it not? It began: "Shipowners will be required to comply with the following regulations"?—Yes.

5971. Did the Court of Appeal say that they regarded it as an imposition on the public? I am reading from Lord Justice Lindley's judgment. "For I regard the new code as an imposition on the public"?—If it is reported so I suppose it is so. I cannot remember it.

5972. And did Lord Justice Kay say: "I am clearly of opinion that it is not a proper proceeding on the part of the Joint Committee to publish in this manner, as binding regulations, a set of rules which they know are not binding"?—If it is stated so, I suppose he did.

5973. But did they hold that you had this right? This is the change of system that I want to bring to the attention of the Commission. Did they hold that you had the right to say to every shipowner who wanted to come to the same berth every time he came to the dock, "We will not let you do it unless you agree to certain terms"?—They gave us judgment and costs. That is more to the point.

5974. "With this declaration the appeal must be dismissed without costs." You must be careful, Mr. Scott, in making these assertions?—The original costs. That is the appeal.

5975. And was the appeal dismissed without costs because they said it had been an imposition on the public?—You have everything there fresh before you, and you are quoting from things before you, and asking me to answer questions. I have nothing before me.

5976. This point about costs is only brought up because you would not answer the question I asked you, and you tried to say that the appeal was dismissed with costs. The question I asked was this:—Did the Court of Appeal say that when a shipowner wanted the same berth every time he came to the dock you had a right to charge him terms for the use of the same berth?—If a shipowner wished to have an appropriated berth we had a right to charge him, but it need not necessarily be the same berth every time he came into the dock. In the case of a tramp steamer she would not have the same berth.

5977. It was for the appropriated berth that you began now to require shipowners who wanted the same berth to take an agreement?—Yes, and that we were held to be within our right in doing.

5978. Your system beginning then has now extended, so that in the lower part of the river the whole of the docks is let in appropriated berths?—Not entirely.

5979. Not entirely, but very nearly. So that whereas before 1890 there was nothing of this sort in the docks, nearly every berth in the lower docks is let to shipowners on a form of agreement?—With this reservation, that if that shipowner is not using that berth for his own particular business we have a right to use it.

5980. Will you hand a copy of the form of agreement to the Commissioners in order that they may see the terms on which the dock is now let?—Yes.

5981. You are still charging the tonnage due on ships?—Yes.

5982. You are still charging the rates on goods that go to your own warehouse?—Yes.

5983. You are not charging the shipowner a discharge rate, but you are charging him a rent for quay space?—Yes.

5984. And for that you are letting him do the work of putting the class of goods that go to lighters over the quay?—Yes.

5985. He does the discharging; he puts the goods on to the quay, and instead of the three rates he was paying before, he has to pay the tonnage due on the ship and the rent for the quay space?—Yes.

5986. And he has been, not only in the American trade, but in every other trade, putting all the goods out on the quay?—Not all. So far as it suited his convenience.

5987. If he finds it more convenient he can put it overside, but he does not thereby avoid paying any rate to you, so that he has substituted the two rates for the three rates previously?—Yes.

5988. You have told the Commission that it was the American clause that has made the difference?—I do not think I said that.

5989. What I am thinking of is this: "The only way, therefore, to place a toll on goods so as to make it bear on the goods-owners and not on the shipowners was to introduce the custom of the Port of Liverpool, under which custom the shipowner's contract is fulfilled as the goods leave the ship's tackles. In the case of steamers from North American ports, the shipowners themselves have succeeded in incorporating in their bill of lading the Liverpool conditions of delivery by what is known as 'the North American bill of lading clause,' or more shortly 'the American clause.'" Has not nearly every ship that comes into your docks a power to do what it is doing—namely, a power to put goods on the quay at once and deliver thence to the barges?—Yes, under its bill of lading. See 5589.

5990. It is not merely the American clause?—Yes, pardon me.

5991. For instance, here is a P. and O. bill of lading. Look at the two clauses I have marked. (*Handing a copy of the bill of lading to the Witness.*) Let us see whether this is peculiar to the American trade. Do you see what the P. and O. have power to do?—"The company shall have the option of making delivery of goods either over the ship's side or from lighters or a store ship or hulk or Custom House or warehouse or wharf or dock or quay at merchant's risk. In all cases their liability is to cease as soon as the goods are free from the ship's tackles."

5992. As I understand, you suggest that that is not the sort of clause you are referring to in your statement with regard to the custom of Liverpool. Is that the custom of Liverpool?—No.

5993. The liability is to cease when the goods are free from the ship's tackles?—This is never used here.

(*Chairman.*) I think there is a dispute on this point. Mr. Scott told us in his evidence that the ships of the North Atlantic did use the American bill of lading, and the reason why the others did not was the custom of the port. He himself deprecated it.

(*Witness.*) I should like you to ask the P. and O. whether they act on that clause. I say they do not.

5994. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) Let us see what the P. and O. do. The goods that they do not put overside they turn out on the quay?—Yes.

5995. From the quay they deliver to you if they are goods going to you, or deliver to the lighter if they are goods going to the lighter?—Yes. May I ask how do you reconcile that statement that they are free from liability so soon as the goods leave the ship's tackles? If they are free from responsibility so soon as the goods leave the ship's tackles, how does it come to pass that they truck these over the quay and then deliver to the craft from the quay? That is a great deal more than the ship's tackles, and that is why I say that this clause, so far as the P. and O. are concerned, is entirely inoperative.

5996. Then, in your view, is there something that is acted upon in the American trade that is not acted upon in other trades?—I say they act on their own bill of lading.

5997. Now I want to go to another thing. We see now what happened after 1890. You changed your pre-

vious system to the system you have just described?—Yes.

5998. Did you then try to extend that system to ships which did not always want the same berth, but which came in as casual ships?—Certainly. At that time it was ruling in Liverpool, and that is the reason why we adopted it in London.

5999. In two cases were actions brought against you to restrain you from enforcing the clause on ships? There was the case of the "Clan," of Messrs. Samuels in 1894, and the case of Messrs. Bruce in March, 1895?—I remember the case of Messrs. Samuels. I should like to refresh my memory with regard to the details.

6000. In each of those cases, did you refuse to allow the ship to go alongside the quay unless they signed the form of agreement?

(*Chairman.*) What form of agreement are you referring to?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) The form of agreement that they imposed on ships that always wanted the same berth in 1890.

(*Chairman.*) What was the effect of it?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) You may come alongside the quay if you pay us so much a yard for quay space. I understand the witness is going to put in a form of agreement.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) There are two. We will hand in a copy of the monthly agreement and one of the weekly agreements, both of which are in common use. There is also a three months' agreement. They are exactly the same.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I think the only difference is the period.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Yes.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the monthly agreement between the London and India Docks Company and Shipowners as to appropriated berths. See Appendix, 17th Day, No. 1. Also a copy of the weekly agreement between the London and India Docks Company and Shipowners as to appropriated berths. See Appendix, 17th Day, No. 2.*)

6001. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) In the two cases I have referred to, was the dock company trying to require a casual ship to sign one of those agreements before it came alongside the quay?—Speaking from memory, I think you are not stating it quite accurately.

6002. What is your view?—My view is that Sir Marcus Samuel claimed the right to go along to the particular berth.

6003. Which was vacant at the time?—Yes.

6004. Without signing that agreement?—Yes.

6005. And Messrs. Bruce's case was the same?—I really forget.

6006. Did the dock company submit to an injunction restraining them from endeavouring to impose that agreement on casual ships that came in?—Yes.

6007. Let us take the Victoria Dock. Can you tell us how many berths there are in the Victoria Dock unlet under this system at present?—Eight or ten.

6008. Suitable for large ships?—Such as there are in the Victoria Dock.

6009. How many berths are there unlet in the Albert Dock?—As many. Ten, I am told.

6010. How many berths are there unlet at Tilbury? Are there three or four times as many?—No; nothing like three or four times. I should think twice as many.

6011. For instance, this last year, have you had to remove a line from the Victoria Dock and send them down to Tilbury, because you have no longer any room to let them?—No.

6012. The City Line?—We have not sent them down to Tilbury because we have no room to let them. We have not sent them. They have not gone.

6013. When are they to go? You have given them notice to go, have you not?—What we have done is what is quite within our rights. We have given them notice to terminate the agreement for the berth which they held for three months, subject to notice to terminate.

6014. For how long have they held that berth from you?—A good many years, but I am not aware that because you hold a berth for a good many years, that gives you any vested interest.

6015. Where have you offered them a berth?—We have offered them a berth at Tilbury, if they like to take it.

6016. And is it because of the pressure of ships in the up-river docks that you have been obliged to say, "Having been ten years in this dock, you must go to Tilbury"?—Partly, and partly that with the space we have at our command we wish to make the best use of it. The City Line do not load in London; they simply come to discharge their cargoes here, and we hold that they can do their business equally well down at Tilbury, where the Clan Line, and the Harrison Line, and one or two other lines which are doing a similar business are working.

6017. Is it the condition this year that there is great pressure on all the three docks, the Albert, the Victoria, and Tilbury?—Yes.

6018. It is one of the reasons why you are putting forward a bill in Parliament for extending the Albert?—Yes; and not only for appropriated berths, but accommodation generally.

6019. Is the present condition of the docks correctly described in this language, "The dock companies of London are in a very serious financial position. It is unquestionably unsatisfactory to have the docks of the Port of London managed by companies which cannot develop it as it should be, and which cannot meet the demands for capital expenditure commensurate with the size and importance of the Port." Do you recognise the language?—Yes.

6020. It is the language of my friend, Mr. Sidney Holland, is it not, your Vice-Chairman?—Yes.

6021. And that accurately states the present position?—Yes. That is why we want to get relief from that position.

6022. Unless you have some legislative powers which enable you to raise more funds, is this the position that you will be in, that the dock companies cannot develop their docks?—The dock company cannot develop their docks to the extent they would wish.

6023. Let us see what powers you have got. You could legally put up the 1s. tonnage rate to 1s. 6d.?—And more.

6024. More, because you say you can charge rent?—Yes.

6025. And you do not use that?—No.

6026. Why?—For a very good reason, but it is a little long. As you have explained, up to 1889 the dock companies were fighting. It was not a question, then, of either dock company increasing their rates; it was rather a question of a dock company reducing its rates so as to get the business. In 1889, under the Working Union Act, the dock companies came together, but as you have also explained, the East and West India Dock Company particularly was crippled by certain agreements which ran on for several years up to 1895 or 1896. The result of those agreements was that, if we had then raised the dues from 1s. to 1s. 6d., half—I am speaking approximately—of the lines coming to the docks having agreements would not have paid any more than they were doing; the other half would have paid more, and we held that it would have been a very unfair thing by any action on our part to practically make some lines, say, the P. and O. pay 1s. 6d. for their ships when their competitor was coming into Tilbury at 6d. Then, so soon as those agreements ran out and we were free to make a change, we attempted in 1896 to carry through this change to which you have been referring in my evidence, and which the shipowners supported.

6027. That is the American clause?—Yes. When the shipowners deserted us, and we found we were not strong enough by ourselves to carry that through, we accepted a small extra payment from the shipowners. Some of us were very much against accepting it. From then we have been constantly looking into this question, and the result of it was that last year we went for this Lighterage Bill, and one of the reasons why between 1896 and last year we could not do anything with it was the position of the two companies; we were not amalgamated. So soon as we were amalgamated and were one concern, we went for this Lighterage Bill, but we have been all along perfectly certain that we could do this with a stroke of the pen.

6028. Does this statement of Mr. Holland correctly express the facts—"Moreover, the cost to the ship-

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owners of discharging and loading their cargoes in London is already, owing to dearer labour and the peculiar arrangements of the port, probably greater than any other port in England."—Yes.

6029. Then Mr. Holland also says: "The dock companies hesitate therefore to place any further burden on the shipping trade, though they may be driven to do so, failing the present remedy." That is one legal power which you do not use?—Which we can.

6030. Which you can legally use, but which you do not propose to use as a matter of business?—I do not propose anything at present, and I do not say I do not propose to do it.

6031. You suggest that you have the power to charge the goods intended for overside, which are put on your quay, delivered to barges, and the barges which come to fetch them the full goods rate?—I do not know that anybody has ever denied it.

6032. You have never tried it?—No, because the circumstances have not arisen.

6033. You think you have that power?—Certainly.

6034. You do not propose to use either of those powers?—Pardon me. I do not say whether I propose to use them or not. If you read my evidence you will find that we do propose if we get further relief that we should have a reduction in our powers of charging dues, and undoubtedly it would follow if we got this right to charge goods put on the quays, we should not then claim the right to make another charge, which we also really have.

See 5592.

6035. Now, I want to ask you a little more about this American clause. You gave the figures for 1888 of the total tonnage entering from North American and Canadian ports as 683,000 tons, and for 1899 a million and a half, roughly?—Yes.

6036. Do you suggest that that increase is due to the introduction of the American clause?—I only quote that because it was stated before that clause was introduced that that clause was going to ruin the American trade; and if it is good for one party to say that that clause will ruin that trade, it is good for me to say, "This is what has resulted." I do not say in consequence of that change, but in spite of it.

6037. What is the cause of this increase? Is it that the Atlantic Transport Line began running after 1888?—If the Atlantic Transport Line had not begun running, and there had been business doing, there were other lines coming to London before. This trade has grown. It does not depend on one line of steamers.

6038. You do not suggest that it is because of the American clause that this great increase has taken place?—I say the steamers of the Atlantic Transport Company could not discharge and do their work, as they had to do, without this clause.

See 5626

6039. Now, I want to ask some questions about your proposals. The increased revenue asked is £234,000, is it?—Yes.

6040. I see one of the things you are willing to agree to is that the maximum dividend shall be 4 per cent.?—Yes.

6041. Would you mind telling the Commission what amount per year is necessary to raise your dividend to 4 per cent.?—On last year's figures?

6042. The last figures I have got here are 1899?—About £160,000.

6043. Then, if that 4 per cent. clause is to be acted upon, and you propose to pay 4 per cent., it will absorb £160,000 of the £234,000 which you are asking. Then you said: "The provision of a reserve fund not to exceed 10 per cent. of the total nominal amount of the capital stocks of the company." If you acted on that to the full amount you would require to provide £1,700,000?—That is on the capital stock plus the debentures. It would be less than that.

See 5626

6044. You told Mr. Lyttelton, and I think you told the Chairman, that you would by next Monday produce what you were willing to bind yourself to spend?—No, pardon me. I did not say what I was willing to bind myself to spend, because I have not got the estimates out, and it is absolutely impossible between now and Monday to get out the estimates. What I told Mr. Lyttelton—and I am sorry if I misled him—was that I would state definitely what works I would bind myself to carry out.

6045. I do not know what you are going to tell Mr. Lyttelton on Monday, but when you made this proposal what did you propose to spend £234,000 on. This is to give you £234,000 a year?—Yes.

6046. When you made this proposal what did you propose to spend that amount on?—When we made this proposal what we had in view was the new dock. Then we had in view considerable works which we had to carry out. As I mentioned this morning, our engineer has drawn up a system by which we should remodel the whole of the Albert Dock. We are only waiting to see how this new scheme of the Albert Dock Extension works. There are many other things which from time to time will have to be done, as I have stated before the Commission. Our shareholders have in the last 20 years provided £3,700,000 for the advantage of the port. The advantage to the shareholders has been that that money has cost them to raise, I suppose, something like 3 to 4 per cent., and it has earned 1½ per cent., and the whole of the difference has had to come out of the shareholders' pockets.

6047. I understand the general statement, but had you any definite figures before you when you asked for this amount of £234,000? Was it allocated to docks, was it allocated to works, or was it allocated to increase of dividend?—No, certainly not.

6048. You had not gone into that at all when you asked for it?—Not definite figures allocated. What we had to do is what we claim we ought to try to do; that is to put the company into such a financial position that it can carry out these new works, and carry on work on reasonable forms.

6049. Did you propose to spend any part of it on increase of dividend?—Certainly.

6050. How much?—It is stated here that the dividend is limited to 4 per cent.

6051. Then you propose to spend £160,000?—No, I do not say that at all. One can only deal with the dividend when the time comes for declaring it, and it is quite impossible for me to say to-day what amount of dividend we are going to declare in two or three years. It might have happened that our warehousing business had fallen off, and instead of our having a gain of £234,000, we might have nothing like it.

6052. Surely when you asked for a definite figure you had some definite ideas as to how you were going to spend it?—Yes.

6053. What were they?—I have been trying to explain perfectly frankly to you. We wish to put this company into a position in which it can borrow the money reasonably. So long as our deferred ordinary stock is only paying a little over 13s. 4d., the company is not in such a financial position, and we have spent so much of our money in improving the property that we think we have the right to put it into that position. The Port has had the benefit of Tilbury. The Dock Company would have been infinitely better off if Tilbury had never been built.

6054. Then I understand that you are unable to produce any definite figures as to how you propose to expend the extra revenue you are asking for?—Yes, if you like to put it in that way, but I think you are going too far when you do so.

6055. Can you supply me with definite figures?—I should like to ask you——

6056. I am afraid you must not?—Not that question at all. It would be like, if you were looking forward to a certain increase in income in two or three years, asking how you would spend it. I cannot tell you.

6057. Now let me ask you something else. This proposal only deals with a part of the Port?—Certainly.

6058. Am I right in saying that about four-ninths of the ships coming into the Port in 1899 used your docks?—I have given you the figures.

6059. Just see whether these figures are right. 9½ million tons came into port in 1899, and 4,200,000 came into your docks?—About that.

6060. That is about four-ninths of the ships and of the goods 14½ millions came into the Port, and nearly five millions to your docks?—Where do you get those figures from?

6061. I get the figures by adding "from foreign ports" and "coastwise"?—That has nothing to do with the goods.

6062. Is it the tonnage of the ships?—Yes.

6063. Where shall I find the goods?—I do not know.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) That is just an illustration. Is counsel to occupy the time of the Commission in this way? It is not for counsel to state to the witness; it is for counsel to extract from the witness his information.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I asked Mr. Scott if he could tell me.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) That is the wrong way to do it.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Perhaps I can help you. There are no returns as to the tonnage of goods coastwise. All the figures as to goods which have been given us are goods in the foreign trade.

6064. (*Mr Scrutton.*) What I want is this. Are you making any suggestions to the Commission for dealing with the rest of the tonnage and the rest of the ships which do not use your docks?—No.

6065. Is the proposal limited to the part of the tonnage and the part of the ships that use your docks?—Yes.

6066. You make no proposal for dredging the river?—I have no authority over the river.

6067. Or for any of the other docks?—No, certainly not.

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(*Mr. Scrutton.*) That, my lord, is all I have to ask as to facts, and I understand that as to policy you do not desire any questions?

(*Chairman.*) That is so.

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) My lord, I appear for the Surrey Commercial Dock Co. Will you require Mr. Malcolm, our chairman, here on Monday? I gather from Mr. Wallace that the London and India Docks Company will not finish their case on that day.

(*Chairman.*) I should hardly think so.

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) Will you say you will not call Mr. Malcolm on Monday?

(*Chairman.*) I think we can say more than that. I will say we will give due notice when his presence is required, and we will do that in the case of all witnesses.

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) I am obliged to your lordship.

Recalled, **6068.**

(Adjourned to Monday next, May 13, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

Monday, 13th May, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The HON. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*

Mr. Balfour Browne, K.C., and Mr. George Wallace appeared on behalf of the London and India Docks Company.

Mr. Lewis Coward, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. Loehnis appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. Scrutton, K.C., and Mr. J. B. Porter appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. Daldy appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. Claude Baggallay, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. K. Harper appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. James Cranstoun appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. Rowland Whitehead appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. C. J. C. Scott.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES CATER SCOTT re-called and further examined.

May 1901.

See 6666–8; 7916.

6068. (*Chairman.*) Will you be kind enough to refer to Question No. 608 in the minutes. You promised to give us the items constituting the sum of £109,000 charged for maintenance. Have we had those particulars?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I do not think you have had them, because Mr. Scott said he would have them by the next meeting, and he was not called after that day.

(*Chairman.*) We understood he would be good enough to put them in.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) The matter has been overlooked if the figures have not been put in.

6069. (*Chairman.*) In any case, Mr. Scott, I hope you will be good enough to put them in?—Yes. Now may I make a short statement in answer to a question that Sir Robert Giffen put to me the other day?

6070. Will you give us the reference to it?—It begins at Question 5708: "Yes. I infer from this paragraph that as a lighterman he received a large compensation, and, of course, as a lighterman he would receive the benefit of the free water clause." I have now before me the appendix to the third report of the Select Committee on Foreign Trade, 1824, which I propose to put in. There it states the amount of compensations paid away to different people in connectiaon with this matter, and I find on page 78 that the compensations are divided into five classes.

"First, of freeholders, leaseholders, wharfingers and warehouse keepers. Second, of the Corporation of London and their appointees, city companies, tackle house-porters, and ticket-porters. Third, of carmen, carroons, and merchants, etc., for additional expenses. Fourth, of lightermen, foremen to lightermen, lumpers, watchmen, and gangsmen. Fifth, of coopers, clerks to wharfingers, victuallers and miscellaneous." So that all the compensations claimed were distributed under one or the other of those five headings. Then further on in the list I find that John Drinkald, the elder, and another claimed as lightermen. He did not claim as wharfinger, but he claimed distinctly as a lighterman. The amount of compensation which he claimed was £28,955 18s., and the amount of compensation which he received was £3,327 19s. as a lighterman. I put that table in with your Lordship's permission.

(*The Witness handed in Accounts relating to Port of London compensations. See Appendix 18th day, No. 1.*)

You may remember that at the moment there was a question whether he had received that compensation *qua* lighterman or *qua* warehouseman.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

Will your Lordship allow me to cross-examine next on behalf of the London County Council? Of course, we are out of the conflict of trade interests, and it may be convenient for the Commissioners if I cross-examine first.

(*Chairman.*) Will you be kind enough to indicate to the Commissioners the points upon which you wish to cross-examine?

6701. I will as I go on. First of all I wish to ask one question about these compensations. Will you turn to Question 5581. You will find it refers there to a very large sum, variously stated at £1,000,000, £1,600,000, and £2,000,000, as paid to the proprietors or occupants of wharves, and so on. I want to get this clear. Was it compensation paid in respect of the specific docks as they were constructed?—I do not quite follow the question.

6072. I will try to make it a little clearer. Was it paid as compensation in respect of the injury caused by the specific docks, or as compensation for the change of system in the port. Does that make it clear to you?—Yes. I should say as compensation for the change of system in the port.

6073. I want also to understand this. You said in answer to Question 5583, "Provision was made by the Act for the repayment of the moneys so paid out of the Consolidated Fund by charging them on the port dues payable to the Crown; and the accounts show that at any rate the greater part of those moneys was in fact so repaid to the Government." If the port dues or Crown dues, I will call them, were given in respect of anything else, such as canal works or anything of that kind, you could not strictly speak of these as a repayment to the Government, could you?—But were the Crown dues given in respect of canal works?

6074. Let me put it in this way. Are you assuming in that answer when you talk about repayment to the Government that the Crown dues were expressly created for the purpose of paying off these compensations?—I do not think the Crown dues were expressly created for the purpose of paying off those amounts advanced.

6075. The point I want to get clear is this. If those were dues which would have come to the Government anyhow under the arrangement this repayment to the Consolidated Fund would have been a mere piece of Government book keeping?—Yes.

6076. I thought if you would clear it up and tell us which of those two it was, it would be convenient?—I am afraid I cannot, really. The point I wanted to emphasise was that so far as this money was advanced it was not advanced to the dock companies at all. It was quite independent of the dock companies?

6077. Quite so. But it was a buying up of existing business *pro tanto*?—It was compensation for disturbance.

6078. It was equivalent to a buying up of existing businesses. The Government also bought up the legal quays at that time, did they not?—Yes.

6079. And paid for them quite independently of these compensations?—I could not tell you.

6080. I am going to suggest to you that commercially the Government did so far find capital for the dock undertaking?—No, I cannot see that. I have put in a Treasury account, which shows exactly what the Government did pay for.

6081. I only want to put the point to you to see what you say about it. Now would you mind turning to Question No. 5887. Speaking of the state of things in the year 1855, you say that the companies were still in a sound financial condition?—Yes.

6082. I want to ask you to give us as nearly as you can the year when the companies ceased to be in a sound financial position?—You will find if you turn to Appendix, 16th day, No. 7, that up to 1877 the India Dock Company paid 6 per cent., 7 per cent., 5½ per cent., and 6 per cent. In the year 1878 they paid 5½ per cent, and from that time forward the dividend gradually diminished until *nil* was reached in 1887, so that I should say that dating from the year 1880 or thereabouts the companies came into an unsatisfactory financial position.

6083. In the year 1855, when this proposal was brought forward, there was a book or pamphlet published in which the grounds upon which the dock companies sought a repeal of the free water clause were set out on the one side, and the answers of the objectors on the other?—I think I have seen it.

6084. If you have a copy it may be that the Commission might desire to see it. May I take it that the book itself sets out authoritatively, or, if not, fairly, the contentions of the dock company at that time in support of the repeal of the free-water clause?—I should rather like to look at it before I answer that question.

6085. If you have not considered it I will not press you further?—I should think it would fairly represent the contentions of the dock company.

6086. Now I want to ask a few questions as to the position with regard to the administration of the Board of Directors acting in the interests of the shareholders, and not as a public body acting in the general interests of the Port. Of course, you would concede that in some matters there must be a conflict of interests between the dock shareholders and the general interests of the Port?—I do not see it except in this way, that the conflict of interests has been that the dock shareholders in the last twenty years have found £3,700,000 of money for the administration of the Port, on which they have received a return of 1½ per cent., so that the conflict of interest has been entirely in favour of the Port.

6087. But in deciding upon any given charge to be made upon the goods, any given expenditure of money, or anything of that kind, there may be a conflict between the interest of the dock stockholders and the general interest of the Port?—I do not think so. I think their interests go together. It is the interests of the dock shareholders and stockholders to develop the Port. Anything which they do which would be against the Port is against the interests of the dock stockholders and shareholders.

6088. I am going to suggest to you one or two matters in which that conflict might arise. I will get this first. Of course, with your Board, in any case, if that conflict arose the interest of the stockholders would be paramount?—I do not admit it at all.

6089. Of course, with directors of public companies the interests of the stock-holders would be paramount?—Of course, we are bound to study the interests of our stockholders as well.

6090. I quite agree. I should like to get it clearly. If you have not considered it, I will not press you, but I ask you whether, as a matter of fact, and as a matter of conduct of an undertaking like this, in case of a conflict between the interests of the stockholders and the general interests of the Port the interests of the stock holders would not necessarily be paramount?—In such a case as you put before me, I do not admit that such a case has ever arisen—undoubtedly the duty of the directors would be to see that their stockholders did not suffer.

6091. For instance, both in your past charges on goods, and in deciding the charges between the different kinds of goods like hides, petroleum, hemp, and one thing and another, and also in any charge which you propose to make, might there not be a conflict between the interests of the company or interests of the general public, and the interests of the dock shareholders?—I do not think so.

6092. I have looked at the tables that you have given us, showing the net earnings of the two companies, that is Table 12 of Appendix No. 6 on the second day. I will not ask you to go through the figures now. Just look at Tables 11 and 12. What I want to direct your attention to is this. I find that taking round figures in the case of the London and St. Katharine Dock Company, to which Table 11 relates, and before the eleven years up to 1899, the net earnings only exceed the sum paid in dividends and interest by about £5,000 on the whole. I will not ask you to total up all the figures now?—Are you taking Table 11 separately, or Tables 11 and 12 together?

6093. I am taking the London and St. Katharine first. As far as I can see, in the last eleven years up to 1899, the net earnings were all paid away in interest and dividends with the exception of about £5,000?—I cannot total up the figures, but if you have done so, and say it is £5,000, I will accept it.

6094. In the case of the East and West India Dock Company, which is dealt with in Table 12, I think you will find that the moneys paid in interest and dividends for those exceed the net earnings by something like £158,000?—Yes; I daresay it is so.

6095. Would you have expended the net earnings in that way if you had been carrying on the undertaking in the general interest of the port?—I think, in dealing with these figures, you are now dealing with the eleven years 1889 to 1899. Those were precisely the eleven years when the Joint Committee was in existence. The Joint Committee administered the entire property of both dock companies, and all new works were carried out by the Joint Committee. The two separate companies simply existed for the purpose of distributing the net earnings, which they received from the Joint Committee, amongst their proprietors. The two separate companies in that way were not responsible for the working. It was a very curious sort of arrangement, an arrangement which we have since seen carried out with a couple of railway companies. And you must remember that, so far as the East and West India Dock Company were concerned, they were not paying dividends, but they were paying interest, which was a debt. They paid no dividends during that time.

6096. Not on preference shares or stocks?—No. I think it was entirely interest—not dividends.

6097. Either you had no preference stock, or you

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were not paying dividends upon it?—Until 1898 they paid no dividend on their preference stock. The London Company in the meantime were receiving a certain amount from the Joint Committee, and that amount was for distribution amongst their stockholders, after paying interest on their debenture debt.

6098. You also referred in Question 5587 to a number of works which the Joint Committee have carried out since 1888 out of capital?—Yes.

6099. Will you first tell me whether, in order to find out what works in the way of improvements and new works were actually done, I ought to add anything to that for expenditure for improvement and new works out of revenue, or does that statement that you have given represent the whole expenditure on improvements and new works in those eleven years?—The Joint Committee could not spend any of the revenue on new works. They were entirely an administrative body, and before they could spend any capital at all they had to get the consent of both companies. When the Joint Committee was first started, they endeavoured to carry out the plan of the two old companies to a great extent, spreading money for new works over a certain number of years, and charging it to revenue. After two or three years they were advised they had no power to do that at all, and consequently everything they spent on new works had to be charged to capital.

6100. Then I may take it that that does represent the whole of the money actually expended on improvements and new works during that period?—Are you speaking now of Question 5588?

(*Mr. Ellis.*) You refer to the £3,700,000?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) Yes, that is it. I want to find out how much the company have been spending.

(*Witness.*) By far the greater part of that amount was spent before the 11 years. It was in 20 years. That included the expenditure on Tilbury. It included the expenditure on a new entrance to the Albert Dock, which took place before the 11 years with which you are dealing. You find that in that question I stated that in 20 years that was the expenditure. So that those figures that you are reading there do not come into line with the 11 years from Tables 11 and 12 to which you just now referred?

6101. I think the best way of clearing it up will be to as kyou to look at Table 9 in Appendix 6 of the second day. There is a table of capital expenditure of the Joint Committee totalling up to £627,000?—Certainly.

6102. That was really what I wanted to ask you about. May I take it that that table shows all the money that was expended in new works and improvements during the 11 years?—No, I should not say all, because we had a system. Supposing we were carrying out works for £50,000, and that necessitated the destruction of existing works to the tune of £20,000, we would only debit to capital the £30,000. The £20,000 we charge to revenue.

6103. I want to take out a few of those items which seem to refer clearly to the warehousing part of your business, so as to see what was spent on the docks themselves. The first item of the frozen meat store is warehousing, is it not?—Certainly.

6104. The Victoria Graving Dock is perhaps dock?—That is most distinctly not warehouse. You do not warehouse in a graving dock.

6105. The works erected by the London Grain Elevator Company. That is only £10,000, and that is warehousing, is it not?—No; it is as much in connection with shipping. It was a facility for shipping.

6106. I will take it both. Those improvements on Blackwall entrance, that is dock?—Yes.

6107. Refrigerating chambers?—That would be warehousing.

6108. Then there is a new cut—that is, dock?—Yes.

6109. Improvements on the South West India Dock; and then there are sundry other new works?—Yes.

6110. Those amount to a considerable sum, over £200,000. The Victoria Dock item is cold storage accommodation, and that is in the nature of warehousing?—No, not entirely cold storage.

6111. Chiefly?—There was a considerable amount of that for new sheds, which would be dock work.

6112. Could you tell us, if necessary, how much of the items included in this bracket are attributable to the dock undertaking as opposed to the warehousing?—Yes, I could get it out almost exactly. I should say the greater part of it was dock—speaking from memory.

6113. But I should think that if you divide the total figure that you have by eleven it gives an expenditure of some £57,000 a year for the average for both purposes?—Yes.

6114. If you take out the dock purposes only, it would probably not come to much over £30,000 a year?—Will you pardon my saying I do not think you are quite fair in putting it in that way. You must remember that immediately before these eleven years we had spent an amount getting on to three millions on the Tilbury Dock, and the fairer plan would be to take that expenditure, because, having built the Tilbury Dock, we had done all that was necessary to bring the trade up to the level required then. For several years, in fact, I might say almost until the last two or three years, we had a large margin of unoccupied space in the Tilbury Dock. Now that has gone. I do not think it is quite fair to take a year which very likely excludes an enormous expenditure for dock matters pure and simple, and then in the subsequent years to say you have only spent so much.

6115. With your answer I hope it will become a fair question and answer when you take them together. Those sums which I have named to you are a mere fraction compared with what was spent in the Mersey or the Clyde on new works and improvements—the average expenditure for those purposes during those years?—Again I do not think it is quite fair to exclude all expenditure.

(*Chairman.*) Mr. Scott is not concerned with the Mersey or the Clyde. I think you must confine your questions to his own docks, and not his opinion as to the Mersey and the Clyde.

(*Mr. Daldy.* If your Lordship pleases.

6116. There is a Table shown in Question 5587. You may be able to help us with an explanation about one item in that. If you pass from the year 1892 to 1893 you will see that there is a diminution in your foreign trade tonnage of, roughly, 150,000 tons. Then, if you turn on to the next column but one the corresponding diminution in the import goods on which you received dues is not only 150,000 tons, but something like 130,000 as well as 150,000 in those 280,000. That almost appears to want some explanation?—I think the year 1892 does require some explanation; 1892 was the year of the Russian famine, and practically no grain was shipped from Russia. In that year there was an enormous amount of grain shipped from America, and we get far more of the American grain than we do of the Russian; practically I think I may say we get no Russian grain. In consequence of the Russian famine and the short supply coming from Russia, our receipts were enormously increased on American grain. That accounts for the entire difference in that year.

6117. I am not quite sure whether I understand you about that. What I am calling your attention to is not that year. Receipts increased from 1892 to 1893, but they diminished so enormously more than the diminution in the total trade. Assuming that you lost the whole of the trade that did not come in at all, that would reduce the amount from £1,131,000 to something under £1,000,000, but it actually goes down to £856,893, and it makes me think that there must be something in the way of agreements expiring, or something of that kind, which will want explanation?—If you are on the question of agreements expiring, I have told you there were none.

6118. I do not want to go into that if I can possibly help it. I only want to see what the value of this table is?—These figures are absolutely correct. They were not taken out for the purpose of the Commission in any way.

6119. Do not for a moment think I am suggesting that?—What I want to tell you about 1892 is precisely what I have said. Our figures were abnormal by the enormous receipts in American grain at that time caused by the falling off of the exports from Russia. Speaking from memory, I think for a certain portion of the time there was an actual prohibition of export of grain from Russia.

6120. I am not sure that I follow your answer, but I will not press you on the point. I do not want to go into it?—There is another point I should like to speak of. Grain is a business that has to be worked very cheaply indeed. Practically there is very little profit on grain until it stays on rent. We were doing then for the benefit of the public an enormous amount of grain business practically for little more than the cost of working. We do to-day.

6121. Even now I do not see that that explains the fall in that particular year of 1892 to 1893. Still I will not press it further?—In 1893 Russia was resuming her shipments, and those from America which come into our docks consequently fell off.

6122. Now will you turn to Question 5597? You said: "The size and draught of the modern steamer places the possibility of its discharge in the river out of the question." Then you spoke of your river quay which you put up outside the Albert Dock?—Yes, and further on I speak of a river quay which is inside the basin at Tilbury.

6123. Supposing a public or private authority were to establish deep water jetties in the river, would they in fact seriously compete with the docks or not?—It depends what they charged for them.

6124. Then it comes to this: that such jetties with a lower charge than yours would seriously compete with you?—Certainly; I think they would.

6125. I thought your evidence in those passages I have called your attention to rather went to show that a pier of this kind was a white elephant which nobody would make use of?—I have no doubt that if you put up jetties like that, and told a shipper they would have them for practically nothing they would go to them. But short of that, on anything like reasonable terms they would immensely prefer the sheltered water in the docks.

6126. May I take it that you would go so far as to say that such deep water jetties could not compete with the docks unless they made a charge which was very much smaller than the corresponding dock charge?—That is my opinion, and I am strengthened in that opinion from the fact that we find to-day a great many coasters which might do their work in the river without paying anything to the docks, prefer to come into the docks and pay us charges.

6127. Now, will you turn to Question 5620? That is where you spoke of borrowing?—Yes.

6128. You said: "A short time back, when money was cheaper than at present, and the docks were in a weaker position than to-day, we were able to borrow at less then 3 per cent., and the London County Council were at the best only able to raise money at a fraction less." When you say you were able to borrow money at less than 3 per cent., do not those words go rather further than you mean? Do you mean you actually effected a loan at that rate?—Certainly; we put out a great deal of what was then our 4 per cent. debenture stock at 138, 139, and 140.

6129. You put a substantial amount of debenture stock upon the market at that rate?—Yes; a very substantial portion. During that time we were changing our debentures for debenture stock.

6130. You have admitted in the frankest possible way that you have selected the best dock debenture stock for comparison here?—Undoubtedly.

6131. That is, the London and St. Katharine debenture stock was backed, was it not, by a dividend of 4½ per cent. on 1,620,000 preference shares and a dividend of 2½ per cent. on 5½ millions of ordinary shares?—Yes.

6132. At that time, in 1896, did 4 per cent. debenture stock of the East and West India Dock stand at 115, or thereabouts?—I do not think they had any 4 per cent. in 1896.

6133. And of that, I think, there were something like £4,000,000 out?—Of course, the two dock companies were working together then, but I was not a director of the East and West India Dock Company, so perhaps I am not as fully acquainted with their figures as I ought to be.

6134. At the same time you put a table like this in your evidence, so I am obliged to ask you?—I am not objecting to your question, only I am apologising for not being able to answer you as easily as I ought to.

6135. Would that be about right—£4,000,000?—£3,000,000 at 4 per cent., I understand. *Mr. C. J. C. Scott.*

6136. I am told at that price that would return £3 9s 6d. per cent.?—Yes. 13 May 1901.

6137. Was this debenture stock that you issued in 1896 London and St. Katharine debenture stock?—Yes.

6138. Not East and West India at all?—No. When I spoke of the prices I was speaking of my own company, the London and St. Katharine Dock Company.

6139. The time you have selected, 1896, was, as a matter of fact, the time at which the London and St. Katharine was the top price of the year?—So was the London County Council. I did it intentionally, but I also gave you the prices, lower down, when both had fallen very considerably.

6140. With regard to that 3½ Metropolitan stock with which you have compared it in the year 1896, was that a stock on which any money had been borrowed since the year 1880?—I cannot tell you at all.

6141. Then you cannot tell me whether it was redeemable in 1929?

(*Chairman.*) We had it, I think, in the answer that they were both irredeemable.

(*Witness.*) They are both irredeemable.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I am afraid I must challenge that, but it may be that the witness did not know.

(*Witness.*) The London and St. Katharine debenture stock was certainly irredeemable, and I am told that the other was, too.

6142. I am told that it was redeemable in 1929. If you provide for the redemption you have to take off 10s. 3d. from the income?—Not altogether. If you had taken the price of Consols when they were very high you would have found there was very little allowance made in the price for the time that the interest would fall from 2¾ to 2½.

6143. Can you tell me one way or the other whether in the year 1896 the London County Council was raising money at a net interest of £2 6s. 1d.?—I cannot tell you. We know what they are raising it at to-day.

(*Chairman.*) I think that has hardly to do with us.

6144. (*Mr. Daldy.*) Now in Question 5626 you said (giving a reason for it) that it would be several years before any Trust could assume definite shape, and in the meantime the needs of the port, constantly growing, must remain unsatisfied. Do you say that this compensation must be assessed and paid before the Trust should be established at all? Or what is your reason for that statement?—I think if the Dock Companies are going to be bought out the question must be settled before they are bought out, how they are going to be bought out and what they are going to receive.

6145. And that is the meaning of your statement?—Certainly.

6146. That the transfer could not take place or the Trust be constituted until all the compensation had been assessed?—Yes.

6147. In Question 5626 you have given some figures about the yield from your proposed new rate. Do you anticipate that the imposition of these charges will relieve the congestion of the barges in the docks?—Undoubtedly.

6148. To a substantial extent?—It will tend that way, undoubtedly.

6149. In estimating your figure of £56,250 as the yield from barges, have you not assumed that the number of barge entries would remain the same as before?—Undoubtedly.

6150. So there would be some reduction from that figure?—I think there probably would be.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) If your Lordship will allow me, it is possible this question may go rather on policy, but I would like, with your Lordship's permission, to ask the witness one or two further questions.

6151. Would not the dock undertaking be substantially benefited by the deepening of the river to 30ft. up to the Albert Dock entrance?—The dock undertaking would be benefited in this respect: that it would benefit the trade of the port; but the dock undertaking would not be benefited unless we went to a very considerable expenditure.

6152. May I put it in this way? Assuming that

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the public authority became bound to-morrow to deepen the river up to the entrance of the Albert Dock, would it improve the value of the dock undertaking forthwith or not?—I am not sure that it would, and I will tell you why. If you had the river deepened to that extent, so that ships could come up at any time, we should practically have to make our dock so that we could lock in at any time. Locking in at any time when the tide was very low would mean extra pumping, and, consequently, extra dredging. It would be a great advantage to the trade of the port, but whether it would be a great advantage to the docks, I question.

6153. I think you have already said that this proposed extension of the Albert Dock is dependent upon the deepening of the river. It would not be a commercially practical thing unless the river is deepened too?—We propose to carry that out, believing that whoever has charge of the river will deepen the river.

6154. I think you are answering my question in the affirmative. If you knew for certain that the river would not be deepened, would you carry out that proposed Albert Dock extension?—We should carry it out. We might not carry it out to its full extent. Possibly we might not make the entrance quite as deep, because it would be useless to make an entrance so deep if we knew that the vessels could not come up there. Of course to-day, when you have high water, the vessels would come into that new entrance. What you propose is that the vessels shall be able to come up at any time by the deepening of the river. But at high water now (if that dock was in existence to-day) we could use that new entrance.

6155. I think your answer is, if I may put it shortly, that, assuming no deepening of the river, you would still go on with that to a certain extent?—Certainly.

Cross-examined by Mr. Shaw.

If your Lordship pleases, I would like to ask a few questions on behalf of the North London Railway Company. The first point I would like to put would be rather historical. It will be about the connection between the North London Railway and the Dock Company. I do not think your Lordship has had it yet.

6156. You have been giving past history. I want to ask you a few questions with regard to the history of the Poplar Docks. I think about 1846 there was a suggestion made that railway connection should be made with the docks in London?—I should think so.

6157. Then I think a company was promoted which was the predecessor in title of the North London Railway Company to make that access?—I think very likely, but I was not a director of the East and West India Dock Company, who made the arrangements with the North London Railway Company, and I cannot speak of those things from my own knowledge.

6158. You have been giving the history of this; I thought it was only fair to put the question to you, because my witness, Mr. Newton ——

(*Chairman.*) He was so ill, I think we did not have the advantage of his evidence.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) It is only fair to Mr. Scott that he should have an opportunity of answering what Mr. Newton has to say about those things.

(*Chairman.*) Do you not think it would be better to have Mr. Newton first?

6159. (*Mr. Shaw.*) I will leave the history to a certain extent alone if you do not know it; but I must the agreement which was come to between the Dock ask you a few questions which arise out of it. Under Company and the North London Railway Company, or the predecessors in title, certain moneys were paid over to the Dock Companies?—Yes.

6160. In Appendix No. 31, of the 16th day, I see you put down that the figure received from the North London Railway Company was £4,580 in 1899?—Yes.

6161. That is not the total sum that the North London paid, was it?—I believe so.

6162. Is it not the fact that in 1899 they paid you something like £36,000?—For compensation?

6163. No, not compensation. I must go back again, so as to give you an opportunity of understanding. Under the agreement by which the North London Railway Company turned the timber pond that was there into a dock at their own expense, they were to pay you wharfage rates, rent, and warehouse charge. Did not the total of that come in 1899 to £36,000 odd?—Certainly not.

6164. Has it not been for the last 10 years over £30,000 per annum?—No, certainly not.

6165. Perhaps in that £4,580 you have not included what the London and North-Western Railway Company, and the Great Western Railway Company, and the Great Northern Railway Company, who were tenants of part of the Poplar Docks, have paid you?—Certainly not. This is the amount paid by the North London Railway Company. It is not the amount paid by any other railway.

6166. I am dealing with the total amount, because we are liable to you for it. That £36,000 is the total amount you have got out of Poplar Dock?—I think you are wrong. You are not liable for it at all. We get that from other railway companies.

6167. We are tenants of yours under a lease of 999 years. We are liable to pay you for everything that goes into that dock what the railway companies, who are sub-tenants, pay. Of course, if they do not pay, we should be liable?—I do not think so.

6168. That is a legal question. But will you accept it from me that the total amount that was paid to you in 1899 out of what went into Poplar Dock was £36,000? Or could you get it for me? That is what we have got that was paid, and for the last ten years it has been a good deal over £30,000?—The North London Railway Company do not pay it at all.

6169. I put it that out of traffic that goes into Poplar Dock you get the benefit to the tune of between £30,000 and £36,000 in a year?—In other words, you would say that the amount we received from traffic going into the Poplar Dock is very considerably in excess of that amount of £4,580. See 11618.

6170. Certainly?—Yes.

6171. And is it not the case that it was in 1899 £36,000?—I question it, but I will try to get out the figures.

6172. And that is a return which you get, the North London Railway having done all the capital expenditure, and you having done nothing?—No.

6173. Have you spent a halfpenny on Poplar Dock? Was it not entirely built and paid for out of the North London capital?—May I ask, do not we allow you 7 per cent. on certain amounts of money spent by you?

6174. Those are entirely out of the takings of the dock before we hand you over the balance?—Exactly; and it is all part of an agreement with you.

6175. I quite agree?—Under which we lock your barges in and out. They have the use of our water, and occasionally we find that you break away from that agreement, as we had occasion a little time ago to draw Mr. Newton's attention to, and Mr. Newton had to admit it, and say they were doing what they had no business to do.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) I did not want to go into the breaking away from the agreement.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I am told that the agreement between the dock company and the North London Railway Company is a very long and elaborate lease, and I believe it would be very hard to say what every right of every party in it was.

(*Chairman.*) I do not think we want to go into this, Mr. Shaw. If you ask him as to the figure, I think that will be perfectly fair.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) I wanted to get the figures before your Lordship.

(*Witness.*) My lord, if you will kindly allow me, I will try to get out a statement showing what income we receive from the Poplar Dock, and how it is charged and how it is received.

6176. (*Mr. Shaw.*) That figure I have been putting to you, I think, includes a sum of £500 a year which we pay to you towards the cost of pumping?—Received in recent years in consideration of your being allowed to do certain things.

6177. I only want to get the fact?—I think it has been paid for about three or four years.

6178. Now I just want to ask you a few questions about the barges. It is almost essential, is it not, to the trade carried on in the Poplar Dock, that barges should come in?—Yes, I should say distinctly so. See 11788

6179. I think the question about the barges has been raised two or three times between the North London Railway Company and the dock company?—Yes.

6180. I think in 1855 you introduced an Act of Parliament which was thrown out on the second reading, which has been referred to. You gave an undertaking to the North London Railway Company that even if you got your bill you would not charge the barges going to Poplar Dock?—I do not know of it. It may be so, but it is very ancient history, and I certainly could not tell you.

6181. Since then is it not the fact that over and over again you have tried to get relief from this obligation, and have failed both before the courts and before Parliament. I am putting it generally?—No, I cannot admit that at all.

6182. Have you not tried to charge on certain barges and the North London Railway Company have had to pay? I can give you cases?—I know of a case quite lately, within the last few years.

6183. That was only the last one, but I say generally was that not the case?—I know of that one case. It was the Burham case.

6184. But that was not the only one, was it?—Will you name another?

6185. In 1878 you tried to charge 6d. on the registered tonnage of barges laden with goods. Will you tell me if this is not true. At the close of the year 1878 the dock company, without giving any reason, sought to impose a charge of 6d. a ton on the registered tonnage?—Yes.

6186. The railway company commenced Chancery proceedings?—Yes.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, the witness may be in a slight difficulty because of course this relates to the India Dock Company, of which Mr. Scott was not a director at that time, in 1878. He never was a director of that company.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) I have nobody else to ask these questions of. The docks have all amalgamated now, and Mr. Scott, if I may say so, is the very capable Chairman of the London and India Docks Company.

(*Witness.*) Unfortunately I have no knowledge of what happened so many years ago.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) I will try to cut it very short.

(*Chairman.*) We would suggest that questions such as you are asking now should be put in examination-in-chief of the Poplar Dock witnesses.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) I expect they will be able to tell us. I will let it go at that. Of course I know a Royal Commission like this has a different way of dealing with witnesses. Mr. Newton will be called, no doubt, and he will go into this.

(*Chairman.*) It was only through Mr. Newton's illness that we did not hear him. Of course we shall hear him.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) I think this puts very fairly what the contention is. It is at Question 5597: "It will thus be seen that the exemption clause by reason of its accidental survival some 80 years ago." The word "accidental" is what I was going to ask about. Is it not the fact that the question of the barges was put before the Committee that you have referred to—the ques- of the barges was put before that Committee—the question of loading and unloading vessels from the side of the ship?—In what year?

6187. The Committee of 1823?—What I was referring to then I think I have stated in my evidence before, was that when the company sought an extension of their monoply and it was refused, this question of the exemption on barges was never raised in any form.

6188. But had not that Committee evidence before them that barges were then in the docks loading and unloading vessels?—I could not answer the question.

6189. Very well, I will put it in when I come to it?—May I ask for a further reference?

6190. I will get the reference for you. There are one or two places. I hav not had time to read that document. You will see it at page 81 in the report of the Committee on the Foreign Trade of the Country, 1823. The question I was putting to you is that this matter of loading and unloading into barges in the docks was at all events before that Committee that dealt with foreign trade. I see a question was asked Mr. Longlands how many ships had at one time been in the export dock. He says that there had been at one time 185 ships in that dock, but that only 130 could load. The question was before the Committee. I only want to draw you attention to that, because you have used the word "accidental"?—I think there the facts only are stated. What I say is that the question of exemption was never brought up at all.

6191. Now I leave that, and will ask you a question about finance. In Appendix No. 6 of the 2nd day there is Table No. 12, giving items of expenditure on new works charged to revenue account and the amount used in diminution of cost of works. For the West India Dock Company you say from 1804 to 1882 there was charged for maintenance and new works, £862,000. Allow for revenue account, say, £6,000 a year?—Yes.

6191A. As I understand it that figure is a figure that you propose to put back to capital account?—Not at all. We do not deal with that. That is simply a statement showing items of expenditure. In our accounts we do not propose to do that.

6192. Then I will deal with it on that basis. How do you arrive at that amount?—It is taken from the accounts as far as it could be, and where we could not get the correct figures it is estimated.

6193. Is it not the fact that while this dock had that monopoly you were under a statutory obligation? You were allowed big rates and a monopoly, and limited to 10 per cent.; everything over 10 per cent. that you got had to go in the improvement of your docks. Under the Act of Parliament 39 George III., cap. 69, you were under an obligation to expend all the money that you got over the 10 per cent. upon the improvement of your dock?—What you would really say is that this ought to be charged to capital.

6194. No, it ought to be charged to revenue in the ordinary way; it ought to have gone out of the common funds as it was treated up to that time?—But if you charge that to revenue you will put off the time when you can pay your full percentage and reduce your charges.

6195. You are making a hardship that you had to spend all this money out of capital account. It was part of your bargain with Parliament that you were to spend it?—No, I do not say that.

(*Chairman.*) I must ask you to keep, please, to questions which affect the Poplar Dock.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) This is a question which affects the Poplar Dock. If they levy a tax on barges that will affect the income of the Poplar Dock.

(*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) It is very remote to go back to 1824 to deal with the present position of your Poplar Dock.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) I will not go any further. The only point was the figure that was put in. Now I am only going to ask one more question. £6,000 a year was put down. How do you get at that? In the old days during that period your cost of repairs was £15,000 a year?

(*Chairman.*) But that is hardly a question for us.

(*Mr. Shaw.*) Then I will not ask it. We can put it in in chief. Mr. Newton is coming, and I think he will be able to deal with the other questions.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

6196. I understand that his proposal is practically to lessen the competition, is it not, between you and the wharfingers?—No.

6197. You do not think that your proposal will hurt them?—It may hurt them to this extent—that at present they are charging our rate for services which we do for them, while we have to do these services ourselves.

6198. An adverse pecuniary effect would be produced upon the wharfingers?—They would be asked to pay for the services which they receive to-day for nothing.

6199. Let us just see historically how this matter arises. Originally goods that came into the river could only be landed at legal quays?—That is so.

6200. Which I think were established by Acts as far back as Queen Elizabeth's time originally, and were followed by Acts in Charles's time?—I believe so.

6201. Then in 1799 the first Dock Act was passed. That was an invasion of the existing monopoly of those legal quays?—For which they were compensated.

6202. I am merely asking you the facts. Parliament in granting the monopoly to the first of those docks for a period of 21 years made provisions, as you told us, for compensation. I do not think this has been quite

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clearly got. The docks did not pay that compensation?—No.

6203. It came, I think, by a tonnage rate on dues having been in the first instance provided from the Consolidated Fund of the country?— I believe so.

6204. Under that system matters progressed until the Foreign Trade Committee, of which we have heard in 1823, and that was at the time when the 21 years' monopoly was just about to expire?—About then.

6205. And was the precursor of the passing of the St. Katharine Dock Act, 1825?—It was before that certainly.

6206. And I suppose we may take it it was passed on the basis of the information acquired by the Committee, and that Act contains the exemption for lighters and overside delivery. I am not quite clear whether we have had it at present before the Commission. Originally the exemption was lighters only?—Yes.

6207. That is in the Act of 1799, the reason being, I take it, that you were given a monopoly then of landing particular classes of goods?—I do not know what the reason was. I can only say it was a fact.

6208. In 1825 it was apparently foreseen I suggest to you that the exemption of lighters would not be adequate protection for you, and the exemption was, therefore, extended to free goods?—I believe that was the date when it was extended, but what was foreseen I cannot say.

6209. To cut the rest short it has continued since?—Yes.

6210. May I remind you that in 1855 you were in Parliament?—Yes.

6211. I think the debate has already been referred to where Mr. Cardwell, the President of the Board of Trade, as he then was, opposed that on behalf of the Government?

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We have this clearly on the notes.

(*Chairman.*) Have you any question to ask in connection with that Act.

(*Mr. Harper.*) Yes, my Lord, I think I have.

(*Chairman.*) Then will you kindly put it?

(*Mr. Harper.*) I was trying to do so as rapidly as possible. I thought it better to lead up to it. I thought it was more advantageous than to put an isolated case.

6212. Mr. Cardwell pointed out their position as owners of water space and as large wharfingers, and said that "by granting the sought-for privilege you would undoubtedly place them in an unfair position to compete with their rivals"?—That is what he said.

6213. How do you suggest that circumstances have changed since then?—I do not admit that. That was the suggestion of one man. The Bill never went into Committee where those suggestions would have been threshed out.

6214. You are now proposing to levy, as I understand, two rates—one on the barge, and the other on the goods, and you have instanced other ports. You gave an illustration, for instance, of Manchester. But there was no wharfing business at Manchester until the docks were created there. The whole thing came into being at the same time, did it not?—I should think so.

6215. Therefore you would hardly say that was precisely an analogous case to London, which had a system of wharves which had been established for centuries?—I think the point is that when the docks were started the wharves were compensated.

6216. Do you suggest that the wharves were compensated for anything beyond the period for which Parliament granted the statutory monopoly?—I say they were compensated for the loss of this business.

6217. But that was in the Act of 1799 alone. Was there any compensation provided in the Act of 1825, or by any one of the succeeding Acts since fresh docks have been established?—No; but you started afresh in 1799. The wharves were compensated for the loss then, and you started afresh.

6218. That is your reading of the Act?—Yes.

6219. You estimate that the effect of what you want to do would be to produce a revenue of £234,000, but you told my friend, Mr. Daldy, this morning, that you estimate a reduction in the tonnage of barges?—I think it is very possible that there may be a reduction.

6220. That would mean the crippling of the wharves?—Not necessarily.

6221. It would mean less goods going to the wharves?—A great many goods go now to the up-town warehouses.

6222. I am speaking of wharves more particularly?—It might to a certain extent cripple them.

6223. Do you think it would be fair, in respect to any diversion caused by that abolition of the existing rate, that they should be compensated?—The question of compensation is not one for me to settle.

6224. You have not considered it?—Certainly not.

6225. You would produce about £234,000. 4 per cent. of your total debentures, I think, produces about £160,000?—No; you have not the figures at all correctly. That is the difference between the present amount which we pay on ordinary stock and the amount required to pay 4 per cent.

6226. To bring it up to 4 per cent. dividend?—Yes.

6227. And you would be left then with £74,000—the difference between that and £234,000, which you estimate. That would be whatever was coming to you from the lighterage dues and from the quayside tonnage due?—The total amount is, as I have put it, the amount we expect to realise from the dues on barges and the dues on goods.

6228. But, in addition to it it would have a tendency to divert this into your warehouses, and you would have the profit on that warehousing in addition?—Then the amount of this would be reduced accordingly. We could not charge it twice over.

6229. How would it be reduced?—Take the barges. If fewer barges come because the goods go, not necessarily into our warehouses—but go away for land delivery, or go into our warehouses, and we do not get these dues on the barges, of course, we should get an increased charge, either for the handling on the quay or for the warehouses.

6230. You would get quay rates and you would also get warehouse rates?—Not necessarily. You do not quite understand; we do not get quay rates and warehouse rates, too.

6231. You may, may you not?—No.

6232. Why not?—If we charge the warehouse rates we do not charge quay rates.

6233. As a matter of practice, you mean?—As a matter of practice.

6234. There is nothing to prevent you in law, is there?—No, except that there is always the outside competition. If we were to attempt to charge both quay rates and warehouse rates, we should not get any business.

6235. You have told us that you had no agreements with anybody for preferential rates. I understood you that all the railway companies were treated alike, and that they had a rate which was a cheap one?—It was a lower rate.

6236. That is putting them directly in competition, is it not, with the old water-borne traffic?—No; this was for expert business entirely.

6237. Do they get nothing on import?—No; nothing at all. The only exception is in the case of wool, where a very low quay rate is made, which would not affect the barge traffic at all. I think I am right in saying that all the wool warehouses are town warehouses, and have no river frontage excepting ours.

6238. Speaking of wool, you are very congested there, are you not, now?—Yes, very.

6239. You had to refuse some 2,000 tons the other day, did you not?—I quite admit there has been a tremendous amount of wool coming in lately on account of the way the prices have fallen, and not only have we been so congested, but we have had to keep wool down there on account of the other wool warehouses which have not been able to take it.

6240. Might I ask you, while I am on that point, what the present state of your warehousing accommodation is? It is pretty full?—Yes, at the present moment.

6241. You could not warehouse much more goods?—Oh, yes.

6242. What class?—Various classes.

6243. Tell me in what warehouse you have much available space?—Sugar, for instance.

6244. There is a special reason, is there not, why that may fall off at present?—I think you do not perhaps realise one of the difficulties of a warehousing business. We may have a great deal of space that is not occupied, for the reason that you cannot mix up different trades. You have a warehouse, say, allocated for indigo, and that warehouse may be occupied for a certain time. To-day we have a very small stock of indigo, but we cannot put other goods into the warehouse.

6245. Not to mix them?—No; and very often you could not put them at all, because the dust from the indigo gets into the warehouse to such an extent that it would damage other goods that came in. You cannot mix up goods indiscriminately.

6246. To an extent, I suppose, that is what a wharfinger does, is it not?—I do not think any wharfinger does the same mixed business as we do. Then you must also remember there is the question of fire insurance. The fire insurance companies will not let you mix up goods indiscriminately. According as they are first, second, or third class risks, you have to keep them separate.

6247. I think you told me that one of the reasons why wharfingers were able to charge lower rates than you did was that their fire insurance risks were lower than your own?—No, higher.

6248. Is the warehousing part of your business at the present time paying a remunerative rate of interest?—I cannot answer the question at all. I have tried to get out the information for the Commission, but the whole company is so worked to-day that it is absolutely impossible to separate one part from the other.

6249. I am reminded that at Question 5646 you are reported to have said: "Their justification for that is that their rates of fire insurance are less than ours." It would seem almost natural, as they charge less rates?—No. I am very sorry if I have made a mistake; I should like to correct it. It should be "more than ours."

6250. Quite so?—The wharfingers' premises, as a rule, are rated by fire insurance companies higher than the Dock Companies The wharfinger does not pay the fire rate; the importer who gives him his business has to pay a higher rate for fire insurance. Consequently, if the importer has to pay more for fire insurance, he will say to the wharfinger: "I cannot give you these goods at the same rates that I pay the Dock Companies. If I have to pay a higher rate of fire insurance, it would then mean that my cost for warehousing with you would be higher than with the Dock Company." Therefore a discount was given off the rates of the wharfinger so that he might be able to compensate the merchant for the higher rate of fire insurance paid by the merchant.

6251. Speaking of that reminds me of this. There have been some insurance cases, have there not, testing this question about goods on the quay side of the wharf? Will you look at Question 5589? "When you get a certain amount of running cargo it may be different, but taking our ordinary mixed cargo, it is absolutely impossible for the ship to deliver those goods to the barges without making use of the quay, without putting up with a loss of time which practically makes it impossible. 'In thus using the quay as a stepping-stone between the ship and the lighters, however, the shipowners render the goods liable to be charged quay dues and the lighters shipping dues by the Dock Companies, inasmuch as the 1799 section applies only to delivery directly overside. That is, that if we like to exercise our statutory powers to-day, if a shipowner puts any goods whatever on to the quay, and then takes these goods from the quay and puts them into a barge, we are entitled to levy our rates on those goods and dues on that barge.'" Do you put that forward as being a charge which would fall upon the goods, the lightermen, the wharfinger, or the shipowner?—If the shipowner puts the goods on the quay, and then delivers to craft from the quay instead of delivering overside, in accordance with his instructions, the shipowner would be liable for that.

6252. That would be under the Merchant Shipping Act, sec. 493. Now let me turn to the North Atlantic bill of lading. Under that bill of lading I understood you to say that the shipowner makes a good deal of profit?—He has saved a great deal of loss. That is how it works in.

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6253. Therefore he makes a profit?—Certainly.

6254. Will you look at Question 5657? "[Q] Under the conditions of the North American trade the shipowner has done his work when he puts the cargo on the quay?—[A] Yes; but the shipowner, under the North American bill of lading, by his bill of lading is entitled to make a charge for doing that, and there is a considerable amount of profit hanging on to that, so that the shipowner is anxious to put it on the quay?"—Yes, I believe so.

6255. That is a profit which he has made?—Yes.

6256. Under that bill of lading you then make what you call considerably reduced charges to lighters going to take it away, do you not?—But we make no charge to the lighters at all.

6257. Is not this the North American bill of lading? The Wilson Line use it, I believe?—Yes.

6258. It says that consignees desirous of conveying their goods elsewhere shall, on making application to the dock companies within 72 hours after the steamers arrive, be entitled to deliver into lighters at the following rates. Then it refers, to grain, rice, flour coffee, oilcake, sugar in bags, cotton, and so on?—But that is an arrangement with the shipowner.

6259. But the lighterman has to pay to get the goods away?—He does not pay us. He pays the shipowner.

6260. The shipowner has already saved something by putting it on the quay, so he is getting it double. As I understand you, the people using the North American bill of lading get a preferential rate, do they not?—In what way?

6261. You give them special terms, do you not?—No, not at all.

6262. What terms do they come in on?—The same terms as anybody else.

6263. Do you charge them for the use of the quay?—Certainly. I should be very much surprised to hear that we do not.

6264. Does it come out of the rent, or how does it come—I mean the charge for the quay?—It is a rent. They pay a rent.

6265. It is all lumped together?—They pay a regular rent for all their appropriated berths just like any other line.

6266. Do they get them at a lower rent than the others?—No, it is higher if anything.

(*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) Do you suggest the wharfinger or the lighterman now pays those rates for traffic taken from the quays under the American bill of lading?

(*Mr. Harper.*) It ultimately falls in that way.

(*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) Do you suggest they pay it now to anybody?

(*Mr. Harper.*) It is the goods that bear the charge.

(*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) But the wharfinger does not pay?

(*Mr. Harper.*) No, I do not think he does pay. It comes to this, that the goods have to bear them. If he cannot get them out of the merchant he has to stand to it as a reduction of his charges if he wants the business. That is the effect of it.

(*Witness.*) It simply corresponds to the Liverpool Master Porterage Rate, where either the ship itself or the ship through an agent does the work on the quay and charges for it. Everybody taking their goods has to pay. All the goods that we take from the American lines in the same way we have to pay these charges for. The riverside wharfingers would have to pay, and the people who own private wharves where they do no public business, but only their private business, have to pay. It is a labour charge. It is not a charge for dock accommodation at all.

6267. Do you make an allowance back to the merchants for goods that have been landed under these North American bills of lading?—It is smothered up in our warehousing charges.

6268. A reduction?—No.

6269. Do you make an allowance to him on your ac-

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counts?—We do make an allowance in that way, because our charge includes the labour at the docks.

6270. But do not you make an allowance back to the merchant?—On certain goods—coffee, for instance. Where the merchant has paid that amount to the ship and we have the warehousing we credit the merchant with the amount.

6271. In point of fact if you get 1s. you credit him back with 2d., or whatever it is that he has paid, so as to get the warehousing in competition?—Precisely like any other wharf.

6272. Then if he does not land under that bill of lading he does not get that advantage?—No, because we get nothing.

6273. I was not asking you why. I was only asking you the fact?—It is not our custom to give something for nothing.

6274. You have considerable advantages in other contracts, in the first instance over wharves, have you not? Take the East Coast of Africa. Take a ship coming from, say, Zanzibar, does she frequently outstrip her bill of lading?—I do not know; it used to be more than it is to-day. I should not think very frequently.

6275. Is it not the practice very often that the bill of lading has to go from Zanzibar to Bombay and come from there to London?—It may be.

6276. Then when it is more than 24 hours late the shipowner can land on the quay?—He can.

6277. And then you get all the advantages of the dock rates and lighterage rates?—We get the advantage of unclaimed goods undoubtedly, and it is for the advantage of the ship.

6278. Then there is another thing. A merchant cannot always discharge his freight within the bill of lading period. Then in that case you get the pull over the goods?—They are unclaimed goods, and the shipowner prefers to leave the goods with us for security, naturally. I believe it is not at all an unusual thing for wharfingers to pay freights so as to get the goods.

6279. Do you pay bonuses to ship's agents for ships?—How do you mean?

6280. Take the green fruit trade. Take a ship directed to the orders of a broker in London. Have you paid a broker for directing a ship to the docks?—We will make allowances to the ship to get the ship into the docks.

6281. To the broker?—Yes, we have given it to the broker.

6282. And to pilots?—No.

6283. Never?—I do not know. I do not think so. I do not see why we should, because I do not see that the pilot could influence it.

6284. I am speaking of getting a particular dock to go to?—No; I might say that it pays us sometimes. Say a ship wants to come to a lower dock, we might say to them that if they would go to the upper docks we should save certain expenses, and we would pay them a certain return to meet those expenses so as to get the goods up in close proximity to where they are to be placed.

6285. You work some ships?—Yes, about 18 per cent. of the total quantity coming into the dock.

6286. Where you are in competition with the wharf is it your practice to work them out at a reduced rate?—For goods?

6287. Yes?—Not that I know of.

6288. You know of no instance?—I know of no instance.

6289. There is one of your trades, I think—the frozen meat trade—which is worked in a particular way. You have to make rapid delivery, of course?—A great deal of the frozen meat trade has to be delivered at night.

6290. Into lighters?—Not from us. We do not discharge any frozen meat; and the meat that goes into our warehouses——

6291. I am not speaking of that; I am talking of the discharge of a ship in the docks?—That we do not do.

6292. Have you provided dummies that enable that work to be carried out?—For the convenience of the ship I have no doubt we have at times.

6293. A dummy is briefly a landing stage, is it not, between the ship and the quay wall?—Yes.

6294. With a water space between what I have called the dummy and the quay wall, in order that barges may get in between?—Yes.

6295. So that you can unload overside direct into the barge on the outside of the ship and over the dummy on the other side, and so work it from both sides, as it used to be done in the old days of the river?—Yes.

6296. Does not that conduce a great deal to the dispatch of business?—It may, in certain instances, but you have just taken the very instance where, I suppose, the discharge of vessels is the very slowest in the port. It is on the question of the discharge of vessels that we have been approached, I think, by the New Zealand Government, with the object of putting up sorting sheds, because the frozen meat, being discharged in the way you have instanced, is exposed to the weather, and damaged.

6297. It is discharged straight into covered barges, is it not?—No; you cannot cover those barges until you have a certain amount of meat in them, and it must be exposed to the weather.

6298. How long do you say it takes to discharge into a barge?—A very long time. Sometimes a portion has to be discharged into one barge, and then you have to go to another barge.

6299. You have never attempted that system of discharge by dummies with regard to anything else, have you?—Every day.

6300. Where?—Constantly we do it. You can go along the Albert Dock, and you will find it there. A great many vessels have dummies.

6301. Discharging what?—All sorts of cargoes. It is not exceptional to the meat trade, at all.

6302. What is it you are proposing in the shape of what you called a barge pond? Tell me in general terms merely, because your engineer will tell us hereafter, no doubt.

(*Witness.*) My Lord, this question is in connection with our Bill which is now before Parliament, and will get before the Committee. If the Commission wish it, I am perfectly willing to say what we propose to do, but I do not know how far I am right in producing plans here which will have to go before the Committee of the House next week.

6303. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Is this the New Works Bill?—Yes.

(*Chairman.*) Certainly we ought not to go into that. Perhaps, Mr. Harper, you will ask the question of the engineer when he comes.

(*Mr. Harper.*) If your Lordship pleases.

6304. You made a strong point about the cost of dredging the docks. You have given us figures of the number of barges that use the docks?—Yes.

6305. And the proportion which you consider belonged to this?—You say, "which we consider"; it is which are taken from actual returns.

6306. Quite so. I do not dispute that. This is given at Question 5626. You have roughly 823,000 tons, which is 10 per cent. of the barges employed in the London and India Dock Company's work?—Yes.

6307. You have, then, 10 per cent. carried coal, which was an estimate?—Yes.

6308. Then 10 per cent. of the barges passing from one company's docks direct into another?—Yes.

6309. That is practically dock company's work, is it not?—No.

6310. Who gets the benefit of that work?—It is a great deal transhipment goods; it would not be ours at all.

6311. Your next item is barges exclusively employed in conveying transhipments?—Yes.

6312. That brings you to a total of nearly 3,000,000 tons?—Yes.

6313. What is the total tonnage of ships in the same way? It would be larger than that?—It would be larger than this amount.

6314. You have attributed no portion of the cost of dredging to ships using the docks, have you?—There is no necessity for it.

6315. You propose to saddle the lightermen and indirectly, I suggest, the wharfingers, with a tax upon barges taking goods away which may be in competition with you, and which will go to pay for dredging par-

tially occasioned by ships, partially by your own barges, partially by coal barges, and partially by transhipment barges?—Put in that way, it is to a certain extent correct, but so far as ships are concerned, the amount of dredging on account of ships is comparatively small. The ships practically enter at high water, when the loss of water is reduced to a minimum. It is in consequence of having to lock the barges one, two, three, and even more hours before high water that the great loss of water is occasioned.

6316. Loss of water, you are speaking of now?—It is the loss of water and making good that loss of water which necessitates the dredging.

6317. It is also, is it not, having a dock sill that is high?—No; I do not think so at all.

6318. There have been suggestions made about lowering the dock sills?—That is done to keep the mud out.

6319. Not to let it in?—Certainly not.

6320. When goods are warehoused in the dock, do you make an allowance to the shipowner?—No; I have never heard of any.

6321. 1s. 3d.?—That is a very different thing. That is where the shipowner does the work on the quay; the shipowner delivers goods into the shed from his ship, and by our arrangement with him in order to prevent having duplicate staffs on the quay, we say, "That in respect of these goods from the ship, which you have to deliver to us for warehousing; we will pay the necessary expenses on the quay." That is purely for labour which the shipowner does for our account.

6322. Would the quays of the docks without the warehouses be of any use to you?—Yes, undoubtedly.

6323. You would make a profit on the water part of your undertaking as distinguished from the warehousing?—I could not separate it.

6324. You have not charged your full rates as authorised by Parliament yet?—I know we have not.

6325. As I think you told us, 6d. a ton would produce £100,000. Why should you not charge that before you seek to vary the whole system of this port?—Because we consider that the best thing we can do is to encourage shipping to come to the port, in the interests of wharfingers and the docks.

6326. But you would be bringing something which would operate prejudicially, and I put it to you, would it not practically amount to creating on your premises bounty-fed warehouses?—In what way?

6327. You are going to levy a tax upon everybody else, which you do not levy upon goods going into your own warehouse?—At the present moment it is not to levy a bounty; it is to put the wharfinger in the same position that we are in to-day. To-day, out of our warehousing charge we have to pay for the accommodation which the goods which are warehoused with us get in the docks. We ask that the wharfinger should be put in exactly the same position.

6328. But you have built your warehouses with the knowledge, as we have heard, and as you have admitted frankly, that you have this exemption to face?—We built our warehouses to a great extent with the knowledge that we had a monopoly.

6329. How many of them were built under the Act of 1799?—Most of them.

6330. Will you tell us which? Was Cutler Street?—Cutler Street was built by the old East India Company, and bought by us.

6331. At what time?—It was built somewhere towards the end of the 18th century.

6332. And used by whom?—The old East India Company.

6333. Before the India Docks were established?—Yes.

6334. Can you name any others which have been built since you acquired the powers in 1799, and before the exemptions?—All the London Dock warehouses; all the warehouses in the West India Dock and the East India Dock.

6335. Were they built before 1828?—Certainly, they would be built under the original Acts which gave them a monopoly.

6336. For the monopoly?—Yes.

6337. There were none at St. Katharine's, were there?—Because the St. Katharine's Dock was not built with any guarantee.

6338. Till 1825?—It was built afterwards; but when St. Katharine's Dock was built all the warehouses in possession of the Dock Company had practically a monopoly, because it was in the warehouses of the Dock Company that bonded goods could be stored.

6339. There has been a considerable extension in the number of bonded warehouses. You are not quite right in that, are you? Except for the 21 years the legal quays could always take dutiable goods, could they not?—But the owners of the goods either had to deposit bonds or they had to pay the duty. With us it was not so, the mere fact that the goods were deposited within our warehouses was sufficient. It practically gave us the monopoly for a great many years afterwards.

6340. I just want to get from you as to whether you think the warehousing business can be conducted separately from the water business?—Most distinctly not.

6341. Why not? I have suggested to you a number of points in which you have mixed the two up. Why should not those be separated, and if a public authority were to have charge of the waterway of the river, the waterways of the docks considered as part of it, and of the quay space adjacent to it, why should not you as warehouse-keepers be able to conduct the most profitable part of your business, as both yourself and Mr. Holland have said, to the satisfaction of your shareholders and everybody else?—Have I said it was the most profitable part of the business? It may bring in a greater amount of revenue; but you should allocate capital to the warehouses in proportion to the docks.

6342. It is not the amount of capital that they would sell for, but what they originally cost?—When you state it is the most profitable part of the business, you must take in the amount of accommodation given for that business.

6343. Supposing you were left alone with your warehousing business, an dyou saw that you had good sites, as I suppose you thought you had, in the case of the Billiter Street and the Fenchurch Street indigo warehouses, and that they would sell for a sum of money that would realise a larger interest than you could earn by using them as warehouses, would you sell them?—I do not know that we can without Parliamentary sanction.

6344. The whole of this matter will somehow be considered in Parliament. What do you think of that?—Of selling our warehouses?

6345. If the land is as valuable as you suggest?—Have I said the land was valuable?

6346. I understood you to say that the land must be taken at its present value?—Certainly it must. In arriving at the present value of a particular trade, it is not sufficient for you to say that after paying our charges there is such a margin of profit. You must look at the amount of capital represented by those premises necessary for carrying on that trade.

6347. If you are relieved of that, which I understand is the less remunerative part of your undertaking ——

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, I must protest against this being put to the witness. The suggestion has been made by my learned friend to the witness twice, or three or four times, that the witness has expressed an opinion that one part of the business is more profitable than another. I am in your Lordship's recollection as to whether or not that is so.

(*Chairman.*) I did not understand Mr. Scott to express such an opinion.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) No; he has not. My learned friend assumes that Mr. Scott has expressed such an opinion.

6348. (*Mr. Harper.*) Do you agree with what your manager has said in another inquiry: "It is the warehousing business that pays, and it is this which has suffered"?—Yes, I do agree with that.

6349. Then I think perhaps it was a little waste of time to raise the objection. The figures show that this declining prosperity has gone on in the face of a continuous and very large increase of tonnage of ships, and therefore to the receipts of the dock companies from dues on these larger ships. The truth is that the profit on the dues paid by ships yield quite an insignificant return on the capital expended?—Yes.

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6350. For a living all dock companies, wherever situated, must look to something else than dues on ships, and get those wherever they are successful?—You did not go on with the question with which you started, as to the division of the goods of the warehousing business and the shipping business. You asked me, in my opinion, whether it was possible to separate them or not, and I will tell you why it is not possible. At the present moment we work the two businesses together. Down in the Albert Docks we store in the sheds at times a considerable amount of goods. Up in the London, the St. Katharine, and in the West India Docks, portions of the warehouses are situated alongside the water, and they are used for discharging. It would be quite impossible to separate, certainly in those docks, the warehousing from the water business, and it is precisely in those docks where you have the bulk of the warehousing business.

6351. I do not know whether I have put it clearly to you. What I am suggesting to you is, if they were taken over and provided for by a tax on goods coming into the port, collected, not by you, but by a public authority, and expended by a public authority for the benefit of the port, what would you say then?—Your idea, then, is that a public authority should practically take over the water area of the port and collect.

6352. What would be the difficulty?—For working warehouses in the St. Katharine, London and West India Docks access to the water is absolutely necessary. You propose to take the water from those warehouses. Do you propose to take water frm the riverside warehouses?

6353. They will not lose the advantage of their situation in any sense?—Pardon me, they would and they must; because they have no ships discharging to speak of, alongside there. In these docks of ours you have ships discharging. How are you going to work it then.

6354. As soon as a ship wishes to discharge there you will get the warehousing of it by reason of your proximity?—Not necessarily, at all. You remember, a great many of these goods are delivered from there.

(*Chairman.*) This is rather an argument with counsel, Mr. Scott.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

6355. Will you refer to Questions 5587 and also 5760, with reference to the bill of 1885. I want to follow up what you said to Mr. Ellis, and I think also Mr. Lyttleton. You said there, this exemption clause was not discussed on its merits. Your attention has, of course, been drawn to the report in Hansard. Is it not the fact that two years, before this, namely, in 1853, this matter was fully discussed?—Where and how?

6356. Will you look again at Mr. Cardwell's speech? "This subject has been before the House of Commons not a great while ago. Only two years ago the Victoria Dock Act was introduced into this House. Two years ago that Bill was finally introduced by the promoters without this clause; but the Committee who had that Bill before them, and who heard the whole subject fully discussed, thought it only equitable to insert the clause." Do you say after that that this clause has never been discussed on its merits?—I have not got the particulars to which you have referred before me, but I am most distinctly of opinion that it was not discussed.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) It was examined in Committee, but it was hardly discussed in the House. The examination was relative to a discussion in the House. May I put it to you having looked up the proceedings, that it was examined very carefully in Committee, but it was not discussed in the House at large.

6357. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) If you please, Sir, I will not put it any more. There is only one point on this. Mr. Muntz decidedly said he voted against this because it was a question of the interests of the country, not merely a matter of Parliamentary bargain; he considered that this question of exempting the barges was a public question, a question not of the trade of London only, but a question of the whole trade of the United Kingdom? Is that so?—He says so, but I am not prepared to take his opinion.

6358. There is another point to which I wish to draw your attention. In was in answer to Mr. Lyttelton at Question 5700. After speaking of the great and growing sizes of the barges you brought in a case by which I suppose it was meant that the question of craft was the question that was discussed. Mr. Lyttelton put to you the question "Have you ever had occasion to test the question legally as to what craft are embraced by that term," and you answered, "I think we may say that we have. I think there was a case which the Chamber of Commerce mentioned and they took credit to themselves for having taken up the case. There the question was raised, but was not argued because it was said it was useless for us to argue it; the scope of the clause was so wide that it covered everything." Do you know that the case was reported in the "Shipping Gazette" of August 4th, 1899?—Yes.

6359. It is the case of the Burham Brick, Lime and Cement Company, Ltd. *v.* the London and India Docks Joint Committee?—Yes.

6360. In that case it was one of the Burham Brick Company's sailing barges that had come into the dock and on which you had claimed certain dues. They had been paid under protest, had they not?—Yes.

6361. The action was brought to recover these dues, with a declaration as to whether they were bound to pay them or not. There were no fewer than five or six counsel in it. Do you say the matter was not argued at all?—Let me tell you how that case arose.

6362. We do not want to enter into that?—Pardon me. I think it is most material to that case. The case arose because the Treasury altered the limits of the port, and we contended that although the term which you have here "barges, lighters or craft" might apply and cover a great deal if they were trading inside the limits of the port, once they came from outside the limits of the port we hold that they were no longer entitled to come in under that exemption clause.

6363. Then the whole question was as to whether you were entitled to charge for this when it came from outside the port?—Yes, that was the main question.

6364. But it seems to me to be the only question. It was tried before Mr. Justice Mathew.

(*Chairman.*) It is pointed out to me that this case has already been put in. It appears in the Appendix of the 4th day, No. 9.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I do not think the attention of the Commission has been called to the exact point. Mr. Lyttelton, I know, was anxious to know of it, and I merely want to read this to the Commission.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) This is all on the notes of evidence.

6365. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) May I just have this one point put on the notes? I will stop if the Commissioners say I am not to go on with it, but it is somewhat important. The judge, after referring to the history of these rates, which I will not take up time by reading said this, referring to Section 138 of the Act of George III.: "It is perfectly plain and perfectly clear language. What exempts the lighter or craft is the fact that she is engaged for the purpose of loading or unloading the ship. The limitation is the engagement of the barge for either of those purposes." That is the point that I wish to impress; it goes to the gist of the whole matter. Then the learned judge goes on: "That is the earlier Statute, and that same scheme of legislation is carried through a large number of Statutes, some of which have been referred to until we come to the Act of 1882, which appears to be the last on the subject." Then he refers to Section 26, which I need not read, and he goes on to say this: "That would apply to any craft or lighter coming from the dock for the purpose of discharging its cargo or for the purpose of transhipment, in the case which has been put, where she had made an independent voyage and came to the dock and discharged her cargo there. Then comes the proviso 'Provided always that any lighter, barge, or other like craft, entering the new dock, lock, or tidal basin, to discharge or receive ballast or goods to or from on board of any vessel lying therein, shall be exempt from the payment of any rate, rent, or sum so long as such lighter, barge, or other like craft shall be *bôna fide* engaged in discharging or receiving such ballast or goods as aforesaid.' Is it necessary to say a further word? There is the old scheme of legislation preserved, and the clearest indication of what the ground of exemption should be, namely, the employment of the barge or lighter in the loading or discharge of the ship. As I understand, the whole of these charges have been made upon barges which have been employed in discharging or loading the ship. It would appear, therefore, that all these charges have been wrongfully demanded by the defendants, and

therefore they must be repaid!" Was not that the question that was discussed?—Yes, undoubtedly; but never the size of craft or what really constituted a lighter, or barge, or craft.

6366. No; but you brought that as an illustration when you were discussing the question about the growing size of the barges, and that you could not get a remedy, or you were told by the High Court that "craft" included any kind of barge?—Yes.

6367. Now a question as to the management of the docks and the barges inside. A good deal has been said about negligence of the lightermen and that you are unable to carry out bye-laws. Do you admit that you have ample powers both by Acts of Parliament and by bye-laws to completely control the traffic in your docks?—No, most distinctly.

6368. Has your dockmaster?—this was a point put by Rear-Admiral Hext at Question 5721, when you were asked, "Does your power to regulate traffic extend to regulating the admittance of barges into the dock? (A.) We claim so most distinctly, but supposing we said: 'We are going to regulate the admittance of barges now, and we will only let you come in in such and such an order, and go out in such and such an order,' a great many barges could not go in and out, and we should bring the trade of the port to a standstill, or we should have such a congestion of barges at the entrances of our docks that we should never get the ships in and out." Then in the next question you are asked: "Your case is not that you will not use those powers, but that you cannot use them?"—Yes.

6369. Then you go on to say: "Well, the thing has gone on so long, do not do anything to disturb the custom; we do not want to upset the trade; we have a right, undoubtedly to say to a barge: 'You shall not moor within our privileged water.'" Has not your dock-master complete control over barges within that privileged water, namely, 200 yards from the dock entrances?—Yes.

6370. Has not he that power in all your Acts of Parliament?—Yes.

6371. And also in your byelaws?—Yes.

6372. Have you not recently taken proceedings with regard to the very thing?—To ascertain our powers.

6373. But you actually got a conviction?—Yes.

6374. I am referring now to two summonses, dated May, 1899, in which the charge was that the person proceeded against "unlawfully placed, or permitted or suffered to remain, in the River Thames within 200 yards of the said old entrance, and refused, and did not immediately remove such barge on being required by the dock-master to do so, and did remain there." That matter came before the magistrate at the Thames Police-court?—Yes.

6375. Had you, before that, given the ordinary form of notice. Is this a form of notice that your dock-master gave to barges in that position?—I admit it; it is the notice.

6376. This is another notice: "You are required to unmoor and remove your vessel from the pier head and from within the distance of 200 yards from the entrance."—That is quite true.

6377. This was your answer to Rear-Admiral Hext at question 5797. The question was put to you: "With reference to the question Mr. Lyttleton was asking just now, about barges, if you insisted on the barges lying outside your limit of free water, outside your entrances, would not they be lying in a more dangerous position than they would near the entrances?—(A.) Yes, but that is not my concern. It would be so undoubtedly. I do not know how they could lie there, unless there were special moorings provided for them." Then the next question is: "The fact of lying there would more or less congest the river traffic?—(A.) It certainly would not improve the river traffic. (Q.) If you kept them outside the free space of water that you are allowed, would it not be almost impossible to get the number in and out that you do at present." Does not that imply (perhaps unintentionally) that you did not for these reasons compel barges to remain outside your 200 yards limit?—Not at all. I should like to go a little further. When this question was raised, for a great many years we had practically, in order to facilitate the barge traffic, been allowing them to take advantage of many privileges, such as that of lying inside our privileged water, to which they were not legally entitled. The question came up; it was getting more of a nuisance every year, and we took that case to which you have referred, the object being to ascertain whether we really could get a conviction under those circumstances. Sometimes, I daresay you are aware, we have not been able to get convictions.

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6378. I am not aware of it. It exactly follows your bye-laws?—Sometimes we have not been able to get a conviction under our bye-laws.

6379. But this point was actually submitted to a Divisional Court, and a decision was given by Mr. Justice Darling and Mr. Justice Channell, in which they had no doubt whatever that you had the power, and they sent it back to the magistrate who had dismissed the summons?—I think, if you will ask some of the lightermen or wharfingers, you will find that after we got the conviction, we told them we should not press on with the matter, as the whole question would probably come before the Committee.

6380. That is a question I cannot deal with. May I take it shortly that by the decision of Duckham v. Gibbs, of December 7th, 1899, it is clear beyond all doubt that you have the power to regulate the entrance?—Yes.

6381. And so far as these barges are concerned, or lying within the prohibited waters, you can turn them all out?—Yes.

6382. Otherwise they are punishable at a Police Court?—Yes. If you followed that up, it would practically mean the lighterman's business could not be carried on.

6383. That is a debateable point?—I do not think so.

6384. The point is as to whether you have the powers, and you may exercise them?—Yes.

6385. The next point is this. You said on the last occasion that you had bye-laws which you could not enforce, and you instanced a case which is now for hearing in the Divisional Court. That is the case of Duckham v. Perkins?—Yes.

6386. That refers to barges being adrift?—Yes.

6387. One of the complaints that the dock company made was that the barges were unattended by anyone inside the dock. Now, was not this particular case the case of the barge lying alongside a quay?—I believe it was.

6388. Not drifting in any way?—Pardon me—no, drifting most distinctly.

6389. Very well. I have not the case here; but you dispute that?—I say it was a case of the barge drifting and being unattended.

(*Mr. Peel.*) Has this case been decided?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) No; it is 19 out of to-day's list. It was decided by the magistrates.

(*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) Is it profitable to discuss this before the hearing?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Then I will stop, but it was a matter that was brought out on the last occasion, and the point was that the dock company could not enforce their right.

(*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) We cannot go into it if it is *sub judice*.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.* One part of it has been disposed of by the magistrate, and I only want to show the Commission that this allegation that their bye-laws cannot be enforced is untenable.

(*Chairman.*) Will you ask the question of the witness, please, and get his answer; then we shall be content with that?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) It is a special case, in which all the facts have been found. My friend Mr. Wallace is against me in that case.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I am opposed to my friend. The case will be heard in the course of the week, and if my learned friend puts before the judges in the Divisional Court the statements that he is making now, he might succeed in enforcing the bye-law. But he is there for the purpose of saying that bye-law is bad.

(*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) If this case is going to be decided, we can hear the decision when it is decided.

6390. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) By the East and West India Dock Act, 1874, section 23, you have this power, have you not, "In case of any defaulting vessel, as defined by this Act, being left adrift, or not properly secured in the docks, the dockmaster, or other person having

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the command thereof, or the owner, or owners thereof shall, for every such offence, provide and pay any sum not exceeding £5, and the company's dockmaster, or assistant, may place a servant, or servants, of the company on board the defaulting vessel, and may pay such servant, or servants, such reasonable wages as to the said dockmaster or dockmasters may seem fit, and the amount of such wages may be recovered by the Company in the manner provided for the recovery of rates and charges by clause 77 of the principal Act." Now, is not that ample power for you, if you like to exercise it?—It does not apply to the Albert and Victoria Dock, or the London and St. Katharine Docks, where the bulk of the barge traffic is.

6391. You say it is only limited to one or two docks. At all events, in these docks, you have power?—The barge traffic is a minimum. But I will take your point. Supposing you had that power, what does it amount to? We have, I suppose, on an average, something like 1,500 to 2,000 barges in the dock at the time; perhaps I am putting it rather high, but still, it is a very large number; if you go down you can see. The great majority of those barges are unattended. How is it possible for any dockmasters to put a man into all those barges? It is an impossibility.

6392. You spend, according to your account, £21,000 on police?—Yes.

6393. What do those police do? They are certainly not there to assist the ligtermen?—The police are there for watching.

6394. Can you suggest any instance in which the police assist the lightermen?—I can suggest instances where the lightermen and the barges do not assist the police, because we have found stolen property in them.

6395. That is not my point. There are good lightermen, I suppose, and bad lightermen?—Undoubtedly.

6396. But you have all that police; what do they do?—They watch generally; they watch the whole place; we have an enormous area to watch.

6397. Merely watching the goods on the quays?—And generally patrolling and doing the work incidental to policemen.

6398. That is your proposition; that you cannot, with that number of police, regulate these barges?—How can you?

6399. Yes, or no?—Pardon me, it is not a question of yes or no. I say it is impossible, with the powers that the dockmaster has, that he should put men on board all the barges in the dock.

6400. I know that?—But that is what it would mean to regulate it.

6401. But you do not suggest that all the 2,000 barges are adrift?—No; but they have to be moved at times.

6402. It is only an exceptional matter, is it not?—No, there are a great many adrift. We have taken them on several occasions, and we have summoned them, with that result.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

6403. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Will you please turn to Question 5581, and also Question 5597, you stated that "the amount of goods which went away from the docks without paying anything came to 76 per cent, as against our estimate of 72 per cent., showing that we had understated it." In Question 5597 you said 75 per cent. The difference is very small?—My first question dealt only with the imports. We estimated the imports at 72 per cent. When we took out for the six months the actual figures they worked out at 76 per cent. We have no means of checking the export figures. What I wanted to say was that when I take the total of 76 per cent. I say I am understating it, because having the actual figures we found that the imports were more than I gave there.

6404. Do I understand, then, that 76 per cent. of these import goods pay nothing? Is that your case?—Yes.

6405. Does that 76 per cent. represent goods delivered to barges only?—Yes.

6406. Does it not include what was delivered direct to rail?—No, not at all.

6407. Does it include those goods that are sent by the American bill of lading and placed in barges?—Certainly, we get no charges at all.

6408. You do not get any charges in the sense of tonnage dues, but you get rent?—But that is not a charge on the goods; that is a charge on the ship.

6409. But it goes to the dock company, not directly, but indirectly by the rent?—Oh, no, not at all. You might just as well say the dues on shipping come on the goods.

6410. But I understand in 1890, after the great dock strike, when you used to discharge the goods yourself, you afterwards handed it over to the ships themselves to discharge, and you commuted these charges that you had then for a fixed rent charge?—We commuted the payment made by the shipowner for doing certain services for the shipowner into a rent under which the shipowner was allowed to do that work himself. It is a charge against the ship in each case, not against the goods.

6411. (*Chairman.*) The American bill of lading has been referred to several times. Might we ask you to put in a copy?—Certainly.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the North American Bill of Lading as employed by the Atlantic Transport Company. See Appendix, 18th day, No. 2.*)

6412. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) What I mean to say is this, if I am wrong please correct me; these charges up to 1900 that you used to get you have now commuted for those that you got for rent. Is it right to say you get nothing?—We never got anything from the goods before.

6413. But had not you a statutory right to charge for the purposes of these goods?—Which we did not exercise.

6414. But you had the statutory rights?—So we have to-day.

6415. Why not exercise them?—I think if we did we should have the whole port in an uproar. When we tried with the shipowners to make such an arrangement in 1896 the wharfingers were the chief people who objected even to a moderate charge.

6416. Surely when so much as 76 per cent. of the goods leave your dock free of any charges at all you might charge for them?—Yes.

6417. And you have the power to charge for them?

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Do you suggest they should charge for them?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Our case is that they should make no difference between one set of goods and another.

(*Witness.*) You will remember if we did that we should be levying a very much higher charge under our existing Acts of Parliament than we propose to make to-day. If you take the schedule of our Act of Parliament under which we were entitled to levy charges it would practically be incomparably higher than the rate which we propose to levy to-day. But these goods, which were delivered *bonâ fide* overside to the craft, would escape, so that a certain portion of the trade would pay very much more and another portion of the trade would pay nothing at all.

6418. But you would not be bound to charge the maximum rate. You could charge what was fair and reasonable under the circumstances?—I think the difficulty would be this. If you are going to levy a certain rate on everything; you could afford to make the rate a low rate; but if you are going to get your charges on a comparatively small portion, you would still have to make it very much higher.

6419. You know the contention of the lightermen is that it should be on everything?—Then I understand that it is on goods with the dock companies, and goods in the river.

6420. Yes. We say, on the whole of the goods that come into the port no distinction should be drawn?—I do not know that we should make any difficulty about doing that. I think it would be very much the worse for the port.

6421. At Question 5850 you yourself say this, "Roughly, I think it is not a difficult question at all. At present the Thames Conservancy do collect certain rates, and I would give the Thames Conservancy or whoever is the river authority the power to continue to collect those rates. I think shipping should pay perhaps a trifle more, but I think that all goods coming into the river should also contribute. I think that body should have the power of levying a small toll, not only on goods coming into the docks, but on all goods brought into the port or exported from the port." That is your own language?—Yes; I was dealing with a charge to be levied for the benefit of the dock companies, but Sir Robert

Giffen pressed me to give my view as to a charge to be levied by whatever body was constituted as the managing body of the river. That was not a charge which I proposed should be levied by the docks at all.

6422. But you are going to allocate it between the dock company and the Thames Conservancy?—No; pardon me, not at all. This was something quite in addition to our proposal.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) If you will refer to Question 5849, you will see in respect of what the witness was speaking.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) "I think in answer to Mr. Ellis you rather hesitated to express an opinion as to how money was to be found for improving the river and harbour generally, apart from the docks?—I have my own ideas, but I hesitate rather to express them."

(*Mr. Ellis.*) As to how money was to be found for improving the river and harbour generally, apart from the docks. That is your point; that covers the reply.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Yes, that is the question.

(*Witness.*) Sir Robert Giffen asked me whether I had any ideas as to how the funds necessary for the improvement of the river should be raised. I then stated that I thought a small increase on the rate payable by shipping would be fair, and that also all goods coming into the port (and "coming into the port" would include all goods coming into the dock) also should be raised, and I offered on the part of the dock company, if it was thought fair, that we should collect that, but it was quite distinct from the suggestion that I put forward as to leaving goods coming into the dock.

6423. At Question 5666 you represent that cranes do not pay, do you not?—Certainly I do.

6424. They represent a very large proportion of the work that is done, that is to say, the greater part of the work there must be done by means of cranes?—They are necessary for the shipowner. They are used there. The cranes that I was speaking of are those which are let to the shipowner for the discharge of his vessel. He pays a certain rate to us for the hire of the cranes. They are necessary for the shipowner in London, but not in Liverpool, and not in a great many other ports.

6425. Then the lighters and barges are not the only things that do not pay at the dock. That is the whole point of this question?—But these do.

6426. I thought you said they did not?—They pay something. What I say is if you take their full expense they do not give a remunerative payment. But they do pay. There is a regular scale by which the ships pay for the hire of these cranes. I do not think, if you come to that, that 3d. on the barges would be a sufficiently remunerative rate against the expenses.

6427. There is another point about the monopoly that you had. It expired in 1827, but most of those docks have been built, have they not, long after that?—Yes. The Albert and Victoria Docks, certainly.

6428. Up to that time there were only some three or four docks, were there not?—There were the London, the West India, and the East India Docks.

6429. Most of the docks that have been built since are without warehousing accommodation, are they not?—No. In the Victoria Dock we do all the tobacco warehousing trade of London; we do a great foreign meat trade; we do a very considerable amount of grain business; and in the Albert Dock we do a certain amount of warehousing business, and even at Tilbury we do a certain amount of warehousing business.

6430. At all events, you do not do it in the same proportion as you did in the old docks before 1827. The proportion of your warehousing work to your other work is not now as great as it was in 1827?—In proportion to our shipping business, no. That is exactly our point.

6431. In Question 5581 there is something about anchorage dues. You said: "The Corporation of Liverpool continued after the expiry of their monopoly, and still continues to levy town and anchorage dues."—Pardon me, I never said that. The Corporation of Liverpool have nothing to do with the docks.

6432. There is this: "The analogy, however, failed in one very important respect, inasmuch as the Corporation of Liverpool continued after the expiry of their monopoly and still continues to levy town and anchorage dues, irrespective of their docks, and are, therefore, independent to a great extent of any such monopoly."—I am sorry, it is a mistake. There is the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board which is perfectly distinct in every way from the Corporation of Liverpool.

6433. It is a mistake, is it?—Certainly.

6434. At all events, that is an equivalent to the Thames Conservancy's charge now, is it not? The Thames Conservancy have their charges similar to those anchorage dues?—I believe so.

6435. They are charged in the Port of London?—I believe the Thames Conservancy charge them.

6436. I now come to a question about comparison of barges and ships, as regards tonnage. That is referred to at Question No. 5581. It is also dealt with at Question 5597, in answer to Sir Robert Giffen: "In 1855 the average barge is believed to have been about 25 tons register, the craft known as hoys, which were of a larger tonnage, having then gone out of use. About 140,000 have entered the docks in the last three years, of an estimated total tonnage for each year of some 9,000,000 (taking the average lighter to be only about 60 tons register), or nearly double the total tonnage of the foreign trading vessels entering the docks during the same period." Do you calculate the tonnage of the ships on the net register?—Yes.

6437. How do you calculate the tonnage of the barges?—I should say there is no difference between gross and net in the barges. Ships are subject to certain deductions.

6438. Is it not a fact that the difference between gross and net, so far as barges are concerned, is as much as 5 to 3? A ship is registered at half her gross tonnage?—Yes.

6439. And she carries about double?—Yes, or more.

6440. Do you say that there is no difference in barges?—I admit between the gross and the net there is a difference in a barge, but nothing like the difference in a ship.

6441. I say it is as 5 to 3; some people say it is half?—That the net of a barge is half?

6442. Yes. The gross to the net is as 5 to 3.

6443. (*Chairman.*) But are they measured in the same way?—I do not see how they can be measured in the same way.

6444. They are not, as a fact?—No. Take a steamer, with the enormous amount which is deducted for one thing and another. I do not see how you can deduct that in the case of a barge.

6445. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Steamers are measured under the Merchant Shipping Act by the Board of Trade, but barges are measured in a different way, and we do not know that the deductions are of the same kind?—No.

6446. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Is it a difference with the barges between registered tonnage and burden tonnage?—From my own knowledge I cannot say, but on this question I might say that I have taken the average tonnage of a barge at 60 tons, whereas a lighterman laid down that the average tonnage of barges now was 79 tons. So that if you take that correction I think you will find that even allowing something for your difference between gross and net my figures are not overstated.

6447. A ship only pays a half of what she actually carries?—She pays on her net register.

6448. That is half of what she actually carries?—No. Very large passenger ships may not carry very much more than their net register. It does not follow at all; there is no rule.

6449. I put it to you that they carry double. If barges are calculated in the same way these 9,000,000 tons that you speak of would be about half, or 4,500,000?—But you must correct my figures first by making the tonnage instead of 9,000,000 tons about 30 per cent. more. I have taken the average barge at 60 tons, and the lightermen have stated the average barge is about 79 tons.

6450. Suppose you take 30 per cent. of your 4,500,000?—No, I take 30 per cent. of my 9,000,000.

6451. Supposing you do, and halved that?—I do not think that would be fair to the barges, because they carry a great deal more in proportion to their tonnage than a ship.

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6452. That is the very point that is denied, so that even if you take your 30 per cent. that would only come to about six millions on your figures?—Take your point then. Then really what we are doing is we are not charging enough on the barges, because if the barges are going to pay for so much less than they ought to we ought to charge more.

6453. But you are suggesting in your Act that it would be a tonnage on the burden of the barges?—Yes.

6454. This is the bill of 1901—your modified bill. "The expression 'tonnage' means the burden tonnage as ascertained by the rules in the 3rd schedule to the Thames Watermen and Lightermen's Act, 1893."

6455. (*Mr. Ellis.*) This is the bill that has been withdrawn?—Yes.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) It is the modified bill of last year.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) But it is not before Parliament now.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) No.

(*Witness.*) As you have referred to the bill, may I draw your attention to page 3, clause 2: "Provided that the tonnage of any craft which shall not be fully laden either on entering or departing from the dock shall for that time be deemed to be the aggregate of the number of tons weight of goods on board such craft"?

6456. I quite agree. Am I right in saying that as compared with the ship it is double?—But a ship pays 1s., as against 3d.

6457. But the principle is different from what you are charging a ship?—If you are going to make the charge on both sides the same I do not mind meeting you on the question of principle.

6458. And in the Bill of 1900, the one before that, you actually drew a distinction between the two: "For the purposes of this section the registered tonnage of large lighters, barges, or craft as aforesaid, shall be deemed first of all in the case of vessels registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, and under any other Act, the registered tonnage of the vessels. In the case of the tonnage of vessels registered under the Thames Lighterage and Watermen's Act, and under no other Act, the burden tonnage of the vessel"?—The difficulty was that some sailing barges are registered under both Acts, and the difficulty would be to know under which they should come.

6459. So that under your present Bill dumb barges (that is to say, those propelled by oars) are at a disadvantage as compared with sailing barges?—I think the difference between gross and net of a dumb barge would be very much less than the difference between gross and net of a sailing barge. I am told they are now.

6460. However, you do not know?—I could not say.

6461. You say that barges are double. May I take it that you calculate on the double basis?—I think you said the barges were double.

6462. You said it was double the tonnage of the ships coming into the docks?—The tonnage of the barges coming in, yes.

6463. So that in your calculation on the same basis they would be alike in tonnage?—I must correct that by saying that since I have got out these figures I have found that the tonnage of the barges is very considerably more than double. On the figures which the lightermen supplied to the Commission, instead of it being 60 tons it was 79 tons for the average barge. So that instead of my figures being nine millions they should be twelve millions.

6464. But even assuming that, there is not much difference between the two, is there?—I think there is.

6465. Your nine millions is very much reduced even on your own figures; it would be reduced to about six millions?—If you put it that way; but, on the other hand, I should say if you are going to charge the barges in the same light as ships it is a different thing altogether.

6466. In the same Question—that is, 5597—you said: "I am speaking from memory, but I think one of the lightermen witnesses put in that the average size of a dumb barge was nearer 80 tons than 60. Mr. Jacobs said that the average was 79 tons." You know that he was referring to the burthen tonnage, do you not?—I do not know.

6467. At all events, I put it to you that he was referring to the burthen tonnage, and the registered tonnage would be only 46. Do you agree with that?—I do not know.

6468. Now I come to the question of the modification in you Bill about the transit goods. The Bill of 190- has been somewhat modified from the Bill of 1900?—Yes.

6469. You propose to exclude from that the cargo that is in course of transit between one ship and another?—Yes.

6470. That would not touch the part of a lighterman's business that lighters goods from a ship, say, to Nine Elms, or one of the railway termini?—Certainly not. Nine Elms is not a ship.

6471. But there is no exemption as regards that?—Certainly not.

6472. So that with regard to goods that are lightered from a ship in the dock to another place such as Nine Elms, there is no exemption at all?—No, undoubtedly there would not be. If you make that exemption, why should not you make the exemption of any river side premises?

6473. But these are in transit all the same, are they not?—No, not necessarily.

6474. They are not necessarily for consumption in London. You know they are taken a long distance from London?—That may be; but I do not see any reason why they should be exempted.

6475. At all events, the fact is they are not exempted?—The reason of exemption of transhipment and transit business generally is to encourage the ships. Those ships in bringing goods to the port have to take for a through rate to Hamburg at no more than the rate for goods going direct to Hamburg. So we say we will waive this to encourage the business.

6476. So that goods taken to Hull, for instance, on a through bill of lading are exempt?—Yes.

6477. But if they pass to the same place by rail, they would not be?—Certainly not. In all probability going by rail really they are not now exempt, because they would probably go over our quays and pay a certain rate there.

6478. Now will you look at ?—You asked me a question on the net register of the ships. I now have some figures which may interest you. The net register of foreign ships coming into the docks is 4,281,389 tons on which they pay dues. The tonnage discharged from those ships is 3,946,527 tons; so that the ships pay dues on a larger amount than the amount of cargo which they bring.

6479. Where do you get that from?—Those are actual figures taken out from returns made by the Dock Company, in regard to which the shipowners have given us considerable assistance. I have already put them in.

6480. (*Chairman.*) Will you give us the reference?—It is Question 5597; it is the same question that was referred to just now.

6481. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) The table?—Yes, showing tonnage discharged is considerably less than the net register.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) My Lord, I appear for the London Chamber of Commerce. Of course I represent a great many different interests in trade, and I am afraid that some of my questions may jump from one point to another, but I will endeavour to keep them in logical sequence as far as possible, and indicate what I am going to deal with. I was proposing to ask a few questions about the agreements first of all.

Cross-examined by Mr. Whitehead.

6482. I understand that, speaking for the last ten years, since the year 1890 the effect of your evidence is that there has been a steady increase in the general trade of the Port of London?—I say so distinctly.

6483. And that in that increase the dock companies have more than participated in the increased pros- you say "trade," do you mean of the shipping, or the warehousing?

6484. I am dealing first of all with trade coming into your docks; making use of your docks. I understood you gave the figures—that it was 38 per cent. in the year 1890 of the total tonnage dealt with in

the port. and in the year 1899 or 1900, I am not sure which, it was 42 per cent.?—That is the shipping tonnage.

6485. And that as regards shipping, therefore, you have more than participated in the increased prosperity of the port?—Certainly.

6486. Yet, as I understand, that period of ten years is a period, so to speak, of financial disaster, so far as the dock companies are concerned. Perhaps I am putting it too high, if you do not want to accept those words, I will put it there has not been a period of financial prosperity in spite of the increased tonnage dealt with at the docks?—Certainly.

6487. That period, I understand, is coincident in point of time with what I will call the period of agreements?—Yes.

6488. You began the period of agreements about the year 1889?—You say the period of agreements was from 1889, are you talking now as to goods or shipping? It is a little difficult to follow.

6489. Take the year 1889. In that year there was the great dock strike, and you were face to face with a condition of organised labour. Down to that time labour at the docks had been unorganised. Down to that time you had yourselves been doing the discharging of vessels. If I may put it so, at that time you were carrying on three businesses; you were dock owners, you were the owners of warehouses, and you were also carrying on the business of discharging vessels. In 1889 there was the dock strike and you were face to face with this labour problem, and you then made arrangements with the shipowners, the effect of which was to alter the form of the bill of lading?—No, it did not alter the bill of lading at all.

6490. When first did you make an agreement, the effect of which was to take out of your own hands the discharging of vessels in the port?—There was no agreement, but I think it was about 1891. We then told the shipowners that in future we did not intend to exercise what we had always claimed as our absolute right namely, the discharge of ships, but we proposed to follow out a wish expressed by them that they should do the discharging, and that we should follow the Liverpool system of letting them the quays on which to do their work.

6491. There was no agreement?—Except that there is the agreement which I have put in here between the docks and each separate shipowner for renting certain quay space, all such agreements being terminable at three months' notice.

6492. Since that time, the tendency has been to gradually increase the amount of discharging by the shipowner in your docks?—Yes.

6493. Until it is entirely done by them to-day?—We only do 18 per cent. of it to-day, and we should not do that if we could separate the water from the quay space sufficiently.

6494. That was a very important change in the administration of the port, and was carefully considered by your Committee?—Yes.

6495. At the time when that change took place, what profit was the Joint Committee making upon the work of discharging vessels?—I could not give you the figures at all; it is quite impossible, the whole thing was so mixed up.

6496. Do you mean to say the Dock Committee made that momentous change without having any data?—We had certain approximate data, but I should say that the result of the change to us was more profitable than the old system.

6497. But let us have some figures. You were satisfied at that time, from something that was before you, that this change was going to be for your financial benefit?—Yes.

6498. What were those figures; surely it is most important?—I do not quite see the point. Do you wish me to give the figures of discharging? I could not do that now at all; it would be quite impossible. All I can tell you is in support of what we believed, that the shipowners were not very ready to take up, on our terms, the right of discharge for which they had clamoured, and we know some of them said it cost them more afterwards than it did before. Even to-day we have a case of the Orient Company, who do not want to do it, because they say it will cost them more.

6499. The point of my question is this; one of the considerations which will come before this Commission is whether the management by the Joint Committee or Board of Directors has been in the interests of the Port of London?—Yes. *Mr. C. J. C. Scott.* 13 May 1901.

6500. As I understand, within the last ten or eleven years a very great and important change has been brought about in the administration of the port by something which you did or which you were parties to. As I understand, you assisted the shipowners to bring about the change; I think you used that word yourself?—I do not think so.

6501. It does not matter about the particular phrase. Now, if this Commission is to judge of the wisdom of the step, they ought to have before them the particulars which guided you when you made the change?—But it was not only the question of finance which guided us. We were face to face with an entirely different state of labour, and we believed in the interests of the port it would be better that we should have as little to do with the labour as possible, and that each individual shipowner would be able to look after the question of his labour for himself better than we could do it for him. That entered very largely into the consideration.

6502. Being face to face with the new problem, you have not got a grip of the new situation, if I may put it in that way, and you were unable to deal with it yourself, but you thought it would be better dealt with by the shipowners?—I cannot say we have not got a grip of it.

6503. Perhaps that is a matter of comment. I do not want to press it upon you. Since you began this course in the year 1891 or 1892, have you ever considered the possibility of making a profit for yourselves on the work of discharging vessels?—No, of course not, because we surrendered the right to do it—a right that we always claimed.

6504. And from that do I understand you have never gone into the question to consider whether you could make a profit upon the work?—Of course not.

6505. Let me just put an illustration to you. I do not know whether you can check me as regards figures. Take for example the unloading of grain. As regards the present charge at the docks for the discharging of grain from a vessel to a barge, is it not 1s. 9d. a ton?—That is the amount which the merchants agree to pay.

6506. Take the port of Hull. Do you know what the charge is there for similar services?—No.

6507. Are you familiar with the charges at Liverpool?—For discharging, no, I could not say.

6508. Do I understand that the dock directors did not go into this question as to the profit that can be made upon such a transaction?—Oh, yes, very largely.

6509. Would it not be an important consideration for you what is being done in Liverpool?—But the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board in Liverpool do not do discharging.

6510. That may be. But take for example the charge. You are not familiar with it?—No.

(*Chairman.*) I think you should not ask the question with reference to Liverpool.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Very well. I only wanted to give the witness a chance of dealing with it.

6511. Is the charge that is payable by the shipowner under his agreement for rent of quay, a charge of so much per ton?—No.

6512. Is it a gross sum?—It is calculated on the superficial area.

6513. Therefore if the traffic increases, he gets the benefit of that?—Yes.

6514. Are all the agreements with the shipowners in the same form?—Yes.

6515. The form which you have put in?—Yes.

6516. I am not sure whether I follow a statement in Appendix No. 15 of the 16th day. It is a table showing the tonnage of goods discharged from vessels from foreign and colonial ports in the docks of the London and India Docks Company during the first six months of 1900. The first four lines of that table deal with different traffic, and then there are four further lines.

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in the last column of which there is this note. "These lines use the docks at fixed and agreed rentals, including dues and wharfage charges on goods, and the Dock Company's revenue is not affected by the proportion of goods delivered overside." That seems to differentiate the last four lines of traffic from the first four?—It is so. I think I explained to the Commission before that we have two forms of agreement for what is really the bulk of our trade—the foreign trade. Under one of those agreements we let companies berths for a period of three months. Under the other agreement we let a man who comes in with a tramp and wants a berth for a fortnight or three weeks, we let him that berth at a rent. It is a higher rent, and in addition to that we have an arrangement with some lines coming in frequently, some at St. Katharine, some London, some Tilbury, which are short journeys. They come in frequently. They could not afford to pay 1s. on their net tonnage every time they come in, and so we make a consolidated rent which allows a certain accommodation and certain limited number of tonnage.

6517-8. And they do not pay the 1s.?—That is so.

6519. And that is the distinction between the first four lines and the last four lines in this table?—Yes.

6520. I notice the Perlbach and Cockerill lines have agreements which are not in themselves profitable to the dock company?—No, I do not say that they are not profitable to the dock company, but they come to very little in the whole.

6521. These agreements relate to other traffic than the North American traffic?—Yes.

6522. You have agreements with other shipowners than the North American shipowners?—Yes, but the lines on which the agreements are drawn are the same.

6523. Has the trade dealt with by those other shipowners increased at your docks?—To a certain extent it has, but whilst the increase of the North American trade has been very large, the increase in the other lines has been only 13 per cent.

6524. As I understand you, you attribute the increase in the North American trade to the existence of these agreements and the bill of lading?—No, I could not go so far as that, but I say that those who said the alteration in the American bill of lading was going to ruin the trade and kill it have been absolutely wrong. With that alteration in the bill of lading the trade has more than doubled, whereas the other trade which has not made the alteration has only increased 13 per cent.

6525. You do not attribute the increase in the North American trade to the agreements?—Yes, I think so.

6526. Then why has there not been a considerable increase in the other?—You are making a difference between an agreement for letting ship's space for doing its own work—that is on one side. There was no agreement between us and the North American people, but they arranged among themselves that they would alter their bill of lading. We had nothing to do with that. The other lines have not altered their bill of lading. What is the cause I do not know, but in the lines which have altered the bill of lading their traffic has gone ahead a great deal faster than the lines which have not altered the bill of lading.

See 6651-58.

6527. Can you tell me what the correct amount of the rents received by you for the use of appropriated quays has been. Take the year 1899 or 1900?—Somewhere about £40,000.

6528. Can you give me the tonnage of goods dealt with at those dates?—No, we have no means.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Are you still on agreements, Mr. Whitehead?

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) It was really testing the advantage of this agreement.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) You are still on that point?

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Yes, I am still on that point.

6529. Cannot you give the Commission the tonnage of these appropriated wharves?—No, we have no means of checking the tonnage of a ship except for the last six months, where we have it.

6530. Can you give us the figures?—For six months 1,978,000 tons.

6531. That is the total tonnage of goods discharged at the appropriated wharves?—No, everywhere.

6532. I wanted you to distinguish?—I cannot do that. We have no figures at all for them. These figures are only given to us by the kindness of the shipowners. We have no means of checking their figures now that they do their own work.

6533. The tonnage of the North American goods for 1899 was 1,497,000 tons?—That was the ships.

6534. You are quite sure that was the ships?—Yes. I can give you the figures for the six months for the North Atlantic. There were 174 ships, with a gross tonnage of 785,000 tons.

6535. I do not want to follow up the point if it does not deal with goods. The effect of the change in the bill of lading was practically to deprive the consignee of the benefit of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, Section 493?—No, I do not think it deprives them of the benefit of it. It enables the shipowner to collect the charge for carrying it out.

6536. Under the Merchant Shipping Act the consignee is entitled to free delivery by the fact that the shipowner does not impose a charge?—Under the Merchant Shipping Act I think Mr. Scrutton brought forward a P. and O. bill of lading to show the shipowner had the power to say his responsibility ceased when the goods left the ship, and then he could put them on the quay, and the consignee would have to pay the charges.

6537. I do not want to deal with the legal aspect, but I understand the effect of the change in the bill of lading is that the consignee has to pay a new charge for delivery?—Yes; which he pays in Liverpool and other ports.

6538. Is it not the fact that the method of trading has very much changed in recent times, and that the old-fashioned merchant, who chartered a whole vessel, has gradually disappeared?—Yes, I should say he is defunct.

6539. And you have in the case of any single ship's cargo a large number of consignees?—Certainly.

6540. And they have no more power of settling the form of the bill of lading than a passenger has who goes to take a ticket at a railway station. They have to take practically a bill of lading that is fixed by the shipowner?—I do not know that I say the question of the terms of the bill of lading is purely a question of contract between the shipper at the port of shipment and the shipowner.

6541. So it is if you are taking a railway ticket. It is a contract that you are to be carried on certain terms. But is there any more real freedom of contract between the consignees and the shipowner? Does not he have to accept the bill of lading as it is put before him?—I should think practically it works out to that.

6542. Now, passing to the agreements with wharfingers. The wharfingers in respect of a certain part of their trade are the competitors of the docks?—Yes.

6543. As regards warehousing and so forth?—Yes; very friendly competitors, taking them all round.

6544. I am afraid too friendly, from the point of view of the trader. I understand you have made a series of agreements with them. Speaking broadly, the effect of those agreements is this is it not; that there are to be certain fixed rates for landing, warehousing and other services?—It comprises warehousing. It has nothing to do with landing, because the ship does that.

6545. Those rates are fixed as for the docks on the one side and as for the wharves on the other?—Yes.

6546. And, speaking broadly, those charges are in all cases higher at the docks than for the wharves?—For the reason I have explained, owing to the fire insurance.

6547. I will deal with the reasons presently. Let us take a concrete case. Take the case of paper. If that is landed at the docks for land conveyance the charge is 5s.?—This would be American paper, I suppose.

6548. I am afraid I do not know what kind of paper it is?—We have some thirty different rate-books, so it is a little difficult.

6549. I only want you to have an instance in your mind, so that we may test the reasons.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I think there is a little difficulty, because this is too much in the abstract. What particular class of paper is pointed to?

6550. (*Mr. Whitehead.*) I will give another illustration. Take Australian leather. There the dock charge

is, I understand, 9s. 9d.?—Not for Australian leather. If you make it American leather, I agree with you.

6551. And the wharfage charge 5s. 6d.?—I do not know what the wharfage charge is, but I will take it from you.

6552. You say that there is a difference in the rate of insurance as between the wharf and the dock?—Yes. See 2-4.

6553. Do you mean to say that that item of insurance would account for a difference between 9s. 9d. and 5s. 6d.?—No, certainly not; but the 9s. 9d. rate includes delivery in Tooley Street, for which we pay 5s. cartage.

6554. Those two rates are not comparable, then?—No.

6555. Then will you give me the comparable rate for the 9s. 9d. rate?—There is none, because there is no such similar service.

6556. You have a General Produce agreement of the 27th December, 1889?—Yes.

6557. Are you willing to produce that?—No.

6558. A Granary Keeper's agreement of 13th May, 1890?

(*Witness.*) My Lord, I think these matters were before you, and you said you did not call upon me to produce them.

(*Chairman.*) I think we told Mr. Whitehead last time the course to be taken.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) That it should be made the subject of a substantive application, and then your Lordship would decide upon the merits of the application.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I understand application has been made in writing.

(*Chairman.*) I have not heard of it.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I understand it has been made in the form which your Lordship stated was the proper form.

(*Chairman.*) Until you have an answer to it, perhaps it would be well to leave it.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) If there is to be a separate application in respect of these documents in writing, might I respectfully ask that that form of application should be communicated to the docks, because the grounds upon which the discovery of the document was ordered, in accordance with your Lordship's ruling, ought to be stated?

(*Chairman.*) We asked for the reasons for the application.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) At least I think the reasons ought to be communicated to the Dock Companies.

(*Chairman.*) I think there will be no difficulty in that.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I think I can save time. I was under a misapprehension. My client has not yet sent the letter. I thought the application had been made. I will pass from that.

6559. Have you made an agreement which is called the tea pooling agreement?—No, there is no tea pooling in existence. We are negotiating one, but it has not yet been carried through. And that has nothing to do with rates.

6560. Have the London Dock Company given up their Crutched Friars tea warehouse?—We do not warehouse tea there now.

6561. And the Fenchurch Street warehouse?—That was sold before the working union. But in place of that the Commercial Road warehouses were substituted by the East and West India Dock Company.

6562. Under these agreements with the wharfingers, do you agree to charge an all-round inclusive rate, which comprises a large number of services?

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) If that is the subject of one of these agreements I must intervene at once.

(*Chairman.*) I think any particulars as to these agreements should come later, in the event of your being allowed to see them.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Very well, my Lord.

6563. I will take it for the present purposes at your own dock. Do you charge an all-round inclusive rate, called sometimes a management rate, and sometimes a consolidated rate, which comprises a large number of services?—Certainly.

6564. I will take the concrete case of rice. There you have a consolidated rate of 4s. 2d.?—Yes.

6565. And that includes these services—landing, sorting, classing for sea-damage, sampling, weighing, marking the weight on bags, one month's warehousing, and delivery.

(*Chairman.*) This is not an inquiry into rates. This is not within our terms of reference.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I am not going to deal with the amount of rate at all, but only the system on which the charges are made.

(*Chairman.*) If you look at our terms of reference you will see it is the system that we have to consider.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I will deal strictly with the system on which the charge is based.

(*Chairman.*) If we go into every detail of each charge we shall never finish.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I am not going to take up any time unnecessarily if I can help it. It is the system. As I understand there is a consolidated rate, and I want to attack the system of making charges in that way.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) That is just one of the things which is not within the terms of the reference.

(*Chairman.*) We wish to point out to you, and to read you for your information, this paragraph from the terms of reference of the Commission: "The system of charge for such accommodation, and the arrangements for warehousing dutiable goods." We do not wish to go any further than that.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I am not going beyond the system of charging.

(*Chairman.*) "The adequacy of the accommodation provided for vessels, the loading and unloading thereof, the system of charge for such accommodation, and the arrangements for warehousing dutiable goods."

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I asked Mr. Scott whether this charge, this consolidated rate, does not include a charge for landing; that is, loading or unloading?

(*Witness.*) Let me answer that at once, to save time. I can say to you that landing does not include the charge for loading. "Landing" means taking it on the quay, it has nothing to do with the ship's work.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) From the point of view of the administration of the Board it is a serious question, and I do submit it comes within the terms of reference. I will just explain what the point is from the point of view of the trader. His case is this:—He is charged, it may be 4s. 2d., or it may be 9s. 9d., or some other rate which is a consolidated rate, for a large number of different services. He may, or may not, require all those services to be performed, but if once he gets within the clutches of the Dock Company they can put the whole of that charge upon him, even if he has only one small portion of those services rendered to him. It is the system of making charges upon that principle that my clients do wish to call in question.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) I submit that it is not within the terms of reference, my Lord.

(*Chairman.*) I think we must ask you in cross-examination to limit yourself to questions of fact.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Yes, my Lord; I thought that did come, and I submit it does come, within the terms of reference; but if your Lordship rules that I must not ask a question on that point, of course, I shall not do so.

(*Chairman.*) I do not think anybody can claim that the terms of reference are not sufficiently wide; but I do not think your particular point comes within them. See 7009.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Very well, my Lord, I am very sorry, but it is a most important matter for the trader.

(*Witness.*) If I may say so, rice is an unfortunate instance; 98½ per cent. of the rice coming into the docks pays us nothing.

(*Chairman.*) I think we had better keep away from individual cases.

6566. (*Mr. Whitehead.*) Passing away from the question of the consolidated rate, this is a question of warehousing. Do you find at the present time that the warehousing business is diminishing?—Yes.

6567. Relatively to the trade done?—Certainly.

6568. And the traders are more and more building their own warehouses and acquiring waterside premises to deal with their own traffic?—Because they are able to take it from the docks without paying anything at all.

6569. Now passing to the question of barges. I understand your allegation to be that the barges come into the docks and hamper the traffic there?—Yes.

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6570. Would it be possible to deal with the business of the docks if the barges were not there?—You could deal with the business of the docks with a very reduced number of barges.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Again, my Lord, I must appeal to you as to whether this question goes outside the terms of reference. If it does, I will not ask it, but I think it comes within the scope of this Inquiry.

6571. Would it not be to the advantage of the Board to have a low quay rate so as to encourage traffic to go over the quay direct to the cart instead of to barges?—We have a low quay rate now where the traffic can go over the quay direct to a cart, and a certain amount does go. We even do some business for wharfingers who want to store goods at the warehouses.

6572. You do it in certain instances, and you find it advantageous?—Yes.

6573. And you get a quay rate?—We get what we call an immediate delivery rate.

6574. Why should not the principle be extended to all goods?—We have no objection to extend it at all.

6575. If it became a general practice, that would remove a good deal of this congestion from the barges?—Undoubtedly.

6576. But you do not put it into force with regard to traffic?—We cannot compel a man to take his goods over the quay.

6577. But cannot you encourage him to do so by fixing a low quay rate?—Not so long as a certain number are able to take their goods away without paying anything at all. If a man can take his goods away without paying anything at all, why should he pay 1s. 6d. or 2s. to take it over the quay.

6578. Has not your policy been to discourage him taking them over the quay, and therefore compel him to do it by waterside?—No. Let me give you these figures. In 1897 the goods landed with us for warehousing were 1,078,000 tons. The amount we had passing over the quay for immediate delivery was 347,000 tons. In 1898 the goods landed with us on charges for warehousing had increased to 1,097,000 tons, only 20,000 tons more, but the goods for immediate delivery had gone up from 347,000 tons to 436,000 tons. I think that shows conclusively that no policy on our part had been taken to hamper this. On the contrary, these figures went on increasing.

6579. Then it really is the tendency of the time that trade should go in that direction?—More and more, and that is one of the troubles of the time, that instead of these goods going for warehousing, they go more and more for immediate delivery.

6580. Would it not be to your interest as a Dock Board to encourage that by a low quay rate for all classes of goods?—We do that whenever we can.

6581. For all classes of goods: take rice?—What is the use of talking about rice, when 98½ per cent. of the rice that comes into the docks goes overside and pays us nothing at all?

6582. That is the point, why do you not encourage it by a low quay rate?—If a man can take his rice overside and pay nothing at all, why should he pay us 2d. even for putting it on the quay. There is no object why he should.

6583. Very well, I will take it from you in that form. Now, as regards the practice. If a barge is not at the docks within 24 hours of the ship reporting the barge has to pay dues?—No, I think not—if no application is made it is so.

6584. In the North American trade it is 72 hours?—Yes.

6585. But in either case if the barge is not there at the docks or does not make the application within the proper time the goods become chargeable to your consolidated rate?—No.

6586. Or to your landing rate—one or the other?—Yes.

6587. In the case where the rate is only a consolidated rate it becomes liable to that?—I cannot conceive such a case where there is only a consolidated rate. For all these things we have a special landing rate.

6588. If I am instructed that you have consolidated rates solely in some cases that is wrong?—That is wrong.

6589. Is not the effect of that provision to encourage the barges to come at the earliest possible moment into your docks to collect the merchandise which they have to take delivery of?—No, because we should certainly object very much indeed to a barge coming in long before its time. We should do all we could to stop that, but we cannot stop it.

6590. Do you give notice as to when the goods are likely to be ready for delivery?—We cannot. We have nothing to do with the discharge of a ship.

6591. Under your regulations as to 24 or 72 hours the barge is naturally attracted to your docks so as to be ready to take delivery?—That is the arrangement with the shipowner on the bills of lading.

6592. But if it were possible to give a reasonable notice to the barge-owner it might be possible to keep down the congestion of traffic in the docks?—But that is impossible. Where they are working out a ship with an immense cargo the cargo is so much split up into numerous small parcels that it is quite impossible to tell a barge when it will be required.

6593. You referred to the importance of quickness of delivery looking at such a matter from the point of view of the shipowner. You referred to the quickness of delivery and saving of expense. Is that a great object, looking at these matters from the point of view of the shipowner?—Certainly.

6594. I suppose it is equally true that quickness of delivery and saving of expense are important to the consignee?—Certainly.

6595. Is it not the present practice at the docks that the shipowner discharges on to the quay, and gets his cargo on to the quay as quickly as possible?—He cannot do the whole of it that way. It is quite impossible. The reason of the delay in London is that he has to work it as he goes along.

6596. Very often, as I understand, as soon as one vessel has left the quay another vessel comes up to the same quay and discharges its cargo on to the same quay where the first cargo is still lying?—No.

6597. Do you mean to say it never takes place?—It is very rare. I will not say in a case of a line having fixed berths, that where they are working their own cargo like that they may not say: "We want to bring in this steamer," but where we have control, no. Where we want to get control of a fixed berth for a special steamer we cannot do so until all the goods are out.

6598. Where there is appropriated quay practically you have lost control?—Yes.

6599. It might happen there that in consequence of your losing control one cargo is put on the top of another?—I will not say that. That is a matter for the ship-owner.

6600. I have evidence to show that this is done. I want to give you an opportunity of dealing with it. That would involve delay to those persons who are interested in the first cargo?—Which delay would not take place if we had the power to compel those goods to be taken away immediately, as they have in Liverpool.

6601. But you have deprived yourself of the control?—No, we do not deprive ourselves. We have not got that power. See 6612–16

6601A. May I say you have not got that power in consequence of your agreements?—Certainly.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) May I refer to a question I mentioned a week ago, and that is as to the Appendices to the 16th day's proceedings. I have not yet seen those. Of course one would like an opportunity of asking Mr. Scott a few questions upon them. I understand there has been some delay in their being printed.

(*Chairman.*) I understand that there will be no further delay now so far as the shorthand notes are concerned, and that the Appendices to which you refer have been published this morning, and are now available.

Recalled 6602.

(Adjourned to Wednesday morning next, May 15, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

NINETEENTH DAY.

Wednesday, 15th May, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Réal-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. K. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES CATER SCOTT recalled and further examined.

6602. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to make a further statement, Mr. Scott?—Yes, my Lord, I wish to make a reference to something that passed last Wednesday. I am glad Sir John Wolfe-Barry is here. It is with reference to Question 5696. Your Lordship may remember that on the 17th day, following up the questions of Sir John Wolfe-Barry on the 16th day, I made a statement showing the works which under our present statutory powers we could carry out for the improvement of the port and works which had at times occupied us very much in discussion. On the 17th day I made a statement as to those works. The question Mr. Lyttelton asked me at Question 5696 is this: "With regard to those works which you mentioned this morning as being in contemplation, are those works which you are prepared to come under obligation to construct provided you get the relief you seek?" Of course, I could not at the moment give an undertaking without consulting the court of the London and India Dock Company. The matter has since been before the court, and I am now authorised on behalf of the dock company to submit a supplemental memorandum which divides the works which we have considered from time to time into three classes. The first class consists of works which the company are prepared to be put under obligation to carry out within a period of ten years if Parliament give the relief which the company ask in the matter of charges on lighters and goods. Taking first the West India Dock, a deepening of the import dock so as to admit of vessels of deeper draught entering and leaving at all tides. A deepening of the export dock to the like extent, and a quaying of the sides of the dock, with all necessary quay sheds and appliances for the accommodation of shipping.

6603. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) When you say "a deepening," do you give any figure of deepening?—I can tell you what really since the Commission has begun, and quite independent of the Commission, we have done. We have authorised a deepening of the West India Import Dock so as to give 27ft. of water there at all times, and that is what we have in contemplation for the export dock too. That means a deepening at present of about 3ft. *Mr. C. J. C. Scott.* 15 May 1901.

6604. In the dock itself?—Yes, in the dock itself. Then going to the East India Dock an enlarged cut between the basin and the import dock, so that any vessels able to enter the basin may have access to the import dock, improved shed accommodation and appliances. Then at the Albert Dock we propose further increased shed accommodation. That is to replace some of the existing one-storey sheds by two-storey sheds. Then at the Albert and Victoria Docks silo accommodation for storage of grain, as and when required, and at Tilbury Dock further shed accommodation as and when required. That is to meet the demands that I mentioned the other day of the Atlantic Transport Company to put up double-storey sheds, and not only their demands, but to extend that to the other berths of that dock. Those are matters which we are willing to come under obligation to carry out within this period of ten years. Then the second class relates to works to which the company will give their serious attention with the view of executing such of them, and in such order as upon consideration may be found to be necessary or desirable in the interests of the trade of the Port. Then at the London Dock a new entrance from the Hermitage or at Wapping into the London Dock, so that such ships as may be able to come so far up the river, and as could use the Shadwell Basin may be accommodated in the London (Western) Dock. Sir John Wolfe-Barry was not here when I stated that at present there is a difficulty in getting vessels that can use the Shad-

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well Basin into the Western Dock. The works at Shadwell Basin will accommodate much larger ships, but we cannot get them into the Western Dock. It is to obviate that difficulty that we propose to do this.

6605. This is a new entrance from the river?—Yes. Then we propose to give improved shed accommodation and appliances. Then in the South West India Dock improved berthage and shed accommodation. At the Victoria Dock an improved entrance, so that access may be given to vessels which cannot enter this dock through the Albert Dock, owing to the insufficient depth of water over the railway tunnel at Connaught Road. We have only some 24 feet to 24 feet 6 inches of water over the railway tunnel, and of course it is impossible to deepen that. This, of course, would obviate that difficulty. Then at the Albert Dock, if the plan of the proposed new dock is found to be satisfactory, and to facilitate the delivery of goods into craft, a re-modelling of the quay and the provision of barge ponds on the south side of the dock. Those are works which we recognise may be very necessary, but I do not think it will be possible or wise for us or anybody else to give an undertaking to carry out those works. At present it is not quite clear whether they are absolutely necessary, but so soon as we found they were absolutely necessary, we would most certainly seriously consider them. Then the third class of works is facilities and accommodation which the company will provide as and when required, according to the needs of trade from time to time; dredging and deepening of the docks; tugs; sorting sheds for frozen produce; further storage accommodation for frozen produce; further accommodation for storage of tobacco. All these items in the three classes which I have put before you have been from time to time very fully discussed by us. With regard to some of them we have even gone so far as to get out estimates, but we have been put into the difficulty that we did not see our way of carrying out these works on account of our financial position.

6606. (*Chairman.*) Can you give us any estimate for the proposed expenditure under Class I.?—Yes, I can. Would you like the separate items?

6607. I think we should like the classes separate?—I have not got estimates for Classes II. and III., but for Class I. I have the estimates.

6608. We should like to have them?—Under the head "West India Dock" the amount is £150,000; East India Dock, £200,000; Albert Dock, £120,000. I think that would probably be exceeded. I think it would come to more than that.

6609. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Does that mean two-storey sheds?—Yes. That is not for the entire dock. That would be only for certain two-storey sheds on the south side. For export work practically you do not want two-storey sheds. Then at the Albert and Victoria Docks, that is the silo accommodation for storage of grain, £50,000. That would complete the plan which we have already begun. Then Tilbury Dock, £200,000, making a total of £720,000.

6610. Do you wish to give us any estimate as to Classes II. and III.?—We have not got so far as that. We have discussed all these matters from time to time.

6611. Can you give us, without going into details, any approximate total of the sum you propose to expend?—Not on Class II. The only one I could give you would be that under the heading "Albert Dock." I think that would be about £100,000. In Class III. the dredging and deepening of the docks would come practically under the yearly expenditure. Of course that would be done. I think possibly if, when you examine Mr. Baggallay, you ask him upon some of the points, he might be able to answer you.

6612. But we might take it, I suppose, that the principal expenditure on capital account would come under Class I.?—Yes. If we made this new entrance into the Victoria Dock, I think that would be certainly £200,000, and the new entrance to the London Dock I should think would not be less than £100,000. Now, my Lord, may I go back to a further question that I was asked by Mr. Whitehead? It is Questions 6601 and 6601a. The two go together. If you read those two questions and the two answers, they absolutely contradict each other. Question 6601 says: "But you have deprived yourself of the control?—[A.] No, we do not deprive ourselves. We have not got that power." Then Question 6601a is: "May I say you have not got that power in consequence of your agreements?—[A.] Certainly." What I want to say really is this. By the mere fact of those agreements that we entered into with the shipping owners we do not deprive ourselves of the power. We still have the power such as we had before. That power is of a legal character which I could not possibly find it in my power to describe, but any power which we had before those agreements were made has not passed out of our hands, and all those agreements are determinable at three months' notice, so that practically if anything did slip out of our hands we could always withdraw it.

Further cross-examined by Mr. Whitehead.

6613. Following up your observations on Question 6601, I understand what you now say to be really this, that as a matter of law you still have control over the quays?—Yes.

6614. That is to say, you could by giving three months' notice, or whatever the notice might be, again acquire the actual use of the quays as before?—Yes.

6615. We are agreed as to this. So long as those agreements are in force under the present actual circumstances, you do not in fact have the control?—Yes, we do in many ways. If you will turn to the agreement you will find that there are many stipulations in the agreement which do keep the control in our hands.

6616. Then we will refer to the agreement itself. Now, taking the matters which you have put in this morning, are these improvements which you contemplate additional to those which are provided for in the Bill?—Certainly. I prefaced my statement by saying that these are all improvements which we could carry out with our present statutory powers. The Bill gives us new statutory powers.

6617. These are additional to those already provided for?—Yes.

6618. And out of what fund do you propose the money should come?—The funds of the company.

6619. Out of revenue?—No; capital.

6620. Do you propose to raise the money by means of that unexhausted borrowing power?—Certainly. If we found, as we went on with these works, that our capital powers were not sufficient, it might possibly be necessary to go to Parliament to get further borrowing powers.

6621. I understand that you have at the present time a net borrowing power of about three-quarters of a million?—Something of that kind. It is not a borrowing power; it is a power of raising money.

6622. And these improvements which are set out in your memorandum would cost about £720,000?—Yes. Of course, you will understand that these estimates are to a certain extent rough. We have had closer estimates made, but since then there has been a considerable advance in the cost of material, and we have had to make allowance for that. If prices went back, we might not have to find so much.

6623. Now, when we left off at the last sitting, I was asking you some question about barges. You gave some figures with regard to the average size of barges at the end of the eighteenth century. You said that the average tonnage then was about 32 tons?—Yes. See 5581.

6624. Has there been any appreciable change in the average tonnage of barges, say, within the last ten years?—I should say most distinctly that the average size in the last ten years has increased.

6625. Can you give any indication of what percentage of increase there has been?—I quoted from a barge owner.

6626. I did not understand you to give any figure with regard to the last ten or twelve years. You said, if I remember rightly, that there were barges now of the size of 200 tons; but I am dealing with the average size of barges to-day. We cannot deal with the thing in detail. I want to take it broadly?—But I think in such a case, where there are practically no figures published, you must deal with it in detail; and if I can show that one particular bargeowner puts it that he has added to his fleet these barges of large size, I think that goes some way to prove that the size of the barges is increasing.

6627. I quite accept that proposition. If you cannot give us any figures, I must pas from it?—I say this in Question 5597: "A circular issued on July

21st, 1899, by Messrs. James Cook and Co., is typical of the growth of the lighterage trade, for it states that Messrs. Cook have added to their fleet to meet their customers' demands, 15 open 125-ton and 15 open 150-ton craft." I think Mr. Jacobs, in his evidence, also alluded to the growing size of barges.

6628. If you cannot give me the figures I will not press it. He deals with the period down to the year 1877, and he gives the average down to 1877 as 47 tons each?—Then there must have been a very considerable increase in the average size, because later on he speaks of an average of 79 tons.

6629. I did not know whether you could give me a figure for the last ten years?—No, I cannot. We have tried to get it, but we have failed.

6630. I will get it from somewhere else, if necessary. Then you expressed a fear that barges should go up in size until they reached 1,000 tons?—I did, because I have been lately approached to know about it.

6631. At the present time, if I understand the exemption clause aright, a barge only has a right of free entry to docks when it is going to receive goods from, or deliver goods to, one vessel?—That is rather a nice legal point, which I am not prepared to answer. That may be your view.

6632. But if that is so, do you think it likely that a barge of 1,000 tons would be able to go full to any one vessel, having regard to the existing conditions of trade?—I think in certain trades—take the grain trade, for instance—it might be worked.

6633. How many riverside premises do you think there are that a barge of 1,000 tons could go to taking grain from the dock?—I could not answer that question at all.

6634. Can you name any riverside premises to which a barge of that size could go?—There must be plenty along the river. The railway docks, for instance; they could go there.

6635. Would it not be true to say that substantially the greater number of the waterside premises could not take such a barge alongside?—That, I think, is probably true with regard to a great many of them; but a great many could. And, mind you, the suggestion that there would be 1,000-ton barges did not come from me; the suggestion came from a shipowner himself.

6636. I want to get your opinion, not the shipowner's, as to whether it is a likely change?—I do not see anything to stop it.

6637. (*Chairman.*) You might turn to the Appendices to the 16th day, No. 35, in which you give a table showing particulars of some of the barges?—I am afraid that will not answer Mr. Whithead's question.

6638. There is no average?—No; and Mr. Whitehead wants the average. This all tends to show that the size of the individual barges has been growing; and I hold from that, that the average must have been growing at the same time. Now, may I also refer Mr. Whitehead to Question 1231, where Mr. Rogers was making certain statements. Mr. Rogers is connected with the Chamber of Commerce. He says: "Apparently it would be advantageous to supplement this system or supersede it by the employment of steam barges calling at a number of places, to collect and deliver goods in the same way that land carriers do." If Mr. Rogers thinks that would be advantageous to the port it means the employment of very large barges, because it would not pay anybody to put steam into barges unless they had very large carrying capacity.

6639. Then you think it would be an economical way of working the traffic, do you?—I do not say that at all. That is Mr. Rogers's opinion.

6640. I wanted to get the fact from you about the average size. Now I will go on. As I understand, your proposed charge would apply not only to imports, but to exports?—Yes.

6641. And it would be a charge varying from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a ton?—As a maximum.

6642. And it would apply at the present time to a tonnage of 1,959,000 tons?—You are quoting my figures. It is at Question 5626. "It is estimated that this would reduce the tonnage by, say, 900,000 tons (assuming that one half of the barges only carry full weight), and the revenue would be reduced by £15,000. The maximum powers sought would therefore give £75,000. But in the carrying out of their powers the London and India Docks Company would, in the absence of necessity for a larger income, charge at the rate of 3d. per ton only—a deduction of £18,750—leaving a net income from barges of £56,250. Dues on Goods.—It is estimated that in the year 1899, 2,860,707 tons of import goods and 1,959,606 tons of export goods passed through the docks on overside conditions without contributing anything to the dock revenue."

6643. That is what I had in my mind. We have heard a great deal about the charge of 1s. a ton on a certain export trade. Can you tell the Commission what articles this proposed impost would affect. What articles are exported from the docks?—Their name is legion. It would be quite impossible for me to go through everything. You have cheap goods and dear goods.

6644. Are they articles of which the nation have a monopoly?—I think nowadays we have a monopoly of very few things.

6645. My clients are looking at this thing from the point of view of the trade of the country, and I want to find out from you what articles would be affected by the impost of 1s. to 1s. 6d. per ton?—Everything.

(*Chairman.*) Mr. Whitehead, we must ask you, if you please, to give us a little more definite idea of the points upon which you wish to cross-examine. We must ask you not to roam generally over the evidence which has been taken, with a view to asking questions because it occurs to us that a good many of the questions you are asking are already on the notes and others refer to matters and to people who are represented by independent counsel.

6646. (*Mr. Whitehead.*) If your Lordship pleases. Now, with regard to the discount. At Question 5681 you said there is a discount given in respect of exported goods. You stated that there was a trade in which all the firms who are engaged get a further discount in addition to those that were published?—Yes.

6647. What trade is that?—My Lord, I think this is one of the questions as to which you stated that you were satisfied with my answers, if I gave you my assurance that those were all the discounts.

6648. (*Chairman.*) Will you give us the reference?—It is at Question 5694 when the matter of putting in these different agreements was before you. You said: "The Commission will be satisfied if you will assure us those are all the agreements that you have," and I answered: "Yes."

(*Chairman.*) That is subject to the subsequent statement that we would be prepared to receive written applications for agreements.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I understood it applied to discounts; it is not a question of agreements. Certain discounts are public, and I understood the Witness to say certain discounts are secret.

(*Chairman.*) If so they are agreements.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) My Lord, this is only another form of trying to get round your ruling, and to get at the contents of those agreements. I submit my friend must accept the ruling your Lordship gave the other day that there must be a substantive application if these agreements are wanted.

(*Chairman.*) I understand the Chamber of Commerce have already made an application.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I do not want to go outside your Lordship's ruling, but I thought if these discounts were relevant to your Lordship's inquiry, it is important that the matter should be investigated by my clients to see whether a statement on that point was worthy of credence.

(*Chairman.*) Do you challenge Mr. Scott's statement at Question 5693 and 5694.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) His statement is so vague, if I may say so. He says there is a trade. I simply ask him what trade. When he tells me what trade it is I can have it investigated.

6649. (*Chairman.*) Have you any objection to answer the question, Mr. Scott?—I think if I answer that question I must answer all the questions as to these discounts. I do not see why it is quite fair to pick out one and leave the others unanswered.

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(*Mr. Whitehead.*) May I point out to your Lordship that it is an extraordinary state of things that there should be a trade in which there are not only published rates of discount, but also secret rates of discount which go to every member of the trade. In itself it is hardly intelligible.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) May I with deference say that your Lordship has already drawn attention to the terms of Reference of this inquiry, and it is with regard to the system of charge only. I understand my friend now suggests that because there is a discount allowed to the whole trade, therefore other trades ought to inquire into it, for some reason or other. It does not seem to be within the terms of Reference of this Commission. Your Lordship sees it is: "The adequacy of the accommodation provided for vessels, and the loading and unloading thereof, and the system of charge for such accommodation." That is accommodation provided for vessels.

See 7009. (*Chairman.*) I think that is so; I do not think it is within the scope of this inquiry to go into the charges which are made by the docks.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I am in this difficulty. This matter was gone into fully in the evidence in chief, and if it was relevant then, I cannot help submitting respectfully to your Lordship that any cross-examination upon the point is relevant now. If it was irrelevant when Mr. Scott made the statements, and those statements are struck out of the notes as being outside the scope of your Lordship's inquiry, I am content.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I confess it is the first time I have ever heard one of my learned friends challenge as irrelevant the questions which the Tribunal thought fit to put. No reference was made by Mr. Scott in his own statement. Your Lordship put the question and asked whether there were certain agreements, and what the Witness said was in answer to that question. It was not any part of the case which we put forward at all.

(*Chairman.*) We should like to say that we do not think the question of the charges of the docks, apart from the accommodation of vessels, does come within the scope of the inquiry, and we trust you will be satisfied with asking for the agreements which you wish to have.

See 7009.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) Of course I do not want to press the point against the ruling of your Lordship.

6650. Now I will ask you to look at Appendix 31 on the 16th day, under the heading "Income." You see the seventh item in the column: "Rent of premises?—Yes.

6651. At Question 6527, I asked you as to the aggregate amount of the rent received by you for the use of your quays?—Yes.

6652. You told me then you thought it was about £40,000?—Yes.

6653. Is this figure of £39,863 under that year 1899 the figure you had in your mind?—No.

6654. Where would that £40,000 come in these accounts?—If you will look at the third line, "Tonnage dues and rents on ships discharging and extra rates on ships," it is included there. It is a charge on shipping. When you come to "Rent on premises," that is not a charge made on shipping.

6655. That is quite distinct?—Quite distinct.

6656. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is the rent of premises the rent of warehouses?—We have certain premises which are let. In the St. Katharine Dock we let large warehouses to the Apollinaris Company. It is conveniently close to the water. We also have a lot of people who distil scent who want accommodation, and we let to them.

6657. Mainly the rent of premises represents matters of that kind?—Yes.

6658. And they are largely outside the docks?—We have a lot of property not included within the dock walls. Those are rents pure and simple.

6659. (*Mr. Whitehead.*) With regard to your answer to Question No. 5847, you were asked would it be possible to separate an up-river from a lower-river business? Your answer was: "I do not think so." Would you just define what you mean by up-river business and lower-river business?—Do you not think, as you asked the question, that you should define it?

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I did not ask the question.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I put the question.

6660. (*Mr. Whitehead.*) I want to know what your answer means?—My answer is what it says. Put it in this way. In the lower docks we do a great deal of shipping business, and comparatively a small amount of warehouse business. In the upper docks the position is reversed.

6661. That clears up the point. By "lower river" you mean lower docks?

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That is all quite explained in the questions themselves. I rather object to going over the same ground. If you look at question No. 5846, you will see that that is all explained. The thing is quite clear.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I only want to get the point quite distinctly. Certain questions have been raised as to the control of what I may call the upper river above the upper docks. I was not quite sure whether Mr. Scott had in his mind merely the lower docks and the upper docks, or whether he drew a distinction, say, between the river below London Bridge and the river above London Bridge.

(*Witness.*) We have nothing to do with the river. We have no control over the river, and, as Sir Robert Giffen says, the previous question shows distinctly it did refer to the business generally in the lower docks.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) So I thought, but I wanted to get it clear on the notes.

(*Mr. Harper.*) May I ask one question upon the evidence that Mr. Scott has given this morning?

(*Chairman.*) Certainly.

6662. (*Mr. Harper.*) In all these questions of improved shed accommodation which you have described, and on which you propose to spend altogether a very large sum of money, that is the same class of shedding as that which already exists?—No.

6663. It is increased shedding accommodation, is it not?—If you say a two-storey shed is the same as a one-storey shed.

(*Chairman.*) The witness has already been asked that question; Sir John Wolfe-Barry asked him.

6664. (*Mr. Harper.*) There was one thing more I wanted to ask, and I was just leading up to it. They would, in fact, be, for all practical purposes, warehouses in which goods only required to remain for a space of two or three days before being taken into consumption and going away?—Certainly.

6665. And *pro tanto* they would be in competition with the other warehousing interest on the river?—You must remember that at the present moment we need not ask for power at all to put up two-storey sheds. Then you must remember that those goods which are going to be stored for two or three days would never come to a riverside wharf.

6666. I am merely asking you whether it would have that effect?—No, it would not, for the simple reason that goods that remain for two or three days can discharge on a low rate; our reason for keeping them there is that we cannot afford to pay the expenditure necessary for removing them, and if we cannot our competitors cannot either.

(*Chairman.*) Does anyone wish to put any further questions?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, I do not know whether the witness has got the items of expenditure of £109,000 which your Lordship asked for. I rather think they are not ready yet. See 7008 and 7916.

(*Witness.*) I have not got them yet.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) They are not on the notes. Your Lordship asked a question again at Question 6068 which was the first question on the 18th day. I said then that it had been overlooked, if it had not been put in. I do not know how far that is so now. I do not know whether your Lordship wants these figures.

(*Chairman.*) We should like to have them. I understand we have not had them.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I understand there were two half years put together, that is all it is—from the printed accounts.

(*Witness.*) I think, Sir Robert Giffen, you could not quite understand the accounts, because we publish our

accounts half-yearly, and we made reference to the amounts of maintenance for the two half years. That £109,000 was made up by putting two half years together. The details of that would be innumerable. It is our general maintenance all over the docks which includes painting and repairs, and every sort of thing from a few shillings up to a good many pounds.

6667. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I think you give a return showing the maintenance of each dock, or something of that kind?—No, we do not keep them separately. See 7008.

6668. (*Chairman.*) Then I think we need not go further into the matter. We are satisfied with the explanation?—It is simply general maintenance.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I only wished to mention that as your Lordship mentioned it. I do not propose to ask Mr. Scott a single question.

6669. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I want to ask one question as I was unable to be present last Wednesday. I notice that you discussed the question of division of the warehouse and dock property. The question was discussed by you as to whether it is economical and sound, but you said from a working point of view it is practically impossible. I should like to have that a little further explained. Why is it practically impossible to treat the warehouse property separately to the quay and dock property? I can quite understand it is an entire alteration of your business, but why is it practically impossible?—Where you have, as in the principal docks, warehouses built right up to the level of your water, the lower floor of this warehouse is used for shipping discharge. That, I think, at once makes it impossible. How are we going to work these warehouses above if we have no control over the lower floor, which is necessary for the working of ships?

6670. You mean that the quay being below the warehouse would interfere with the working of the warehouse?—Precisely.

6671. Are all the goods that are stored in these particular warehouses landed at that particular quay?—Yes.

6672. Out of barges or ships?—We bring them up out of barges.

6673. Not out of ships?—Some out of ships. Originally the idea was that the ships should discharge there, but with the growth of ships they cannot come up there. The bulk of our goods for warehousing are discharged in the lower docks, and they are barged up to these docks, or if they are for a town warehouse, such as Cutler Street, they are taken up by road.

6674. The warehouses in the town, apart from the water, do not, I suppose, enter into this difficulty. It is the warehouses near to the water?—We bring a certain quantity of goods for Cutler Street up by barge, and then cart from the St. Katharine's Dock.

6675. You use the quay, then, as a means of approaching the Cutler Street warehouse from the barges?—Yes.

6676. But all the traffic comes from barges into these warehouses?—Yes.

6677. And the ships that bring the goods unload at some of the other docks?—Yes.

6678. So that those particular warehouses are approached on the one side by barges and on the other side by carts?—Yes.

6679. You say, however, that it is practically impossible to treat these warehouses as separate from the docks?—I think so; quite impossible.

6680. I want to know why, if we consider the docks as a barge access to the warehouses?—Because the whole business is so mixed up. Take goods landed, say, in the Albert Docks. There are certain duties which have to be performed there in connection with those goods, but we do not make a charge for those docks; we only in our own accounts to a certain extent credit the Albert Dock with a small part of the warehousing charge which we earn in the uptown warehouse or in the warehouses of the other docks. When we have goods discharged on to the quay, say, at Tilbury, we have to do certain operations for the goods there before they come into our warehouses, but on those goods which are warehoused with us we make one charge for warehousing to the merchant, and that one charge to the merchant covers all the services rendered down at Tilbury, the cost of transport from Tilbury up to the up-town warehouses, and then the services rendered there.

6681. Then the difficulty arises in charging?—Certainly.

6682. Not in practical working?—Yes; I think it would be in practical working too. Take the case of the Tilbury Docks, again. We do a very large cheese business there, and for the shipowner we have to bring that cheese up and deliver it to domicile. In connection with that trade it is absolutely necessary to have warehouse accommodation, and a great deal of that cheese which is on the bill of lading to domicile comes up to the Commercial Road by rail, and is stored there if the owner, the consignee, does not want immediate delivery.

6683. It comes up by road?—No; it comes up by the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway from Tilbury. It comes straight up into the warehouse, and is stored there. I think when some of the Commissioners went round they saw an enormous quantity of cheese.

6684. But would you follow the other line—barging? Suppose a ship unloads any cargo you like, cheese, for example, which then goes into a barge to go to its destination?—Yes.

6685. That destination may be either a private wharf or the wharf of the company—we will say inthe St. Katharine's Docks?—Yes.

6686. What difference is there in the physical mode of working the traffic if it goes to a private wharf, or if it goes to one of the warehouses in the St. Katharine's Dock?—None whatever, but if the warehouses in the St. Katharine's Dock are deprived of their water frontage, they will be placed at an enormous disadvantage compared with the warehouses on the river which will retain their frontage.

6687. I quite follow that point, that for the warehouses belonging to the company water access is all important?—Yes.

6688. Just as water access is all-important to the private ones?—Yes.

6689. To that extent they are on all fours?—Yes. I may tell you we have gone into the thing very, very closely, and we have come to the conclusion that it is absolutely impossible.

6690. You mean absolutely impossible to separate the water access from the warehouses which possess that water access?—Yes. I have just been asked to make a statement on a matter that I had not remembered with reference to Question 5871. It is really on the question as to whether the docks were our freehold or not. The question put by Sir Robert Giffen was this: "I wish to ask a question with reference to your statement as to vesting, and as to the claim about freehold. I think at one part of your evidence you said that docks are freehold property. My question is whether you maintain that docks are freehold property in the sense that the dock companies could give up the business and sell the property or whether it is a complete property of that kind?" My answer was: "No, I do not think so, for this reason, if we wanted to sell one dock, I do not think it would be possible to sell it without getting Parliamentary sanction." I may remind the Commission that in the year 1889, when we had the great dock strike, and when we wanted to get the protection of the Metropolitan Police, we could not get it. They held that the docks were our private property, and we could not have their protection unless we could show there was going to be rioting.

6691. (*Chairman.*) Have you any specific instance that you can put in?—We can put in all the correspondence with the authorities at that time.

6692. I think we cannot receive the statement without it?—I will have that put in then.

6693. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Bearing on that subject, I do not know whether you are aware that the Liverpool Docks Harbour Trust have recently sold one of their docks. I believe I am right in saying that they had to obtain Parliamentary powers to do it?—Yes, and I think the same would hold good with us. I think that practically with regard to any of our docks or any of our warehouses we should have to get Parliamentary powers to do that.

Mr. C. J. C. Scott.

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6694. Granting that Parliamentary powers were given, the compensation all went to the dock trust?—Yes.

6695. Those who bought the dock had to pay the money as if it were a freehold? I think all that you want is an enabling power from Parliament to sell?—Yes, and then the money would go into our own pockets.

Recalled, 7008.

Mr. HENRY CHARLES BAGGALLAY recalled and further examined.

Mr. H. C. Baggallay.

6696. (*Chairman.*) You have already appeared before us in order to give evidence with regard to the docks belonging to the London and India Docks Company?—Yes.

6697. I understand you now propose to give us particulars of the annual cost incurred by the Joint Committee of the London and India Docks on account of barges?—Yes, but before I go to that I may mention one or two questions that have already been referred to that want a little explanation.

6698. With reference to what?—First with regard to a question of Sir John Wolfe-Barry, who asked for the cost of dredging.

6699. I think that will come better later in your evidence. You were going to give us the particulars of the annual cost incurred by the joint committee on account of barges?—Before dealing with that, I think it would be clearer to give you the general system of dealing with barges at the entrances, and also some observations on the practice at particular docks.

6700. Very well, we shall be glad if you will do so?—Until a year ago the general plan adopted by the dockmasters was to commence by locking out barges some three or four hours before high water, the object being to clear the fairway for the ships and incoming barges, and to give the barges as much tide as possible to carry them up to town. At the St. Katharine and Shadwell entrances it was more usual to reverse the order, and admit barges before sending any out. The entrances being thus somewhat cleared, the ships were dealt with, after which the balance of barges entered, these operations frequently extending for an hour or two after high water—in many cases locking in and locking out were not alternate. I may explain that of course if you can send out a lock full of barges, and alternately with the barges going out you can bring in a lock full, you naturally save half the water. It having, however, been pointed out that to make locks from four hours before high water until high water, wasted three times the water that would be required if four hours were taken—two before and two after high water—the dockmasters have been endeavouring to shorten the hours and keep them nearer high water, with some success, but of course the bargemen do not like the change. The barges only carry one man each, but I have often seen about three men to five barges in the basins, so that any locking without assistance would practically be so slow as to become almost impossible. The Dock Company's staff therefore lend assistance in fastening the barges together with ropes and haul the whole mass through. They also supply ropes, labour, and hydraulic power. The barges, when in the docks, are frequently not properly made fast or kept under control, for instance, on one day three separate barges drifted down on the temporary dam in the South West India Dock Basin, and the contractor now has to keep a man specially to protect his dam from wandering craft. This general practice, however, has to be modified at different times and at different docks, according to the number of barges to be dealt with, the force of the wind, state of weather, and other conditions. With regard to the Royal Victoria and Albert Docks, as nearly one-third of the shipping, and more than one-third of the barges enter these docks, and the ships are of such depth that the water level must be maintained at Trinity high water, I will describe the practice more fully. About 36,000 barges enter at the Victoria end and 20,000 at the Albert end in the course of the year. At the Victoria Dock entrance barge work commences about four and a half hours before high water, and the average number to enter is 100 per diem for the year, but this number is often doubled on particular days. The number going out is not so great, as many that have entered at the Victoria Dock entrance go out at the Albert Dock entrance. The barges to go out being all collected in the basin, the gates to the docks are closed and the barges are then locked out; when the number is not very great a lock full is allowed to enter, after one or two locks have been made with outward bound barges. When this locking is commenced the water in the river is generally 15ft. below dock level or Trinity high water. After the barges have all been locked out, a level is made in the basin, generally about 5ft. below the dock level, and then all the barges that have been waiting in the river enter the basin, the average number for the whole year being 50 per tide, but 150 per tide is not an unusual number. The lock gates are then shut and the sluices between the docks and the basin opened, and the basin level raised at the expense of the dock, with the result of lowering the dock about 6in. at neap tides, and of course less at spring tides. This loss of water has to be made good by pumping for six hours per tide, or 12 hours per day for 45 tides per mensem, in order to maintain the level, the pumps, as a rule being able to raise the level of the docks 1in. per hour. Perhaps I ought to say it is a little more than that; they can generally manage about 15in. in 12 hours. At this entrance the Dock Company's servants do all the work, very little assistance being given by the lightermen. That is partly necessary, because over the centre of the lock there is a swing bridge for the public, and therefore any delay would cause inconvenience. At the Albert Dock entrance there are two locks, one being used almost exclusively for barges. The barges are not so numerous, but the ships being large and the available area of the basin much reduced by the ships berthed at the quays, the traffic is very much congested. The dock-master keeps a foreman and two men generally supervising the docking of barges, and assistance is given in any case of special need, but speaking generally the labour is put upon the lightermen at the entrance, and the dock staff do not render them the same assistance as at the Victoria entrance. There is no public bridge there, or anything of the kind, therefore a little delay does not inconvenience anybody at all, except, of course, that it increases the congestion of the traffic. Until last year the locking commenced at the same time as at the Victoria Dock, namely, four and a half hours before high water for the convenience of the barges that they might get the flood up to town—but for some time, I understand, the work has been commenced later, and consequently finished nearer to or even after high water, thus saving some of the water. But when there is a crowd of barges in the basin the locking commences four and a half hours before high water in order to clear the basin for ships. For although large ships are only locked in and out at the top of the tide, they have to be brought into the basin in good time or the work could not be performed. The whole dock is often so crowded with barges that navigation is almost impossible. I have been sometimes unable to get through the barges at the east end of the Albert dock in a little steam launch. At Tilbury locking can be performed at all times, and in all states of the tide. Being so far from London barges mostly arrive there near low water and like to leave at low water. The barges are generally locked out or in at any time they desire, and although the lock will take 36 barges, it is not unusual to see only two or three passed at one time. I have seen a single barge going out. Each lock at low water lets out 1,000,000 cubic feet of water, and this loss is often sustained for only a few barges. There is a middle pair of gates dividing the lock, but as they are only 150 feet from the dock end, it is not often that water can be saved. Of course that depends a good deal on the state of the water in the lock at the moment. If the water was down in the lock and a barge wanted to go out, you would lose the whole lock-full. At this dock there is plenty of room, so the lightermen can take their time and do their own work without much assistance. I think it probable also that the lightermen who go so far down the river may be more experienced men, and a little extra time on a long journey not so important. At the East India Docks there are two entrances, but being short all ships pass on a level. The locking of barges begins three and a half hours before high water, the barges are locked out,

lock after lock, and with but few exceptions all pass in on the level. The dockmasters find it necessary to do all the work for the lightermen, otherwise they could not clear the entrances. In making the level the gates are closed between the basin and the docks. With regard to the West India Docks—Blackwall entrance—these docks are pumped up about 1 foot above Trinity high water so no levels can be made. Locking commences three and a half hours before Trinity high water, and is finished at high water or an hour after high water. At this lock the barges pass in and out alternately, so no more water is lost than necessary, but as the barges for the first lock-in begin to enter the lock at low water, the sluices are opened and a full lock of water lost. The dock-master works the barges through the lock and has also often to use his tugs to clear the block. This is another case where there is a public road swing-bridge right in the middle of the lock, therefore no delay can be allowed. Even as it is the traffic is very much delayed. At the South West India Dock the work begins about three hours before high water, the locks being first made for the outward barges and then for the inward—one lock each way is generally sufficient—the others wait for the level one or two hours later. Nearly all ships and half the barges pass on the level. At the London Docks there are two entrances, one at Shadwell and the other at Wapping. The work at Shadwell commences three to four hours before high water, and continues from one to three hours after; large ships are dealt with from one hour before up to high water, and light draught ships can be dealt with from two hours before to two hours after. The practice here is different to that which obtains at most of the docks, for the first lock of barges is generally inwards, and more than half pass on the level. Blocks are common at this lock, so the work has to be done by the dock staff. No delay can be allowed on account of the public road bridge. At the Wapping entrance practically no barges are locked in; they all pass in on the level into the basin, but barges are locked out about three hours before high water. Here again all the work has to be done by the dock staff. At both these entrances the barges have to be locked a second time from the basins into the dock, which is kept at a higher level by pumping. Then the St. Katharine Dock. Most of the work at the St. Katharine entrance is done on the level, but a few barges are locked in and out from two to three hours before high water.

6701. Will you give us now the particulars of the annual cost incurred by the Joint Committee on account of the barges?—Exclusive of any proportion of general expenses, and also of any interest or depreciation on capital value, except in the case of dredging and pumping plant, the annual cost incurred by the Dock Company in consequence of the number of barges entering the docks exceeds £50,000—divided under the following heads:—

	£
1. Dredging and pumping	32,760
2. Interest and depreciation on value of dredging and pumping plant	4,725
3. Repairs at entrances, etc.	5,250
4. Hydraulic power	4,500
5. Wages of oilers, oil, rope, stores	2,100
6. Barge searches	761
Total	£50,096

With regard to the first item:—Dredging and pumping.—The water in the Thames below London Bridge contains a large amount of matter in suspension. This matter is maintained in suspension so long as the water is in motion, but when the water is allowed to be at rest the matter settles and forms a light mud, which in process of time consolidates into a compact mass. When, therefore, river water enters the docks the mud in suspension is deposited so that the water becomes comparatively clear. In the process of locking, this comparatively clear water is let out into the river, to be replaced at the next high water, or by pumping, with river water full of mud in suspension. It makes no difference whether the water to re-fill the docks is taken in through the locks on the rising tide, or whether it be pumped in, as the incoming water contains practically the same amount of mud in suspension. The amount of mud that comes in, and, therefore, the amount of dredging, is directly governed by the loss of water. The pumping is required to make good the loss of water when the tide is insufficient to maintain the level of the docks. Pumping is carried on at the Victoria and Albert Docks, the West India Docks, and the London Docks, since the size of the ships using these docks will not permit of any loss of water; but at Tilbury, the East India Docks, the South-West India Dock, and the St. Katharine Dock, there is at present a sufficient margin, so the loss is only made good by the following flood tide. In addition to the mud that is blown out of the basins and locks by steam blowers and drags, between 600,000 and 700,000 tons of mud are annually dredged and sent to sea.

6702. Can you tell us where that mud is deposited?—In Barrow Deeps. It has to be deposited beyond a line drawn east of the Maplin Lighthouse and the Girdler Lightship.

6703. Is it far enough down to prevent the possibility of its being washed back by the flood?—I think it is fifty miles down the river from the docks; it is in what are called the Barrow Deeps. Taking the figures for 1898, which I adopt for the purpose of my evidence because I was myself responsible for the figures of that year as Engineer-in-Chief of the Joint Committee, 667,000 tons were so removed. That figure is also the average of the last five years. The cost was £31,618 exclusive of interest and depreciation on the capital value of dredgers or other plant employed. From this I deduct £1,600, the cost of clearing the entrances outside the lock gates, leaving £30,000 as the cost of removing the mud from within the gates. The cost of pumping to make good the loss of water in the Victoria and Albert, the West India and the London Docks was £6,400 exclusive of interest and depreciation. The pumping and dredging together, therefore, cost £36,400, partly due to ships, and partly to barges. A return of the barges and ships locked in and out and passing on a level at each entrance during a week when 5,555 barges and 253 ships used the Joint Committee's docks, shows that:—(*a*) Sixty-four per cent. of the barges were locked, and 36 per cent. were dealt with on the level at high water. (*b*) Fifty-six per cent. of the ships were locked, and 44 per cent. passed on the level at high water. (*c*) The average number of barges to a lock was:—St. Katharine, 3·36; Wapping, 3·85; Shadwell, 5·11; East India, 4·28; Blackwall (West India Dock), 9·78; South West India Dock, 6·11; Victoria, 12·58; Albert, 16·3; Tilbury, 9·44; and taking all the locks together the average was 8·9, say nine barges per lock. Those figures show that the locks are frequently not nearly full, for the St. Katharine Dock could take 4 or 5; Wapping could take 4; Shadwell, 12; South West India, 6 or 8; Blackwall (West India Dock), 18; East India (upper), 6; and lower, 3; Victoria, 16; Albert, 28; and Tilbury, 36. In 1898 the number of loaded vessels that arrived from foreign ports was 2,743; of these 300 discharged in Tilbury Basin, so 2,443 only entered. In addition, 1,988 light ships entered to load or lay up, their average tonnage being under 500 tons. Also 1,552 coasters, many not larger than barges, entered; these latter can hardly be considered as ships, but to be on the safe side, I will count them all as ships, each requiring a whole lock, although in many cases two or more passed in one lock. We have therefore:—

Ships from foreign ports with cargoes	2,443
Light ships to load or lay up	1,988
Coasters under 500 tons	1,552
Making a total of	5,983

Of these 5,983 ships, 44 per cent., or 2,633, passed in on the level at high water, and 56 per cent., or 3,350, were locked in, and, as I said before, I will assume that they required 3,350 locks. The number of barges was 142,217; 36 per cent., or 51,198, passed in on a level at high water, and 64 per cent., or 91,019 were locked in. I have already shown that the average number per lock was nine. So they required 10,124 locks. This number is three times the 3,350 locks required for the ships. I may here refer to a document which was prepared for the use of the Commission, giving particulars of the docking and undocking in the several docks belonging to the London and India Docks Joint Committee for the week ending 14th January, 1900; I do not know whether you have it before you. (*The Witness handed in return. See Appendix, 19th day, No.* 1.) In 1898 I had observations taken at the Albert Dock entrance to the levels of the water in the river every hour, night and day, for a period covering spring and neap tides. I found the average level of the water in the river at each hour, before and after the highest level of the day, to be:—At high water, 9in. below Trinity high water mark. At one hour before or after high water, 2ft. below Trinity high water mark. At two hours before or after high water,

Mr. H. C. Baggallay.

15 May 1901.

5ft. below Trinity high water mark. At three hours before or after high water, 9ft. below Trinity high water mark. At four hours before or after high water, 14ft. below Trinity high water mark. At five hours before or after high water, 18ft. below Trinity high water mark. At six hours or at low water, 19ft. below Trinity high water mark. Six hours before or after high water is not always dead low water, as the tide ebbs for a longer time than it flows, and varies with the amount of fresh water coming from the upper reaches of the river, and also with the wind. Excepting at Tilbury, where the river is deep, and there is an outer basin which facilitates their entrance to the lock, ships endeavour to enter and leave the docks at or near high water. They come up the river on the flood, and go to sea with the ebb. For most large ships there would not be sufficient water over the lock sills unless they took advantage of high water, and some of them would run aground in the upper reaches of the river unless they did so. It is also difficult for ships of any length to enter the locks which are at right angles to the stream when there is much current running, so for safe locking it is desirable that they should enter the docks on the top of the tide when the water is deep and slack. It is further desirable that large ships should be locked a little before high water, while the tide is still rising, and not on a falling tide, so that in case of an accident causing delay they would have time in hand, and not run the risk of being stranded. At the St. Katharine, Wapping, and East India entrances, all ships enter and leave at high water on the level. But the barges leaving the docks want to go up stream to London, and are, therefore, anxious to be let out as soon after low water as possible, so that they may have the flood with them. They accordingly crowd in the basins round the locks, and often cause a complete block, while the barges that want to enter, having come down from town on the ebb, are crowded outside waiting to be let in. It is, therefore, necessary to clear the blocks before the ships can be dealt with. The large number of barges to be dealt with makes it necessary that the locking operations be commenced several hours before high water, so that the fairway may be cleared. At the Victoria Dock these operations commence four and a-half hours before high water, when the tide is 10 or 12ft. down. Now, were it not for the barges causing blocks and delays, the ships could, with few exceptions, all be dealt with within an hour of high water, for at most of the locks the ships do not average more than one per tide. The loss of water per lock, therefore, is many times greater than it would be were the barges in moderate numbers, but I will only claim that it is three times as great, although in reality it is about six times as great. Taking it, then, that three locks are made for barges against one for ships, then, as the extended time for locking requires three times the water per lock that would otherwise be used, the barges are responsible for 90 per cent. of the loss of water. The quantity of mud to be dredged, and the quantity of water to be pumped increase in direct proportion to the loss of water. Ninety per cent., therefore, of the cost of dredging and pumping is caused by the barges, and only 10 per cent. by the ships. Ninety per cent of £36,400 amounts to £32,760, due entirely to barges. As a matter of fact, the amount due to barges is even greater, because when only a small quantity of mud has to be dealt with a longer time elapses before the accumulations are sufficient to cause obstruction to the shipping, so the mud has more time to get solid before it need be dredged. As the ships get larger this becomes more serious, as a foot or two will prevent a ship reaching its berth, so the mud has to be removed before it has had time to solidify, with a result that the stuff raised by the dredgers contains a large proportion of water which costs as much to dredge and send to sea as solid matter. That such is the case can be stated from observation, it being often necessary to dredge a berth where the mud is quite fluid. The following figures indicate how the quantities have increased :—

	Average dredging. Tons.
During the four years 1886-9 - -	415,000
During the four years 1890-3 - -	570,000
During the four years 1894-7 - -	610,000
During the two years 1898-9 - -	660,000
And for the year 1900 - - -	675,000

The mud at the end of last year amounted to 2,000,000 tons, equal to three years' dredging, but most of this could not be removed because it was in too liquid a state. These figures show that during the past ten years the quantity of dredging has increased by 50 per cent., although the number of ships and barges has only increased about 15 per cent., and they indicate also that the quantity or rather bulk of mud to be removed is increased by the impossibility of giving it sufficient time to consolidate owing to the accumulations being so rapid, which would not be the case but for the barges. Again, in the case of the pumping, the loss of water by locking ships at high water is so little that in most cases no pumping would be required, except, possibly, at low neap tides, but for the barges. Were they not so numerous locks outward and inwards could be made alternately and the loss of water reduced, but under existing circumstances this cannot be done at many of the locks. Now with regard to interest and depreciation on value of dredging and pumping plant, the value of the dredging plant is over £20,000, and the cost of the pumping stations over £64,000. I may point out that these figures are very low for the plant, because all the carriage is done by contract, therefore we have nothing to do with the capital value of the plant. These two items make a total of £84,000. I have included no amount for the blowers and drag, as these might be required were there no barges. Allowing 7½ per cent. for interest and depreciation, the annual charge would be £6,300. I will not divide this between ships and barges in the same proportion as the dredging, namely, one to nine, as the capital expenditure would not have been reduced to that extent, but I think one-quarter would have been ample, so I attribute three-fourths to the barges, or £4,725. Now as to repairs at entrances, etc. The next item that is fairly chargeable to barges is a portion of the repairs of lock gates, sluices, gate machinery, pier heads, lock walls, capstans, moorings, and swing bridges. The cost of maintaining these amounts to £7,076, which sum does not include repairs to tugs and floating plant, as these are not practically affected by the barges. A steamship passing the locks is properly provided with fenders, she hauls herself in with her own winches, comes in slowly, and does little or no damage, and if she does any she pays for it, and it is not included in the cost of maintenance, but nine barges in a lock, on the contrary, bump against the walls and piers with their sharp square iron-bound bows, cut deep holes into the brickwork or masonry, break the timber sheeting and wallings, and knock the gates about. A lock full of barges does much more damage than a lock with a ship in it, but I will only divide the £7,000 in the proportion of the number of locks, or as three to one. £5,250 is therefore due to the barges. Then hydraulic power. The fourth item is the hydraulic power used in connection with the traffic at the locks. With few exceptions all gates, sluices, capstans and bridges are worked by hydraulic power. The Dock Company spend £24,000 per annum (and now that coal is increasing in price will spend more), in fact, last year it was £25,000, in working the hydraulic engines which pump this power, exclusive of any charge for interest and depreciation on capital cost, which I have also excluded, as the outlay would probably not have been much less had there been no barges—although it is a fact that a new engine had recently to be added at the Albert Dock and another at the West India Dock on account of the insufficient supply at locking hours. It has been found that 25 per cent. of this power is used by the dockmasters. Three-fourths of one-fourth, or three-sixteenths, is therefore due to the barges, that is to say, £4,500. Then wages of oilers, oil, rope, stores. The wages of attendants for oiling and keeping in order the hydraulic machinery at the entrances amounts to £1,200, and the cost of the rope, oil and stores £1,600, making a total of £2,800. This should be divided in the proportion of the locks made, though the cost is almost entirely due to the barges. £2,100 is therefore chargeable to barges. The Committee also spend £10,000 a year in repairing hydraulic machinery, but I have not charged any of this to barges, because it is very difficult to arrive at a fair valuation. Then wages of barge searchers. The last item I propose to charge to barges is the wages of the barge searchers at the river entrances which amount to £761. The foregoing items bring up the total to £50,096, without including any amount for general supervision,

See 6820-3.

or for interest and depreciation on capital value, except in the case of the dredging and pumping plant. The salaries and wages of the dockmaster's staff at the entrances amount to £23,566. The watching of ships and barges by police costs £2,348. The gas and electric light at the pier heads represents £1,121, and the assistance rendered by tugs at the entrances to the barges is estimated at £930. Some portion of these expenses, amounting to about £28,000, would certainly be saved were there no barges, but I have not charged the barges with any portion of that sum, as I have preferred to confine my figures to those more directly influenced by the barges. The cost of the barges is thus shown to be equivalent to 5 per cent. interest on a million, which would be sufficient to make a new dock extension to hold twenty of the largest ships. It has been said that the dock companies have done nothing for the barges, so have no right to expect anything from them, but that is not by any means the case, for quite apart from the £50,000 per annum which, as I have just shown, is spent by the dock companies on account of the barges, many millions of capital are represented by the water areas, and by the excavation and cost of river locks, quay walls, and bridges and interior locks, all of which are necessary to the water areas. The cost of water areas being the principal item in the cost of docks, it is important that as many berths as possible, or the maximum length of quay should be obtained for a given water area. At ports where it is unnecessary to provide for large numbers of barges, the length of quay obtainable per acre is much greater than in London, where barges are numerous. I am not certain what the figures are to-day, but a few years ago, when the Tilbury Dock (the most recent) was being built, Mr. Vernon Harcourt published the following figures: Lineal yards of quay per acre; Liverpool, 108; Hull, 113; Leith, 116; Dublin, 149; while in London, Milwall, only 87; Surrey Commercial, 53; and of the Joint Committee docks, London and St. Katharine, 110; East and West India, 80; Victoria, 75; Albert, 62; and Tilbury, 83. With the exception of the London and St. Katharine Docks which include a number of short quays, the lengths of the quays in the docks of the Port of London are about 40 per cent. per acre less than those of Liverpool, Hull, and Leith. A large sum of money might have been saved had it not been necessary to consider the area required for the barges, and to enable the business to be carried on without the traffic being congested. The Albert Dock is a very good illustration. The main dock is 6,500 feet long by 490 wide. When the London Company constructed this dock 20 years ago, they need not have made it so wide had not their experience with the Victoria Dock shown them that with a less width the dock would be unworkable on account of the barges—even now at times it is absolutely impossible to pass down the dock on account of the block of barges. But for these 60 per cent. of the width or about 300 feet would have been ample for dock purposes. At Tilbury the central branch is only 300 feet wide, and the side docks from 300 feet to 200 feet, as there is plenty of room away from the quays for barges in the main dock. The cost of excavating the Albert Dock was £252,000; had it been only 300 feet wide a saving of £100,000 would have been made, as it would only have cost £150,000. Thirty acres of land now worth £30,000 would also have been saved. That it was not necessary to make the Albert Dock 500 feet wide for the shipping to pass through to the Victoria Dock is proved by the canal at the east end of that dock, which is 1,000 feet long and 200 feet wide, and by the fact that the Suez Canal is only 72 feet wide, the Amsterdam Canal only 88 feet, and the Manchester Ship Canal 120 feet wide. I believe that a very large sum might have been saved on the water areas but for the barges.

See 6824-30.

6704. Will you now tell us what works and improvements have been carried out by the Joint Committee during the years 1893 to 1900?—During the seven years ending December, 1899, the Joint Committee have spent no less than £627,000 out of capital in improving the docks and adding to their equipment. At the end of last year there were works in hand amounting to £188,000. At the West India Docks the most important structural improvement carried out cost £210,000. This consisted of a new entrance lock 480 feet long by 60 feet wide, having a depth of 30 feet on the sill, furnished with three pairs of gates. New passages were also cut 60 feet wide and 30 feet deep from the basin into the import and export docks; these entailed the lengthening of the railway swing bridges. In addition to this the north quay of the import dock, which is 2,600 feet long, has been greatly improved by the addition of a false quay on piles driven in front of the old quay walls, thus enabling deeper water to be obtained from the ships, and this year a new quay at the west end has been made 500 feet long at a cost of £6,000. Pumping engines have been erected at the entrance so that the level of the water is maintained a foot above Trinity high water, and larger ships can use the dock. At the East India Dock another important improvement on which £35,000 was spent has been carried out—a new passage with gates has been made between the basin and the export dock, 60 feet wide and 30 feet deep on the sill, while the old passage had a caisson and was only 50 feet wide and 23 or 24 feet deep. A false quay 500 feet long was also built on the north side, and piles driven the whole length, so that the dock could be dredged to a depth of 28 feet. At the South West India Dock £45,000 is now being spent in lengthening the lock from 300 feet to 480 feet, and in deepening it to 29 feet, the original depth being only 27 feet in the centre and 25 feet at the sides. The sections of ships now being square instead of the old curved lines the alteration of nearly all the dock entrances in course of time becomes necessary. In the Victoria Dock a new quay 1,000 feet long with two double floor sheds has been constructed, making two additional berths, at a cost of £30,000. At the Albert Dock an additional shed has been erected on the south side of the dock at a cost of £16,000. As ships grow larger more powerful tugs are required to assist them in traversing the docks, so two new tugs have been added to the fleet at a cost of £20,000, and two more have been ordered at another cost of £10,000 each. These tugs are 850 h.p. About £7,000 has been spent in laying additional sidings, and five new locomotives and 45 trucks have been purchased. Large sheds for teaks have been erected at a cost of £27,000 at the wood wharves in the West India Dock, and another is now being erected at a cost of about £6,000. The electrical installations have been increased at the Victoria, West India, and London Docks at a cost of £25,000. For the improvement of the frozen meat trade a new store at West Smithfield was built at a cost of £76,000, and £40,000 was spent at the West India Dock in insulating a warehouse and providing the machinery; while at the Victoria Dock £57,000 has been spent in extending the stores and converting the machinery to the ammonia system. £35,000 has also been spent in connection with the grain trade. The old pontoon property on the south side of the Victoria Dock was purchased and let to the Grain Elevator Company, who are erecting four elevators on the American principle. Plans have been prepared and sanctioned for grain silos at a cost of about £22,000. With regard to the cranes, about £40,000 has been spent on additional cranes, and £22,000 on additional hydraulic power. The figures I am about to give include a certain amount for what was ordered in 1899, but not completed in that year. Since the strike of engineers a few years ago the joint committee have experienced the greatest difficulty in obtaining quick delivery of machinery of all kinds. During the seven years the additions to the cranes have been as follows:—

See 6831-4.

Quay Cranes for Working Ships.

30-cwt. moveable hydraulic cranes	62
30-cwt. moveable electric crane	1
5-ton moveable steam cranes	2
3-ton moveable steam crane	2
30-cwt. fixed hydraulic cranes	2
Hand crane	1
Quay cranes total	70
Hydraulic cranes on warehouses	15
6-ton electric travellers for timber	23

Some of the electric travellers were converted from hand travellers, others were new. In addition, a large number of hydraulic capstans and jiggers have been purchased. The 70 additional quay cranes are sufficient to supply 600 ships with three cranes each, allowing each ship a fortnight, which is a liberal allowance. The number of ships using cranes has not increased by 600 during the past seven years. Some time ago

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I made a point of counting the number of cranes in use, and the number not working in the Albert Dock when I visited it, and I never found more than half in use; often only one-third were employed. At many ports where cranes are provided the ships use them continuously until their cargoes are discharged, but at the docks of London so much cargo goes overside into barges that the cranes are required most irregularly, causing considerable loss to the joint committee at some of the docks. A 30-cwt. crane must be used 1,000 hours per annum to pay its expenses, and 1,000 hours is about 20 hours per week, not much more than two nominal working days, yet many of the cranes are not worked even to that extent. With regard to the patterns of the cranes, those now made by the best makers are practically the same as those supplied 25 years ago; small improvements may have been made in minor details, but the main features of the cranes supplied when the Albert Dock was built are the same as of those now being supplied. I mention this, as it has been said that the cranes are not up to date. To supply the power for the additional hydraulic cranes and machinery additions have been made to the engines. At the Victoria and Albert Docks a new engine to pump 400 gallons per minute, at the West India Docks one to pump 500 gallons per minute, and at the London and St. Katharine three, to pump together 1,000 gallons per minute, have been added to the pumping stations at a cost of £22,000, and there should at present be no difficulty in maintaining the necessary power. Then with regard to improvements to quays and sheds, at Tilbury Dock the quays at seven berths have recently been concreted; this is a great improvement and facilitates trucking to the sheds. The quays, like those at the Albert Dock, could not be concreted when the dock was constructed, as the ground was marsh land and has continued to sink under weights up to the present time, but it is now thought that the settlement will not be sufficient to injure the concrete. In addition to the improvements that have been carried out at the cost of capital, many improvements are made and properly paid for out of revenue. For example, the Albert Dock was constructed on marsh land like Tilbury, so wooden quays were laid down. As these wooden quays decay they are replaced with concrete, which is much better and cheaper. During the last seven years 26 out of the 34 berths at the Albert Dock have been concreted, also two sheds have had the wooden floors replaced by concrete and four at Tilbury; in time, as repairs become necessary, all the wooden floors will be replaced by concrete. In many similar ways improvements are being made. The maintenance of the docks, including dredging, working expenses, and coal for the hydraulic, electric, and pumping engines, etc., amounts to £200,000 per annum, one half of which represents the cost of repairs and renewals. The total cost of maintenance, including improvements, representing capital expenditure, amounts to about £300,000 per annum.

6705. Will you now proceed to the schemes of dock construction that have been suggested, and the reasons why, in your opinion, they are not adapted to the Port of London?—Unless your Lordship wishes me to do so, I do not think that matter of sufficient importance to go into now. Very little has been said about the type of our docks. The statement of my evidence was prepared at a time when there was a great deal in the papers, saying that the docks were wrong, and we ought to have river quays, but I will give that part of my evidence if your Lordship wishes.

See 6771.

6706. Unless you have any particular wish to give it in I do not think you need do so?—I have no particular wish to give it. It merely shows you that quays in the river and other schemes are not feasible.

6707. Do you wish to make any remarks in connection with the supplemental evidence given by Mr. Scott this morning?—I am prepared to answer any questions that may be put to me.

6708. But do you wish to make any remarks?—Not unless your Lordship wishes to ask any question.

6709. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I wish just to make it quite clear about the number of barges that are locked. You have given in your evidence that the average number of barges per lock is 8·90?—Yes.

6710. That is based upon the experience of one week in particular?—Yes.

6711. Have you verified that figure by taking some other week or two or three other weeks, so as to check what the average is?—I have not taken any weeks but I have taken the particular locks by themselves and watched them, and formed my opinion of each lock, and made estimates for each lock, and I have also taken out how many they would hold, and how many I find practically get in. I have checked it in that way only.

6712. But you have not ascertained as a matter of fact that nine barges per lock all the year round would be a fair average. You have not checked it in the way that you have arrived at the figures for this particular week?—No.

6713. You say that of 5,555 barges, 64 per cent. were locked?—Yes.

6714. What number would that be?—3,555.

6715. At the average of 8·9 that would give you about 400 locks in that particular week?—Yes.

6716. Multiplying that by 52 you would get about 20,000 locks in a twelvemonth if that week was a fair average?—Yes.

6717. But I think you have told us that the actual barges locking required 10,124 locks in the year?—Yes.

6718. So that to some extent that particular week would not be a fair average?—No. But I have checked the numbers in each lock by taking the locks by themselves, and what the dock masters tell me is the average number they have found in practice that they take through. I have done that without taking any particular period. I have not taken any period, but in going down to the docks and seeing the dock masters I have ascertained from them, and we have other figures which confirm my figures, which show that that is the average number that practically go through the locks.

See 7481.

6719. The average differs very much at each particular dock?—Yes. And therefore I take the number of barges for the year that enter a particular dock and take the number of locks at that particular dock.

6720. But I suppose in arriving at that figure of 8·9 you took the total number of barges locked in that particular week and divided it by the actual number of locks?—Yes, the number of locks made.

6721. That was about 400?—Yes. The number of locks made during that week.

6722. In applying it to the general average, did you allow for the different number of locks at each particular dock in using those other figures where you made the comparison?—Yes. Take, for instance, a dock that has 10,000 barges only in the year. I have taken out the number against that particular dock, and I have found the number of locks made at that particular dock only.

6723. So that although the number of barges, and possibly ships, dealt with in that particular week that you select was more than the average number for each week of the whole of the year, yet the average number is quite correct for the purpose of calculation?—Yes. I have taken each dock separately, and worked them out separately.

6724. I presume the average loss of water per lock varies at the different docks where the lock takes place?—Yes. The amount of water lost is in proportion to the difference in level inside and outside. As you will find if you compare the number of barges in a lock with the size of the lock, which is the number they will take; it makes no difference whether you take a lock that would hold 20, and you put in 10, or whether you take a lock that would hold 6 and you only have 3 in it. It is the depth of water that we lose.

6725. But you compare the loss of water per lock of barges with the loss of water per lock of ships?—Yes.

6726. And you assume that in each case the loss is the same?—I assume that the loss is greater in the case of barges, because no ship goes in when the river is down 15ft.

6727. But apart from that, barges cause the greater loss of water, because it is taken at a different time?—Yes.

6728. You assume that in each case the loss is about the same?—It entirely depends on the hour at which

the locking is done with regard to high water. It makes no difference whether a ship is in, or whether it is one barge or 100 barges; practically it comes to the same thing. The change of water is equivalent to the area of the lock multiplied by the difference in the height of the tide.

6729. But still, on the average, you compare the locking of ships and barges—apart from that limit of time?—Yes.

6730. Would it not be the case that ships are mainly locked out and in of one or two docks, and barges are mainly locked out or in at some other docks? I wish to know whether there is any difference?—That would make no difference at all. You might have a dock without any ships at all, but it would be just the same thing. You could compare a ship going into one dock with barges going into another dock.

6731. The locking of ships takes place mainly at Tilbury and at the Victoria and Albert Dock?—Yes. And at the West India Dock.

6732. Would you say the same for barges—that the locking takes place at those docks?—The locking takes place at nearly all the docks except the Victoria Dock, where a special level was made for barges. I have taken no credit for that. That is to say, we lower the water in the basin some 5ft., and let the barges all come in in one lot. That is the only case in which it would be different.

6733. You have stated that about one-third of the barges went into the Victoria and Albert Docks?—Yes.

6734. But you have not given any proportions of the barges to the ships entering any of the other docks?—I can give you those.

6735. I think we ought to have it on the notes, what it is at the other docks?—The ships are given in Appendix 8 of the 2nd day.

6736. I think I know the ships, but I should like to know about barges?—That is in Appendix 33 of the 16th day.

6737. Will you read out the figures?—Shall I give you 1898, the year I am dealing with?

6738. Yes?—The London and St. Katharine Dock, 29,983; the East and West India Dock, 42,708; the Victoria and Albert Dock, 56,689; and the Tilbury Dock, 12,837.

6739. These would give you proportions not quite the same as the proportions in the case of ships?—No, not quite the same; at some of the docks the ships pass on the level—at the East India Docks, for instance.

6740. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose with regard to letting barges out of the locks the two subjects are, on the one side, economy in preventing more pumping than necessary?—Yes.

6741. And on the other side the alternative is clearing the dock as quickly as possible?—That is most important—clearing the entrance.

6742. You have then to endeavour to steer a middle course between those two lines?—Yes.

6743. The barges, I suppose, want to get out as early as possible?—They would like to get out at dead low water, so as to get the tide up to town, naturally.

6744. That would add very much to the cost of pumping?—Yes. I have some figures with regard to that. With reference to Question 5663, which was put to Mr. Scott, I have just made these notes. The dredging amounts to 666,666 tons. The three years, therefore, come to 2,000,000 tons. The usual accumulation is a little over 2,000,000 tons. The water area of the docks is a little over 2,000,000 square yards. The dredging is therefore equal to 1ft. deep over the whole of the water area per annum. In order to be able to keep that mud away as it is absolutely impossible to dredge thin layers, it would be necessary to deepen the docks to the extent of 2,000,000 yards, which are practically tons for this purpose. That at 1s. a cubic yard would be £100,000. The rapid accumulation of mud would not then be so costly. If the dock company are called upon to assist barges in and out at all locks instead of certain locks only, where there are public road bridges, as at present, the wages of the dock-master's staff, now £24,000 per annum, will be increased, say, to £27,000, and if we only debit one-third of this to barges the amount would be £9,000. The account would then stand (without the new dock):—Cost of barges as already shown, £50,000; less 10 per cent. for barges used by the dock company, £5,000, leaving £45,000. Then add £9,000, being one-third of the dock master's staff, £27,000, that will come to £54,000. If the barges were permitted to enter and leave at any time they pleased, even at dead low water, the dredging may be doubled. Some restriction would be necessary to prevent a single barge demanding entrance at low water. That is supposing they had the right to go in and out at any time they pleased; it would cost about double the dredging.

6745. At any rate, your estimate now is on the present condition of things?—Yes.

6746. And if greater facilities were given to the barges, it would cost, according to your view, so much more?—Yes.

6747. Do you find any improvement in the quantity of mud in suspension of late years?—No; it depends a great deal upon the season; about two or three years ago we had a very hot autumn; the mud increased enormously then, because, instead of the large quantity of fresh water coming down the river which carried the stirred-up mud away, I think it was reduced to something like 40 million gallons that came over Teddington Lock for some little time, and we found that the actual quantity of mud in the water we looked at was nearly double what there was in the winter time, when there was a lot of water coming over Teddington Weir.

6748. What you want to see is the fresh water preponderating as much as possible?—We do.

6749. When you come to deal with the question of the allocation of the cost of pumping, I want to ask this question. Could the docks be used by the ships under the present conditions without pumping?—Some could and some could not.

6750. Apart from barges?—Apart from barges a certain amount of pumping would be necessary at the Victoria and Albert Docks, because by pumping we keep the water up to Trinity, and there is only 24 or 25 feet over the tunnel between the Victoria Dock and Albert Dock. If we did not pump we should lose about 3 feet, therefore no ship over 21 feet could get into the Victoria Dock at neaps. Now they are much deeper than that, and, therefore, it would be necessary to pump at neaps for a short time the Victoria and Albert Docks. I do not think it would affect the other docks in any way, because, although pumping is done at the West India Dock I do not think it would be necessary to continue it there, because the entrances are deep, and the passages have all been deepened to 30 feet, and it is only a question of dredging the docks a little deeper to get the extra depth.

6751. You can only get the addition of the necessary depth of water either by dredging out the docks or pumping?—Yes.

6752. Does the question of dredging the docks involve the deepening of the walls?—What we have done in one or two docks is to put a false quay in front. That is the cheapest way of doing it. We put a line of piles some 10 or 12 feet from the walls and put a concrete decking.

6753. You would have to incur capital expenditure if you did not pump?—Yes.

6754. For ships alone?—Yes.

6755. Would it not be fair to allocate some of the expenses of pumping more equally between the ships and the barges?—I have in the proportion of three to one, the number of locks, which is loss of water only; I have not done it in the proportion of nine to one, but three to one, the number of locks made, and, therefore, the quantity of water that has to be pumped.

6756. But you would have to pump in any case for the ships?—But only one-third of the quantity.

6757. The wages would be the same, would they not?—Yes.

6758. And the interest on machinery would be the same?—Yes. I have allowed for that.

6759. Then it is a fact, is it not, that you must have the pumping, whether you have the barges or not?—We should have to have the pumping at the Victoria and Albert Docks to a certain extent.

6760. But the cost of pumping would be very much less?—Yes.

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6761. You have given us the average cost of dredging from 1886 to the present time. Are you dealing there with exactly the same depth of water in the docks?—Yes, the same docks.

6762. None of that dredging is in the improvement of the dock?—No, that is charged to capital. If we were told to deepen the dock that dredging would be charged to capital. This is dredging of mud only.

6763. Then you continue the dredging at a greater depth?—Yes; but that does not increase the quantity to be dredged. The quantity to be dredged is only what comes in.

6764. None of this is in the nature of a permanent improvement?—No.

6765. It is all absolute siltage?—Absolutely. Any dredging done for deepening or enlargement is charged as recently in the Victoria Dock separately to capital.

6766. With regard to what you said about the width of the Victoria Dock and the modern docks, was not the width to a great extent arrived at from considerations of the larger ships, and having to turn them?—No, because we never turn ships in the docks in London, and they never have been for many years. Ships always go out backwards.

6767. Then do you consider that it was only for barges?—Yes. Originally, at the Albert Dock it was only intended to make a quay with 200 feet of water, and it was not contemplated to make any greater width until they decided to make the whole dock at once, and then they fixed 500 feet as the width which would be certainly unnecessary but for the barges, because Tilbury afterwards built a dock which is only 300 feet wide.

6768. Tilbury Docks have a large place for turning ships?—They never turn.

6769. But Tilbury has a large place where they could turn?—They could turn, but they never do in practice.

6770. Now just a question with regard to that part of your evidence in which you considered amongst other things the practicability or otherwise of open quays in the river. It deals also with other proposals which have been put forward for dock construction?—Yes.

6771. I think it would be well that we should hear that?—Certainly. It has been said that the general design of the existing docks is not suited to the requirements of the Port of London, and that the dock companies have not kept pace with the times by making improvements in accordance with modern progress. Again, the system of enclosed docks has been unfavourably compared with other systems which work well at other ports. One suggestion is that enclosed docks are not required, as a proper system of riverside wharves would be much better and more convenient, saving as they would do all the difficulties and delays consequent on locking from the river, and passing the many sets of interior locks and gates as well as the swing bridges, and that future extensions should take that form. Another idea is that half-tide docks would avoid the delays and be more convenient. The following systems again have all been advocated:—(a) Large tidal floats or pools that can be entered at all hours. (b) Similar large floats without quay walls, but to be entered by lock gates. (c) Jetties in the river after deepening the river. (d) Tidal cuts or canal berths at right angles to the river. (e) Weirs across the river with locks at some point down the river, so that the water should be maintained at a suitable level. None of these suggestions if carried out would be so suitable as the present system, but, of course, any extensions would be made with a view to accommodating larger and deeper ships. It may be admitted at once that the Dock Company's present docks are not actually perfect for present and prospective shipping requirements, and that the 62 pairs of gates, the 36 swing bridges, and the 257 sluices to be worked do cause delay to the shipping and barges and expense to the dock companies. But it is also true that since their original construction new and larger entrances have been added to the London Docks, the East India Docks, the West India Docks, and the Albert Dock, and the entrance lock of the South West India Dock is now being lengthened and deepened. Hydraulic and electrical machinery has been introduced at all the docks, and many of the berths have been deepened. The dates when the docks were constructed are:—

	Commenced.	Completed.
The West India Docks	1799	1802
The London Docks	1800	1805
The East India Docks	1803	1806
The St. Katharine Docks	1825	1828
The Royal Victoria Dock	1850	1855
The South West India Dock	1866	1870
The Royal Albert Dock	1875	1880
The Tilbury Docks	1882	1886

Before considering whether the existing docks have been improved with the times, and sufficiently provided with shed accommodation, cranes and other accessories, I will endeavour to show that the general system is sound, and that it would not be advisable to alter it as suggested. First as regards open berths or wharves on the river side, without counting the Surrey Commercial Docks and the Millwall Docks, or the many small docks belonging to railway companies and private owners, the quays of the Joint Committee's docks alone would extend over 20 miles in length, or from the Brunswick Wharf at Blackwall to beyond Tilbury Dock, if placed on the north side of the river. And all the docks in London, if extended on both sides of the river would occupy the whole of the frontage not yet built upon down to Gravesend, while the width of water area required to accommodate all the ships and barges would be 175ft. on either side of the river. No scheme for extensions would be desirable that did not contemplate ultimately doubling the accommodation of the port, so if a system of river-side wharves be adopted the port will have to extend on both sides of the river to a point 25 miles or more from London Bridge. Such an extension would add immensely to the difficulties of the Custom House officers, the dock officials and the police. But it is not only on these grounds or on the ground of the cost of construction (which would be far greater than the present system) that I think the proposal undesirable, but rather for the following reason:—The ordinary tide in the river is about 19ft., but on occasions is as much as 22ft. below Trinity high water. To accommodate ships drawing 30ft. therefore the river bed must be dredged to 52ft. below Trinity high water, and this dredging would have to be carried out at once for the whole distance from Galleons to beyond Purfleet, about ten miles, and for the whole width of the river to high water mark in those portions of the river in which it may be intended to construct the wharves. Even supposing this were done it would be quite impossible to keep a berth in front of these wharves free from mud, if dredged below the general surface. The Dock Company know this from their futile attempts at Galleons, Royal Albert Dock. But apart from the dredging which would be an almost prohibitive expense the quay walls would cost three times the cost of quay walls in a dock, even if they could be built without cofferdams. To increase the sectional area of the river to such an extent as this proposal contemplates, might have very serious effects on the river banks through London. The Thames Embankment and the Houses of Parliament would probably be flooded as it would be impossible to increase the sectional area of the river above London Bridge. Then with regard to half tide docks. In the existing docks less than one foot of water per tide is lost in locking, but it costs £30,000 per annum to remove the mud due to this comparatively small loss of one foot. With half tide docks the loss of water would be ten times as great, and the consequent dredging amount to £300,000 per annum. The cost of locks would be practically the same, the cost of excavation would be 25 per cent. more, and the cost of the quay walls double. It will be seen, therefore, that the cost of dredging alone would be prohibitive. Dealing with the other suggestions that have been made:—Large Tidal Floats or Pools that can be entered at all hours.—In a system of this kind the quantity of mud to be dealt with would be enormous, and if the area of the floats were equal to the existing docks it would cost £600,000 per annum to dredge the mud, but having no gates I believe a number of blowers, if constantly employed, would be able to stir up the mud on the falling tide sufficiently to prevent large accumulations, though a certain amount would have to be dredged. The amount would depend upon the extent to which the depth of the float exceeded the river at its entrance. There would be a saving in having no quay walls, lock

gates, etc., but the excavation would be 70 per cent. more on account of the increased depth, and another 30 per cent. more for increased area, to accommodate the same number of ships, as ships cannot lie moored in a float touching each other as they do when made fast to bollards on a quay. It is true the cost of constructing the float would be about half the cost of a dock, but all the goods would have to be put over the side into barges. This might suit a certain class of import, but not the export, and would be most inconvenient for general or mixed cargoes, and, in fact, would be impossible for big ships from foreign ports. (*b*) Large floats without quays walls but with lock gates. —This proposal involves all the present delays of locking, coupled with the disadvantages of the last proposal; the only saving would be the cost of the dock walls, which only represent 25 per cent. of the cost of construction. (*c*) Jetties in the river.—The river at present is so narrow that jetties could only be adopted if the river were widened; also the river would have to be deepened to 52ft. below Trinity high water to take ships up to 30ft. in depth. Ships are now increasing in length. A jetty to take a ship 700ft. long would have to encroach on the river 500ft., if at an angle of 45 degrees, a width equal to the width of the Albert Dock. To widen the river would cost more than the excavation of a dock, and a large ship across the stream would be in a dangerous position. Moreover, all the other disadvantages applying to the open quay system would apply in an equal degree to this scheme. (*d*) Tidal cuts.—These would be better than the last proposal, only it would be almost impossible to keep them free from mud. At the South-West India Dock entrance, where there is at present a temporary dam across the entrance to exclude the water from the lock during the progress of the works connected with the deepening of the lock, it was found that in a few weeks the mud had silted up over 10ft. in depth, making it impossible for the divers to enter the sluices, although the dam is only 150ft. from the line of the river wall. Excepting where the shore actually dries at low water, any cut or recess in the line of the river wall accumulates mud very quickly. In fact, it would be quite impossible to keep such cuts free from mud if they were of any length or depth. (*e*) Weirs across the river, with locks at Gravesend or some other point down the river. —If it were only necessary to deal with the mud that comes down the river above Teddington Weir, no great difficulty would be presented, as the mud comes down from the upper reaches with the floods, and when the river is in flood 3,000,000,000 or 4,000,000,000, and occasionally as much as 6,000,000,000 gallons of water pass over the weir daily, carrying the mud quickly down to the sea. But we have to deal with the mud created by London, which is supplied to the river when the river is not in flood, and when only a few million gallons of water are coming down from the upper reaches. This mud is washed backwards and forwards past the lock gates (salt is found in the river at Richmond), and the further down the river the thicker the water gets. During the last few years we have had very dry autumns, and as the result a marked increase in the quantity of mud entering the Dock Company's Docks during those months. Now, if a weir was made down at Gravesend, it would probably be on a similar principle to that at Richmond, where, contrary to the usual practice, the water passes under the shutter instead of over it, an arrangement which is supposed to assist in keeping the bed of the river clear. Whether it does so at Richmond or not I do not know, but I have seen several rivers in India where the sluices are also on the bed of the river. These rivers are for several months short of water, with floods only during the monsoon, and it has been found that the sluices only clear the mud for a short distance above them, beyond which distance the river silts up, and the silt is not cleared away by the floods. For many weeks during these dry seasons the flow of water over Teddington Weir per diem does not exceed the water we lose in the docks in one day's locking. If a similar amount of water were to be used in locking at Gravesend (but the quantity would be much greater), there would be no flow under the weir, and there would be no tidal change of water, with the consequence that the river would become very foul, and it would be impossible to keep it in a sanitary condition, unless some additional supply of fresh water could be obtained, which seems hardly possible. There is not any to spare in the River Lea, or the Dock Companies would have made a bid for it long ago. A salt water canal from the sea with clean water would be too costly. For these and other reasons I am of opinion that enclosed docks, such as exist at present, are the only practical system for any extensions of docks in the Port of London.

6772. Have you anything to add to that?—There is one point which I think is not quite clear. That is about my fear of widening and deepening the river too much, causing floods in the upper reaches. That would not apply to merely deepening the channel, but I am very much afraid that if you had quays by the side of the river it would be necessary to make the river so wide and deep that if you had a large body of water coming up we should have all our quays flooded. Nowadays we have sometimes to put clay round the quays at the swing bridges to prevent the water coming over. An extra foot of water would be very serious. In the London Docks we have to put iron kerbs round the quays 18ft. high to prevent the flood coming over the quays, and when the Thames Embankment was made they had to put little blocks of stone against the balustrades to prevent the water coming over.

6773. And there was an Act of Parliament passed in consequence?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

(*Chairman.*) Will you be good enough to indicate the points upon which you wish to cross-examine?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I think the question will itself indicate it, my Lord.

6774. You bring out in your evidence a figure of £50,000 odd for expenses on account of barges?—Yes.

6775. And I understand you put it that there is an undue congestion of barges in the docks?—Certainly.

6776. More barges come into the docks than are required to serve this number of ships?—I do not say that. I only say there is a congestion of barges. I do not know what they do when they come in.

6777. Have you considered how much of this £50,000 would be attributable to barges which were really required to serve, under existing circumstances, that number of ships?—I have no knowledge of what the barges do when they come in. I am only interested in getting them in and out.

6778. Now, I want to ask you one question with regard to this. You stated that during the past seven years there had been a capital expenditure of £627,000?—Yes.

6779. Then we have already in Appendix 6, Table 9, of the Second Day, a sum of £627,260 for capital expenditure during the eleven years from 1889 to 1899?—The whole of that, I believe, was spent in the seven years ending.

6780. Then the improvements referred to in the two tables are substantially the same, you mean?—Yes.

6781. But if that is correct, that leaves no improvements at all during the first four years out of that eleven?—No, not in those four years. The improvements began eight years ago.

6782. It depends whether you take the average over seven years, or eleven years?—Yes; the improvements began eight years ago, and are going on at the rate of about £100,000 a year.

6783. I have not followed that very carefully through, but I think in substance the improvements you have given us to-day are the same as are in that table?—Yes.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) My Lord, I do not think it will be necessary for me to ask any question on the engineering evidence. I might like to ask leave to put a question afterwards.

(*Witness.*) Might I say one word with regard to your question. Those figures represent the money spent in the seven years. When you asked the question I said I thought there had been nothing done then. No figures had been given to me for that period. There was a rectification of accounts which altered it. They spread them over a certain number of years, and the figures I was dealing with were only the seven years ending 1899.

6784. May I just take it in this way. There is a

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table upon which I have previously cross-examined Mr. Scott, that is Table 9 in Appendix 6 of the Second Day —the old table?—Yes.

6785. May I take it that that table stands, and it is right? If it ought to be corrected will you just say how?—During those four years it had been erroneously charged to revenue. They had been making improvements, but they had been charged to revenue. The figures I have given you are what has been spent since 1893, and charged direct to capital.

6786. Then to get an average it would be right to divide that £627,000 by 11?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

6787. Referring to your statement with regard to the 5,555 barges, of which you say 64 per cent. are locked and 36 dealt with on the level at high water, I take it that the cost to the company is all incurred on the 64 per cent. that are locked?—It costs us a certain amount even with regard to the loss of water on the level, but of course you cannot very well measure that. All I can say is that the loss on a level for barges is infinitely greater than it is for ships. I have made no charge for the barges coming in at the Victoria Dock on the level, where we actually lowered 16 acres of basin 5 feet for barges.

6788. You are dealing with something which I did not ask you. I am dealing with the difference between barges that were locked and barges that were not locked. The cost to you of those that were locked is relatively greater than the cost of those that were not locked?—Yes.

6789. Have you taken out any figures to show what proportion of the 64 per cent. of the 5,555 for that week were barges that were going to private wharves on the river?—No. I know nothing about where the barges were going. I am only giving you the cost of the barges as barges.

6790. You may have it the other way about, to show what proportion of those barges were employed on the dock company's own works, and what proportion on transhipment?—Those figures have been already given by Mr. Scott. I am merely dealing with the locking of barges. These figures include the 10 per cent. for the company, and include every barge and every ship.

6791. Do I understand you are referring to the same week?—No; this week is only to explain how the proportions are got, but we have had observations made in many other ways to know exactly how many barges are locked, and how many come in on the level.

6792. You did not ascertain their destinations?—I had nothing to do with their destination at all.

6793. Now I will ask you to excuse my ignorance. I do not know what a barge pond is. Can you tell me?—Yes.

(*Chairman.*) Did we not settle at the last sitting that this has to do with the Bill that is now before a Committee of the House of Commons?

6794. (*Mr. Harper.*) I only want to know what a barge pond is. I simply want a definition. What is a barge pond—any barge pond?—It is a gap made in the quay, leading to a float behind the sheds, where barges can lie and receive goods out of the sheds without interfering with a ship lying at the quay.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) My Lord, I should very much like to see my clients on this evidence before I put my questions. I have only a few questions to ask. I do not know whether it would be inconvenient to put them on Monday instead of to-day?

(*Chairman.*) I think it would be inconvenient. Are you referring to Mr. Baggallay's evidence?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Yes, on barges. There are a good many statements upon which I should like to see my clients.

(*Chairman.*) It would be inconvenient to us to recall the Witness. We feel that the progress will be very slow if we do that.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) If your Lordship pleases. I did not know whether another Witness could be taken to-day.

(*Chairman.*) I think it would be most inconvenient to do that.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

6795. Now, referring to your particulars of the actual cost incurred by the Joint Committee on account of the barges, there is an item there of £761 for barge searchers. Would you mind telling me what barge searchers are, or what their duties are?—They have to see to the barges leaving the docks, in the same way that the police at the gates prevent a man going out with anything that he has no business to take away.

6796. Do you mean that they are a species of detectives?—I should say a species of police.

6797. Are they separate from your police?—They are on the police establishment.

6798. The lightermen do not require them?—No.

6799. We do not want to pay for these. Now with regard to the damage, you also mention here repairs at entrance £5,250. I think you allege that a considerable amount of this damage was done by the barges at the entrance?—Certainly.

6800. That is so?—Yes.

6801. Is not all damage done by barges charged by the dock company against the barges?—Only when they do any specific damage. But you cannot charge a barge if it merely rubs the sides, dents the gates, or cuts holes in the brickwork. You cannot charge any particular barge for that.

6802. (*Chairman.*) Why?—It would be so small. A lot of barges in a lock bump against the wall, and the iron head cuts it away.

6803. You told us in your evidence that when a ship comes in she does little or no damage, but if she does any she pays for it?—Yes.

6804. Is it always so?—Ships are brought in with great care; they put down fenders and so on.

6805. Can you tell us why the barges do not do any damage?—It is really wear and tear, you may call it. Any wilful damage they would, of course, be charged with.

6806. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I understand you to say that it is done by the iron head of the barge?—Yes.

6807. That is a dent made by the barge?—Yes.

6808. That is what you mean to convey?—Yes.

6809. Are not those damages claimed against the individual barge owner and pressed for payment?—Certainly, if they do a damage that you can measure.

6810. Then do I take it that this item only refers to ordinary wear and tear?—Certainly, wear and tear caused by these rough barges.

6811. But you do not allege that barges have not got fenders, do you? Do you allege that a bargeowner allows his barge to cut and bump against the wall?—Yes, I do.

6812. And damages himself thereby?—Yes.

6813. Seriously, do you say that barges have not got fenders?—I do not say that no barge has a fender, but as a rule they have not. The manager will be able to answer those questions better than I, but in giving these figures as to the repairs I mean what is caused by the wear and tear at the entrances; and a certain proportion of these repairs I charge to barges, because the barges are more numerous than the ships, and do more damage.

6814. Then you have said this. The number of barges was 142,217; 36 per cent. or 51,198 passed in on a level at high water, and 64 per cent. or 91,019 were locked in. Can you give me any idea how many of the barges that you are speaking of in this question carried in coal?—No.

6815. Are they included?—Yes, they are included. They are all the barges of all sorts.

6816. And even where ballast is taken in by barges that is all included in this number?—Yes.

6817. And I may take it that they form a very considerable proportion?—Yes. The figures have been given, I think.

6818. And do they also include barges that take off the goods landed on the quays under the American bill of lading?—They include all barges.

6819. For all purposes?—All purposes—every barge and everything.

6820. Now there is a repetition of my first question with regard to damage. You have stated that: "Nine barges in a lock, on the contrary, bump against the walls and piers with their sharp square iron-bound bows, cut deep holes in the brickwork," and so on, "and knock the gates about." Is not any of that damage that is

See 6703.

directly caused by the barges brought about by the careless handling of the hydraulic winches?—No, certainly not.

6821. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—I do. I do not mean to say that I am always standing there, but I have never seen any damage done in that way.

6822. But is it possible that the damage could be done in that way?—Of course it could. That would be incidental to working the barges, would it not.

6823. And that would be the act of the dock company's own men?—Yes.

6824. Then you said: "Some portion of these expenses, amounting to about £28,000, could certainly be saved were there no barges, but I have not charged the barges with any portion of that sum, as I have preferred to confine my figures to those more directly influenced by the barges." That is a repetition again. Do you include in that paragraph the barges that take the goods from off the quays under the American bill of lading?—I do not quite follow you.

See 6703

6825. The salaries and the wages of the dock staff at the entrances?—I have not charged anything for that. I am only mentioning that we should charge a certain proportion of that to barges, but I have not done so.

6826. You have not reckoned that in?—No.

6827. When was this evidence drawn up?—I think it was August last.

6828. It was not drawn up for the present purpose, was it?—It was drawn up for the Royal Commission.

6829. For this present Commission?—Yes.

6830. Does that mean that the whole of it was drawn up for the purpose of the Commission, or was it drawn up for some Bill and adopted for the present purpose?—This was not drawn up for the purpose of these Bills. I do not say that I did not study the subject for the Bill, but the whole of it was drawn up for the purpose of this Commission.

See 6704.

6831-2. And then you stated: "The old pontoon property on the south side of the Victoria Dock was purchased and let to the Grain Elevator Company, who are erecting four elevators on the American principle." Were not any of those elevators erected long ago?—They are completed now, but they were not completed when my evidence was compiled last August.

6833. Not in August?—I do not think so.

6834. Were they not working in August?—Certainly they were not completed. Two were completed a year before. The dock company had started some piles as well.

6835. Then you stated that "the dock master keeps a foreman and two men generally supervising the docking of barges," and so on?—That is at the Albert entrance only.

6836. Is it not a fact that for some time past the dock company have refused to render any assistance to barges going out?—We never render assistance unless it has been necessary at the Albert Dock. The custom varies at all the entrances.

6837. In the Albert Dock you render no assistance?—At the Albert Dock we do not render assistance.

6838. Then there is no expenditure for that?—We have these men that I mention here generally supervising it and ordering the barges where to go, but we do not use our hydraulic machinery and assist them in and out as we have to do at the entrances where there are bridges.

6839. This is bearing on the point of congestion of traffic. Do you say that at the Albert Dock no assistance is rendered?—Not as a rule; it is occasionally.

6840. And the bargemen have to do the best they can to get in and out?—Yes.

6841. There is no control exercised by the governing body?—There is a great deal of control. These men are specially put there to control it to the best of their ability.

6842. But within the last twelve months have they exercised any control?—Certainly.

6843. Is it not a fact that they have expressly refrained from rendering assistance?—No. They do not render assistance; they do not give them ropes; they do not use their hydraulic capstans to haul them in. But they control them; they tell them when they may come in and go out, and they do the locking.

6844. Where is it that you lend assistance to the barges?—I may say, at all entrances where there are public road bridges, and where, if we did not hurry the barges through and render them every assistance, we should be causing great inconvenience to traffic along the roads. The Blackwall instance is a good one; if we did not get the barges through quickly there, we should get miles of traffic on the road blocked; therefore we use our capstans and all the machinery we have, and put a tug there to help them through. But we do not do that at Tilbury, where there is no public inconvenience. If a man takes an hour coming in, it does not really affect us very much.

6845. At all events, at the Albert Dock, have not the bargeowners complained to you, times without number, of the want of assistance that the dock company should give them?——

(*Chairman.*) Is not that a question that should be put to the manager? It is hardly a question for the engineer.

6846. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) If your Lordship pleases. (*To the Witness.*) Now one more question. Could not a good deal of this accumulation of mud be prevented by pumping more?—The pumping is exactly the same as I have already given in my evidence. The mud that comes in with pumped water is exactly the same as the mud that comes in with the tide.

6847. Could not that be rectified?—No.

6848. Could not you pump in more of the surface water?—No, because we have to pump when the tide is so low. Besides that, I have taken specimens of the water at different times, and had them examined to see how much deposit there was. It makes no difference. You cannot tell. Sometimes at the top of the tide the water is muddiest, and sometimes at low water it is muddiest.

6849. You can answer me this question. Is not the top of the tide less muddy by far than it is, we will say, about 15ft. down?—No, it is not.

6850. Is it as muddy at the top?—Quite.

6851. Then are there any periods when the water on the top of the tide is less muddy than at others?—Not at the docks.

6852. I mean outside?—Yes, in the river. When a tug at an entrance stirs up the mud at the bottom, and you open the lock gates, of course at that moment a great deal more comes in; but if you take the water in the river generally, apart from the entrances, it makes no difference whether you take the water from the top or the bottom. I do not say an inch or two from the bottom, but a reasonable distance from the bottom.

6853. At all events, a considerable amount of the accumulation that is caused by opening the lock gates may be diminished if you pump more?—No. I maintain that every gallon of water that we pump in brings in as much mud as the water that comes in through the locks on the tide.

6854. The barge itself being flat-bottomed, cannot itself stir up the mud?—We do not accuse the barges of stirring up the mud. It is merely that the water in the river contains a certain quantity of mud in suspension which, when it becomes still in the docks, deposits.

6855. How do you propose to prevent it?—We do not propose to prevent it. We only want to be paid for taking it out.

6856. Then if this tax which you want goes on the barges, the same state of affairs will still be, only you will have more money to get rid of the mud?—Yes, we shall have more money.

6857. There is to be no alteration in the congestion of the traffic?—Yes. Supposing we were paid a liberal price for locking barges in and out, and were paid for all this work, we should not object. Then the barges would be cleared away over the whole 24 hours instead of only certain hours just when the ships want to come in, which would stop the congestion very considerably.

6858. Has not complaint been made by the barge owners of the length of time they are kept outside the locks? For instance, if they are just a little too late

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at high water the barge is kept waiting for ten hours, is it not?—Yes.

6859. Is not that one of the causes of the congestion of the traffic in front of the docks?—Yes. Probably if we locked for the whole 24 hours there would not be really the same congestion. If we locked for 24 hours, and did not only lock within two or three hours of high water, naturally there would not be the congestion of traffic round the entrances, but it would cost us double the amount in dredging.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

6860. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) You have spoken of the increase of dredging. Have your docks been deepened since they were built, or are they at the same depth now as they were when they were built?—No dock has been deepened. The entrances, the locks, have been deepened, but not the docks.

6861. Can you give me any idea of the average depth of ships during the years 1886 to 1889—the draught of water, I mean—as compared with 1898 and 1899?—No, I am afraid I could not.

6862. Is it a fact that the increase of dredging has been caused by the increase in the draught of the ships?—I think I have said so—that as ships get bigger and deeper it is necessary to keep the docks absolutely clean, and not allow the mud to collect for some years, and then dredge it out in a solid form; therefore, the ships getting larger has necessitated our dredging right down to the very bottom.

6863. In fact, a deeper depth of water has to be kept in the docks now?—Certainly, and that has caused this enormous increase of 50 per cent. in dredging.

6864. So that dredging and pumping have both increased, not owing to anything the barges have brought about?—Not pumping.

6865. But have you not also to pump more water into the dock?—No, we have not to keep the water any higher; but as the docks are deepened we have to keep them cleaner. It means that we cannot allow the mud to accumulate and dredge it in a solid form, but we have to dredge it in a slushy form, and that has caused this increase.

6866. When you talk about the average dredging being 415,000 tons during the four years 1886 to 1889, and increasing until for 1900 it is 675,000 tons, that has been caused by the increase of the ships?—No, I do not put it that way at all.

6867. I mean a great part of it?—No, not a bit of it. I only say that in the olden days the barges, however numerous they might have been, were not so troublesome to us with regard to dredging. Now that it is necessary to keep the docks clean, the mud brought in by the locking of barges becomes a regular nuisance, as we have to clean it out in a slushy form.

6868. I know that that is your contention, but I suggest to you that no more mud gets into these docks now than got in ten years ago?—If you will, I will admit that; but that does not alter the fact. We have to take it out in a slushy form, which means more carriage to sea, and more dredging.

6869. Is it not a fact that the water in the Thames is much clearer now than it was 10 years ago?—I should certainly say not.

6870. Has the improved system of removing the sewage had no effect upon the state of the river?—I cannot very well answer that question with regard to sewage, because, although they may have reduced the amount of solid matter put into the river in the form of sewage, other things have caused the water in the river to become much dirtier. There is more mud in the river now I maintain, than there was 10 years ago, and the more they reduce the quantity of water coming down the river the more it will increase.

6871. Now, I want to ask you about the pumping at the London Dock. Where do you get the water from at your London Dock that you pump in?—We get it from two places.

6872. What are they?—We get the water from the river and from the basin.

6873. By the basin do you mean the old Shadwell basin?—The new Shadwell basin and the old Shadwell basin adjoin. They are all practically one.

6874. But the Shadwell basin that you refer to is practically unused, is it not?—No.

6875. There is not the amount of traffic in it for places up to London?—Yes, it is very much used indeed. It is the main entrance to the London Docks.

6876. I think we are at issue, perhaps. Are you speaking of the old entrance?—We do not use the old entrance at all.

6877. That is my point. You do not use the old entrance at all; but do you not pump the water out of the old entrance?—No, we pump the water out of a basin which is made up of the new Shadwell basin and the old Shadwell basin; but they are practically the same; there is no division between them. The water is pumped out of the new Shadwell basin and is pumped into the dock, and the great advantage of doing that is that we do not pump so much mud, because instead of the water being locked out of the basin into the river, we pump it into the dock, and it is a saving in mud.

6878. Do you do 10 per cent. of the dredging at that dock that you do at the other dock?—I can give you the actual figures. You mean dredging at the London Dock?

6879. I am referring to the main dock. I am not separating the dredging in the main dock from the other parts of the London Dock. That is all under one figure?—I do not know what you call the main dock. The London Dock is a series of docks.

6880. Suppose you take the London Dock as a whole; the main dock I am talking of?—Do you mean the Western Dock. There is a Western Dock, an Eastern Dock, and Tobacco Dock.

6881. The main dock is the part of the dock that is kept at high water mark?—Yes, that is, the Eastern Dock, the Western Dock, within the inner locks.

6882. That is the main dock, is it not?—You may call them so. There are a series of docks.

6883. Is not all that kept above high water mark?—Certainly it is kept very often 2ft. above Trinity. There is very little dredging done there, because we pump out of the basin, but we have to do the dredging in the basin instead. That is only transferring the clean water out of one part of the system into another. That does not alter the amount of dredging in the dock. If we take clean water out of the basin and put it into the dock, we have to do the dredging in the basin instead.

6884. Then if you took the whole of the water out of the river you would not have any dredging at all?—Yes, we should have exactly the same dredging as I have already pointed out in my evidence to-day.

6885. For locking?—Of course we have exactly the same amount of mud in pumped water as we have in water that comes in through the locks. The mere fact of taking water out of one basin and putting it in another basin or enclosure within the locks does not affect the dredging in any way.

6886. With regard to the Albert Dock, where do you get your water from there?—We take it from near the upper entrance—Galleons entrance.

6887. Do you get it through the chain hole?—No, we get it through a special culvert made for the purpose, but it is very near what you may call the chain hole.

6888. By the chain hole I mean the chain that is connected with the lock gates very low down?—No, there is no chain there, but, still, I know what you mean—it is near the entrance.

6889. You know what I am referring to when I talk of the chain hole?—Yes. There is no chain there, but the culvert is near the entrance of the lock.

6890. That is low down, is it not?—Of course, it is put low down, because we have to pump until the water is 19 feet below Trinity to get the quantity. We have to pump 12 hours.

6891. At all events, it is a fact that it is close to the land, is it not?—Of course it is, because we have to pump for so many hours, and we cannot afford to stop pumping until the water actually runs away from this hole.

6892. But you are not always pumping?—We pump six hours every tide, and then the water is down about 15 feet, I think.

6893. Then about three hours before and about three hours after would do it?—Exactly; that is what we do.

6894. At high water?—Yes; we go on pumping until the pump sucks air. It is placed at a level that is necessary to give us that quantity of water.

6895. The last question I have to put is with reference to the Tilbury Dock. Is it a fact that the water down there in the flood is muddy?—Yes.

6896. But comparatively clear on the ebb in the basin?—I do not say that it is different on the flood from the ebb; it varies in such a way that I cannot account for it. We have taken samples of the water at different states of the tide, and they give such totally different results that we cannot form any theory upon it at all. Of course, it makes a great deal of difference whether it is summer or winter. When there is a large quantity of fresh water coming down the river, hundreds of thousands of gallons, the mud of the river is swept to the sea quickly. In the summer time, when very little water comes down, the mud goes backwards and forwards for a certain number of miles for weeks and weeks before that mud gets into the sea. But you cannot find any fixed amount of mud at different periods of the year that you can form any theory upon.

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6897. You do not agree with the suggestion that I put?—No.

Recalled 7481.

Mr. THOMAS HARDY called and examined.

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6898. (*Chairman.*) You are one of the Joint Managers of the London and India Docks Company?—Yes.

6899. You are, I believe, going to give us evidence with regard to the existing practice at the London and India Docks with reference to the docking and berthing of vessels, the discharge and loading of vessels, and the manipulation of goods and system of charges thereon?—That is my purpose. With regard to the manipulation of goods and system of charges thereon, I understand your Lordship does not wish to go into any question on the subject of charges on goods, and therefore I do not propose to go into that.

6900. Will you proceed with your evidence?—As to the docking and berthing of vessels. Vessels may be divided into three classes:—(1) Regular liners with appropriated berths at the lower docks. (2) Regular liners with appropriated berths at the upper docks. (3) "Tramps," that is, vessels not coming regularly to the docks. With regard to class (1), that is, regular liners with appropriated berths at the lower docks, berths are appropriated in the lower docks to lines of vessels under special agreements, by which they have, in addition, a portion of quay and shed space allotted to them in consideration of an annual rent referred to later, which is independent of dock dues on the ship. With regard to class (2), that is, regular liners with appropriated berths at the upper docks, in the upper docks the berths are appropriated on a different system. A berth with quay and shed space is appropriated to a line of vessels in return for an inclusive rent, which covers dock dues on the vessels, though in some cases extra payment is made for every voyage beyond a fixed maximum made during the year. Power is reserved, however, in the lower docks in all cases, to the dock master to use any berth for the time being unoccupied. The shipowner who is concerned with either of the classes (1) and (2) is never under any doubt as to which system of docks he intends to occupy; it is, moreover, provided by section 59 of the London and St. Katharine and East and West India Docks Act of 1888 that shipowners have a right to select what dock they will use for the discharge or loading of their ships. Of the tonnage entering last year from home and foreign ports for the purpose of discharging, 83 per cent. came under classes (1) and (2), and as regards this tonnage the berthing of the ships is practically simple. The Dock Company know, of course, from the ordinary shipping lists, and from information which the shipowners themselves supply, what ships are expected to arrive. This information is immediately transmitted to the dock master, who makes provision accordingly. These vessels are attended to by the dock master and his staff at the entrances, and, if required, tugs are supplied for the purpose of assisting the vessels from the entrance to their berths, a charge being made for the use of the tugs.

6901. Have you anything to tell us with reference to the sufficiency of these tugs in the docks?—As regards the sufficiency of the tugs, the company quite admit that, as regards some of their tugs, they are old and they require replacing, and they are now building two new tugs of very much greater power, and they have already built two, which will put us in possession of four new tugs with ample power of dealing with the shipping. As time goes on, new tugs will be one of the things the company will provide if they get such relief as they are applying for.

6902. You have, no doubt, in mind the evidence of Mr. Jacobs which was given at question No. 3725?—I remember Mr. Jacobs gave some evidence as regards the lack of tugs for towing barges, I think—the failure of the Dock Companies to provide sufficient tugs.

6903. The answer to question No. 3725 is this: "The failure of the Dock Companies to provide sufficient tug power for towing barges within the dock water, and refusing to allow barge owners to keep tugs in the docks for the purpose of rendering such service?"—I suppose that, taking the answer as Mr. Jacobs gives it, it is true that we do not allow barge owners to keep tugs in the docks for the purpose of towing barges; but if the suggestion is that we do not allow tugs to go into the docks for the purpose of towing barges, that is altogether untrue. Mr. Jacobs himself has the right to send his tug into the dock, and does send his tug into the dock. He pays a commuted sum of only three guineas a year for that privilege.

6904. He told us that he had made an application to keep a tug in the dock, and that was refused?—I do not remember Mr. Jacobs' proposal, but a proposal has been made to the Dock Company to allow a particular lighterman to keep a tug in the dock and to tow barges. To that proposition the Dock Company did not assent, because they thought it not prudent in the interests of the trade generally that a particular lighterman should have the right to tow everybody's barges. Naturally he would give the preference to his own barges, and it was our view that we ought to do the towing ourselves, unless it was done by some perfectly independent person who would tow indifferently, and without giving preference to anybody, all the barges that may be in the docks.

6905. In any case, I understand, you are removing any defect that there is?—We are removing that defect so far as the defect existed. Then as regards class (3), that is tramps. In each dock system some berths are always kept unappropriated for tramps. Although the shipowner has the right to choose which dock he pleases, it is generally a matter of mutual arrangement between him and the Docks Company, having regard to the nature of the cargo and the circumstances at the time, as to the dock at which his vessel can be most conveniently dealt with. Assistance at the entrances, that is the use of tugs, and so on, is the same with regard to these vessels as in the case of vessels having fixed berths. London is, however, essentially a liner port, and the tonnage of tramps entering the docks of my company is comparatively small, the docks being chiefly used by liners. Now, as to the discharging and loading of vessels. As regards discharging, when the shipowners do not directly employ their own labour, they employ master-porters, who work at fixed tonnage rates and employ their own men. About 27 per cent. of the discharging work is done by master-porters, and about 55 per cent. of the work is done by the employment of men by the shipowners direct. The discharging done by the docks company amounts to about 18 per cent. of the whole of the foreign and colonial tonnage. Coasters are invariably discharged by the shipowners. In the Tilbury, Victoria and Albert, West India and St. Katharine Docks, the shipowners generally employ their own

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labour, either direct or by master-porters for the discharge of their vessels and also for the work upon the quay in connection with landing, sorting and delivering goods to lighter. The whole expense of these operations falls in London on the shipowner, and not as in other ports upon the consignee; excepting, however, that the bill of lading used by the North American lines overrides the London practice. In the London Docks, and to a small extent in the St. Katharine, East India, South West India, and Tilbury Docks, the Docks Company undertake the work of discharging ships by arrangement with the shipowner at certain tariff rates for the labour performed. The rates, where the discharge is done by the Docks Company, include the use of cranes and a separate charge is made according to the tonnage of the goods, in cases where, incidental to the discharge, the quay shed is used for the purpose of landing and sorting overside cargo. In the case of berths appropriated to regular liners a charge is made for the use of the quay space for overside goods at a rental of 3s. or 3s. 6d. per square yard per annum, and berths with quay and shed space are also temporarily appropriated to "tramps" at the rate of 4s. 6d. per square yard per annum when desired. As regards loading, berths are appropriated to ships that require the use of a quay for taking in cargo from the shore, and in these cases no charge is made by way of rent for the use of the quay, the docks company being remunerated by the wharfage and porterage rates which they get on the goods passed over the quays for shipment. These rates include the service of receiving goods from railway truck or van, putting them in the shed, bedding to ports, and subsequently of trucking out to the ship's side when the ship is ready to receive the goods. The operation of loading the ship, that is, taking the goods from the side of the ship and stowing in the hold, is in all cases performed by stevedores working for the ship. It is estimated that on an average about 80 per cent. of the cargo loaded into ships is brought alongside in craft. The Dock Company get no revenue of any kind from such craft goods. With regard to the manipulation overside of goods, in the Port of London the shipowner's contract, in the absence of anything to the contrary in his bill of lading, does not end until acutal delivery has been taken by or on behalf of the consignee. The consignee has, by the practice of the port, the privilege of taking delivery by lighter direct from the ship's side, in which case he pays no dock dues, or if the shipowner, for his own convenience, lands and sorts the goods on the quay the consignee can claim delivery of them from the quay into craft exactly as if the quay were part of the deck of the ship. If, however, the consignee is not in attendance with his lighter and all clearing documents within the time limited by the bill of lading, not exceeding in any case 72 hours after the ship's report, the shipowner is entitled to land these goods on the quay, and so subject them to dock charges, in which case the shipowner's liability ends there. There is no limit of time within which overside goods have to be removed from the quays, though theoretically the process of delivering such goods should be continuous and simultaneous with the discharge. No less than 75 per cent. of the import goods entering the docks are delivered on overside conditions and escape all dock charges. The shipowner to give despatch to his ship lands on the dock company's quays, at his own expense, a large proportion (in some cases the whole) of this 75 per cent. It is for this reason that the shipowner enters into the quay and shed space agreements before mentioned, as he finds it better worth his while to pay extra for the despatch thus obtained than suffer from the delay which the practice of direct delivery overside would entail. For this use of their quays and sheds the Dock Company, as regards regular liners in the lower docks, charge the ship rent at the rate of 3s. or 3s. 6d. per square yard per annum. A tramp vessel which is desirous of being rid of the delay caused by delivering direct into barges can hire temporary quay and shed space at the rate of 4s. 6d. per square yard per annum, the ship performing all labour. Hydraulic cranes are let to shipowners doing their own work at the rate of 2s. per hour per crane. When the docks company land and sort overside goods on the shipowner's account—that is, where the discharge of the ship is undertaken by the docks company—a charge is made according to the tonnage of the goods dealt with for the use of the quay and the labour of landing, sorting, and delivering the goods. The whole of the overside goods landed on the quay are, after being sorted by and at the expense of the shipowner, delivered to craft free of all expense to the consignee. But in no case do the docks company get any payment except the rent or other charges referred to, though the statutory exemption in favour of lighters and goods does not actually apply to goods taken off the quay. The rent and charges referred to bear no comparison with the landing charges under which the goods would otherwise have fallen, and, of course, are insignificant compared with the charges made by the Docks and Harbour Board at Liverpool, which, in addition to the rent paid by the vessel for its shed accommodation, gets a very large sum in dock and town dues from the goods, in respect of which no labour services are rendered by the dock trust. For this proportion of the cargo (75 per cent.), therefore, London is an absolutely free port so far as the goods are concerned, as they pay nothing to either the port or dock authority. This must be qualified as regards shipowners in the North American trade, who have combined to put a clause into their bills of lading entitling them to put the whole cargo other than grain on the quay, and to charge the consignee a minimum rate of 1s. 9d. per ton weight for delivery. This charge is collected by the shipowners and retained by them as compensation for the labour of landing and sorting the cargo. In the case of grain there is a charge paid by the goods for the cost of discharging. This also in every case goes to the shipowners, except in very rare cases, in which the docks company still do the discharging. The delay against which there is so great an outcry is due simply and solely to the lighterage system. While the ship is alongside the quay the barges cannot in many cases obtain a berth, and even where a berth can be provided there is a certain amount of confusion in cross trucking first from the ship into the shed and then from the shed to lighters. On an average, and with respect to large ships, it may be said that it takes 18 days from the date of the ship breaking bulk before a shed is cleared of the cargo. The result of this to the docks company is, of course, that their docks cannot be used to the full extent to which other docks of equal size and accommodation are used where deliveries are being made from the back of the shed simultaneously with the discharge of the ship. It comes in effect to this, that allowing nine days as a very full time in which a ship's cargo should be disposed of, the dock property is used for nine days by the ship which pays, and nine days by the lighters and overside goods, which pay nothing. I hand in a table showing the number of hours that some of the larger ships which use the Tilbury, Albert, and Victoria Docks took to discharge their cargoes on various occasions in the year 1900.

(*The witness handed in a statement showing the actual time occupied in discharging some of the larger vessels frequenting the Tilbury and Albert and Victoria Docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee during the year* 1900 *and also the average number of tons of goods discharged per hour. See Appendix,* 19*th day, No.* 2.)

I also hand in a table showing the average number of days that all the vessels entering the docks of my company during one month of 1900 remained there, and showing separately the average number of days such vessels were engaged in discharging, waiting, or loading.

(*The witness handed in a statement showing the average number of days vessels entering the docks of the London and India Docks Joint Committee in one month* (23*rd July to* 21*st August* 1900) *remained in dock from first date of entering to finally quitting, showing separately the number of working days vessels were under discharge waiting or loading. See Appendix* 19*th day, No.* 3.)

There are, of course, many reasons why some vessels take longer to discharge than others, and when the time occupied in the discharge is stated in terms of days it should be remarked that a day may be anything from 8 to 24 hours, according as the shipowner may find it to his interest to work, having regard to his other engagements with respect to his ship. Then I wish to say something as to the adequacy of the existing quay space of the docks company to accommodate all the cargoes on the quay, if the Liverpool system of cartage of goods from the quay within 72 hours for

steamers and 48 hours for sailing vessels were adopted. The suggestion that the want of despatch so often complained of in the Port of London should be obviated by the simple expedient of abolishing the London practice, and so allowing the shipowner to end his liability by depositing the whole of his cargo on to the quay, has been met by one or two witnesses with an objection which is based on a misconception of the true facts and figures involved, and requires to be specifically dealt with. In his evidence on the 27th November, 1900, Sir Thomas Sutherland (Chairman of the P. and O. Company) said in answer to Questions 1979: "The most rapid way would be to discharge the whole cargo into the dock warehouses as is done in Liverpool." 1980: "As a matter of fact, if we wish to discharge the whole of our cargoes into docks . . . it would be impossible to do so, because the present dock warehouses would not contain the large cargoes which are received in the port." 1981: "I am speaking now of the dock sheds." 1982: "What I say is that it would be impossible for us if we wished to do so, to put the whole of our cargoes into these temporary sheds, and therefore we are compelled, whether we like it or not, to discharge a large portion of our cargo overside." Mr. Alfred Strover Williams (Director of the Atlantic Transport Company), in his evidence on the same day said, at Question 2170: "All North Atlantic general cargo, except grain, is discharged on to quay, and is delivered thence to merchants' craft when the importing steamer leaves the quay." Mr. A. L. Jones (Senior Partner of Elder, Dempster and Co.), in his evidence on the 26th March, 1901, speaking of the Millwall Dock, said, in answer to Questions 4827: "I am of the opinion that the dock company are unable to handle any more of the imported goods than they do now." 4925: "It has not the quay space." Mr. Jones was, of course, speaking of the Millwall Docks, but I just mention it here as it bears upon the point to which Sir Thomas Sutherland and Mr. Williams referred. Both the P. and O. Company and the Atlantic Transport Company use the Albert Docks; the space appropriated to them being—to the P. and O. Company, 31,413 superficial yards, and to the Atlantic Transport Company, 27,530 superficial yards. In the six months ended 30th June last, the Atlantic Transport Company's general cargo, other than grain, discharged at the Albert Docks berths amounted to 99,984 tons weight. This was all placed on the quays or in the sheds, and works out at the rate of 7·26 tons per superficial yard per annum. During the same period the P. and O. Company discharged at their appropriated berths 124,111 tons of goods. If this had all been put into the sheds the space would have been required to accommodate at the rate of 7·90 tons per superficial yard per annum, or little more than the quantity actually accommodated for another line of steamers in similar sheds in the same docks. But the goods brought by the Atlantic Transport Company are more bulky, weight for weight, than those brought by the P. and O. Company. It is perfectly clear from these figures that there would be no physical difficulty in placing the whole of the P. and O. Company's cargoes in the sheds, though it must be acknowledged that under existing conditions of delivery to barges, by which goods are detained in the sheds for a week or ten days the sheds would sometimes become congested, and that some additional shed accommodation would have to be supplied, which could easily be done. In connection with this matter it should be remarked how little use is made of the shed space in London even where whole cargoes are placed in the sheds. The Atlantic Transport Company use the quays and sheds to the extent of 7·26 tons per superficial yard per annum, and the sheds are used to their maximum capacity for that class of cargo under existing conditions of delivery to barges. What I mention now is from information with which I am perfectly satisfied. I have some documents issued by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and from them I have gathered that in the year ended June, 1899, the Toxteth and Harrington Docks in Liverpool dealt with about 1,234,500 tons of goods from oversea vessels. The area of quay and shed space available for oversea tonnage in these two docks is 89,710 superficial yards. This works out at 13·76 tons per superficial yard per annum, or nearly 90 per cent. in excess of the London quantity. And this could be done in London were it not that deliveries are protracted under the lighterage system. At the Cockerill berth at Tilbury, 15 tons per superficial yard of space are annually dealt with, and the berth is capable of accommodating a far greater business. In this case the goods are not kept about on the quays, but are loaded away into trucks simultaneously with the discharge of the ship. If every ton of goods discharged at the Albert Dock were put upon the quays, those quays would, under the system of barge delivery, only be worked to the extent of 7·26 tons per superficial yard per annum, whereas a well-equipped dock, such as the Albert Dock is, ought to be able to deal with at least 14 tons per superficial yard per annum, as is done at Liverpool. This, again, shows the injustice under which the Docks Company are labouring; for, assuming that the Toxteth and Harrington Docks in Liverpool were in the year referred to worked to their maximum capacity (which is not quite the case, because owing to a change in trade from dock to dock, due to reconstruction, some 14,000 superficial yards of shed space in the Toxteth Dock were not fully used), the Docks Company's docks would be able, if worked on Liverpool conditions, to accommodate about 90 per cent. more tonnage of both shipping and goods than they do to-day. This means that nearly one-half of the capital expenditure and of the up-keep expenses of the Docks Company's quays and sheds is due to the requirements of barge delivery in London, while no revenue is derived from either the barges or the goods. Appendix No. 1 which I have handed in shows the actual time occupied in discharging some of the larger vessels. It will be noticed that there is a great difference in regard to the average tonnage discharged per hour. One particular ship discharged as much as 176 tons per working hour, and others as little as 50. We have here the "Minnehaha" discharging at Tilbury on the 2nd October. That is one of the very large vessels of the Atlantic Transport Line. She got out 11,091 tons weight of goods in 63 hours, whereas in the same dock at similar sheds, and with similar appliances for discharging cranes, and so on, the "Inaba Maru," which is a steamer of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha Line, discharged only 51 tons per hour. This great difference would arise from circumstances entirely beyond the control of the Dock Company. There is no question of better accommodation to the one or the other.

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6906. What reason do you suggest for this difference?—Probably the Nippon line boat was not in a great hurry to get her cargo out, and there would be differences also as regards the class of cargo. In all probability, too, the Nippon boat did not put everything on to the quay, but discharged a good proportion of her cargo into barges, whereas in the case of the Atlantic Transport Line they invariably discharge every ton of the goods other than grain on to the quays of the dock, and so get the ship out in comparatively short time. Appendix 2, which I have handed in, has been prepared really at the wish of Rear-Admiral Hext. I think when he visited the docks some time ago he wished to have a statement prepared showing the average number of days that ships occupied the dock. We took the whole of the ships entering the docks of this company for one month, and traced them through to the time of their leaving the dock, and this is the result. They are classified according to the ports from which the vessel arrived, and also whether they discharged only or discharged and loaded, and sailing ships are distinguished from steamers.

6907. It would be useful for us to have from you the answer to a question which I think one of the learned counsel put to Mr. Baggallay, whether more barges came into the docks than are strictly wanted for discharging purposes?—Certainly; many more barges come into the docks than are strictly required if they only came in for the purpose of discharging the ship. They do not come in for the purpose of discharging the ship. The ship would be glad to see the back of the barges in many cases; they are not in any way in the service of the ship. They come in for the purpose of collecting definite parcels of goods; if they were there merely for the purpose of taking cargo from the ship, and taking it somewhere for the purpose of sorting, comparatively few barges would be required.

6908. I mean to ask you whether the congestion could be remedied without any detriment to the discharging of the ships?—I do not think that the practice of the port will admit of fewer barges being brought into the docks than come in now, except, of

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course, that barges sometimes come in for the purpose of harbourage, in which case they pay.

6909. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Will you tell us with reference to Appendix No. 1, what the average number of hours per day would be? You give the hours of discharge?—The average working hours would be ten. In the case of a large ship they would probably begin at 8 o'clock in the morning, and go on to 6 o'clock at night, but in the case of many of these vessels, and certainly in the case of these huge vessels of the Atlantic Transport Line, there is no stopping at all; they go on all round the clock; therefore 63 hours in the discharge of that ship would mean 63 running hours—that would be rather less than three days.

6910. So that this table does not give us the means of seeing how many days a ship is occupied in discharging?—That table does not, but I have given in the next table the average number of days of all ships entering within a month. Of course, if a shipowner does not choose to work all round the clock, it is because he does not find it to his advantage to do so; therefore, as I said just now, if you take days, it requires to be qualified in some way, because a shipowner may work 8, or 10, or 24 hours a day.

6911. With regard to this second table, it seems almost too voluminous to give a short answer to a short question?—Yes; I am afraid it is.

6912. You give the average for ships in certain trades, and then you divide them into a great many classes. We shall have to find out for ourselves what are the important classes and the less important classes?—You will get that in a measure from the number of ships engaged in the particular trades. I give the number of ships as well as the tonnage; and also the size of the ships would be gathered from the average tonnage.

6913. There is a great amount of delay in ships from the time they go into the dock and go away again, apart from the time spent in discharging?—In some cases there is a good deal of delay. In the case of a sailing ship it will sometimes happen that a ship comes into the docks and stays three days without doing anything.

6914. How would this compare with the other harbours from which they come?—I should say that it would compare unfavourably with other harbours, because they have not this practice of overside delivery.

6915. But you have no particulars to give us in respect of other harbours from which they come?—I have no definite particulars. I think at Avonmouth there are three lay-days allowed for the consignee; but the ship does not wait those three days, and I believe in some cases bears part of the expenses of landing if the goods should be actually applied for and delivered in those three lay-days.

6916. That is a harbour with which you are to some extent in competition?—Yes.

6917. I was speaking more of harbours used in the United States and Canada?—I am not acquainted with harbours in the United States and Canada.

6918. You have two ships from the United States and Canada, which occupy an average of 13½ days, and you have 17 which occupy an average of 5·77 days?—Yes. I separate them because it would be misleading to include the vessels that, for some purpose of their own, remained in dock after complete discharge. That obviously could not have any reference to the work of discharging. There must have been some special reason for those two vessels remaining in dock 5½ days after the discharge had been completed.

6919. So that six days would be a fair average?—Yes, and I may say that is about the lowest average, I think, certainly, of ocean-going vessels. It arises from the fact that every ton of goods put upon the quay from the ship is cleared out as quickly as possible.

6920. There is a lower average. In the case of 86 vessels from the north of Europe, where the average is 1·86?—Those are little things that come in from Ostend or Hamburg. In the case of Ostend there is a daily service bringing a very small quantity of cargo, and they just come in and go away the same day.

6921. But for large ocean-going vessels, about six days is the average ——?—Of discharging?

6922. No; these are the total days in the dock?—They do not remain afterwards, there is very little loading done by United States vessels.

6923. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Lord Inchcape asked just now about the number of barges using the docks that were in excess of the requirements for unloading. Presuming the American bill of lading was in universal use in London, would that reduce the number of barges required or not?—No; it would make no difference whatever to the number of barges.

6924. It would not reduce it at all?—I do not think it would have the slightest effect upon the number of barges. There are quite as many barges hanging about American ships as there are with any other ships.

6925. But would not the fact of being able to distribute on the quays and sort them accelerate the discharging of vessels?—The practice of discharging cargoes on to the quays is not confined to American lines. It is used largely by other lines. The only difference is this: Take the P. and O. Company, for instance, they would consider whether it would be better and more economical for them to put cargo overside into barges (they very often find it is), or to put it on the quay, and to incur themselves the expense of, say, 1s. 6d. a ton for handling it. In the case of the American lines no such consideration comes in, because they have under their bill of lading the right to collect from the consignees the expense of handling the cargo on the quay. Therefore, they do not make that calculation.

6926. But the unloading of the ship would be more rapid under the American bill of lading than it would be under the P. and O. bill of lading?—Certainly; this table shows it.

6927. (*Mr. Peel.*) You said that there was no limit of time within which overside goods had to be removed from the quays. Would you suggest that there should be some limit of time? There is a limit of time in Liverpool, is there not?—There is a limit of time in Liverpool and in Bristol, and I think in most ports. I cannot say how far it would be practicable to impose a limit of time in London. It would be unreasonable to say that goods should be taken from the quay, say within 72 hours, if a barge could not get alongside the quay in 72 hours to get the goods.

6928. A rule like that is more easy to make in Liverpool, where everything is carted off, than in a place where barge traffic prevails?—That is so.

6929. I suppose a rule of that kind would tend to increase the barge congestion in the dock?—I think perhaps it would.

6930. Do these barges come into dock just to look for business, or do they come in on contract as a rule?—There is a very grave suspicion that they do come in to look for business sometimes. They generally get business. If they do not, of course, they fall under charges. If they come into dock, and find nothing within a certain time, we should put them on charges, but I think, as a rule, you may say they have some definite purpose in entering dock.

6931. So that, with reference to that, a charge placed upon barges entering the dock as is suggested, I think, in that Bill, would not really diminish the number of barges that do enter the dock. It would have very little effect?—We are not proposing any measure that would have the effect of crippling any trade at all. We are not asking for powers to enable us to limit the number of barges or to diminish the number of barges. We quite appreciate that the custom must go on in a port like London. All that we are asking is that we should be paid for the accommodation that we afford those barges, and for the expenses that we incur.

6932. But whether or not a charge was placed on the goods or on the barges, that would really not affect the question of congestion very much. The whole point arises from London being a barge port, does it not?—It does.

6933. And it has been compared with other ports which are not barge ports, but which, like Liverpool, have the goods sent away by cart?—Quite true. That makes the comparison, of course, all the more favourable to those other ports, because, where they have none of the difficulties of the barge system, they have dues on the goods, and we who have all the trouble and difficulty of the barges get no dues either on the goods or on the barges.

6934. But, from a shipowner's point of view, the faster the vessel discharges on to the quays the greater

is the congestion in the dock at certain times by barges to take away all those goods from the quays?—I have pointed out that, after the ship is gone, we begin with barges.

6935. So that the faster the ship is discharged, the more the congestion is in the docks?—I do not think so.

6936. So long as the business is conducted by barges as it is in London?—I do not think the speed at which the ship can discharge her cargo on to the quay has any effect upon the number of barges coming in.

6937. Surely it must, because if it is all put out at the same time all the barges which were going to take goods from that ship would tend to come in at the same time?—It does not necessarily follow because under the Merchant Shipping Act the barge owner or consignee of goods has a right to demand from the shipowner 24 hours' notice of the time when he may expect to get his goods.

6938. But, of course, London must always remain a barge port. We have had pointed out some of these docks are at such distances that carting becomes impossible?—From the Tilbury Dock carting is almost impossible.

6939. Or from the Victoria and Albert Docks?—No; carting is very much resorted to in the case of the Victoria and Albert Docks.

6940. But that is almost the limit, is it not?—We think that is about the limit.

6941. So that when you have a barge port it seems to me you must always keep a smaller proportion of tonnage deposited on the quay per square yard of quay space as compared with a port like Liverpool, where everything is carted off?—I quite admit that. I say we are suffering from that practice.

6942. Your comparisons between London and Liverpool are really comparisons which depend on the natural conditions of the port rather than on the question of system?—Yes, I do not think there can be any alteration of system that would enable us to make a larger use of our quays than we do now; but I am putting it that with the system now in London we are unable to make so great a use of our quays and docks as they do in Liverpool under a different system. That is a very strong reason, I think, why we should be paid for the expenditure we incur.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

6943. Is a barge port a port in which the docks undertaking is very much more difficult to carry on than it is in such a port as Liverpool?—I should say so—certainly more onerous. The difficulties can be got over, of course.

6944. Will the imposing of the charges which you ask for on the ships and the barges by itself make any alterations in the practice of handling goods in the port?—It will enable the dock company, who have that difficult question to deal with, to make suitable provision for the needs of this trade.

6945. Perhaps that is part of an answer, but I want you, who are so very conversant with the practice of the port, to tell me if you can whether the fact of imposing these two charges would make any alteration in the way in which the goods are dealt with?—I do not think so.

6946. None whatever?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

6947. You told us, I think, that you discharge about 18 per cent. of the whole of the foreign and Colonial tonnage now?—Yes.

6948. Is that by your own labour?—Yes.

6949. Might I ask if it is remunerative?—Well, we hope it is slightly remunerative, certainly.

6950. What percentage of profit do you reckon there is in it?—I cannot tell you what percentage of profit we make.

6951. Is it satisfactory?—It is reasonably satisfactory.

6952. Might I inquire, then, why you gave up the 55 per cent. to the shipowners to discharge direct themselves? Why did not you keep that in your hand?—I will go over the whole thing, if you like, but the matter was very fully explained by Mr. Scott.

6953. You have nothing to add?—I have nothing to add.

6954. Now, with regard to your table. You have compared the Atlantic Transport Line with the Nippon Line. Will you take the three instances that are there of the Atlantic Transport Line—the Europe, the Maniton, and the Minnehaha?—Yes.

6955. I think you will find that the average tonnage discharge per hour of the Maniton is 69 tons, whereas the Minnehaha was 176 tons?—Yes; both vessels discharged at the same berth with the same means and the same appliances in every way.

6956. How do you account for the difference. Before, in comparing with the Nippon Line, you made suggestions that there was a difference in cargo and so on?—Quite so. There is no difference in cargo here. They came from the same port.

6957. The same conditions prevailing in every way at the same berth, they ought really in substance to have been delivered at an equal rate?—Yes, if the shipowner wished it, except that very likely one vessel may have a very much higher percentage of grain than the other. Grain can be turned out very quickly.

6958. You have no information to enable you to say that?—No, I cannot give you the details of the cargo.

6959. Do you employ the dummy system with the Atlantic Transport Company?—Yes, they have it if they wish, but they discharge their grain by elevators.

6960. But their other cargo?—Their other cargo they put all on to the quay, and therefore they do not require dummies on the quay side of the ship.

6961. Is not the difficulty this: that a line with an appropriated berth like the Atlantic Transport Line, has its vessels coming in so quickly that their cargo from one may not be cleared before the next vessel comes in?—Not wholly cleared—that does happen.

6962. And then there is considerable trouble and congestion with the barges?—Certainly to some extent.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

6963. About the congestion caused by barges, is it true that barges are required to be in attendance for many days before the shipowner intends to give delivery?—No, it is not true.

6964. Is it true that they have to be there some considerable time before the shipowner can give delivery?—They frequently are there some considerable time before the shipowner can give delivery, but as I said just now they have the right to require of the shipowner 24 hours' notice. They have that right under the Merchant Shipping Act.

6965. But they must present the barge, must they not?—Yes, they must present their barge; they can take their barge away immediately if the goods are not ready.

6966. There is the cost of doing that?—Certainly.

6967. And the risk of being locked out again a considerable time?—Yes.

6968. Which the lighterman will have to pay for?—Undoubtedly he would have to pay, but he only remains in the dock, I suppose, because it suits him better to remain in the dock doing nothing than to take his barge out and get another job.

6969. That is what you suppose, but there is no proof of it?—The proof is that he remains in.

6970. It is like your suggestion about barges going into the dock touting for work?—Yes.

6971. Will you give me a single instance where that has been done?—I said there was a suspicion of it.

6972. Can you change that suspicion into proof; can you give us a single instance?—No; I am not going to give any evidence on suspicion.

6973. Then it is nothing but suspicion?—Quite so; it may be only suspicion.

6974. How long have you occupied your present position?—My present position only since the 1st January.

6975. Well, a leading position in the docks?—Eleven years.

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6976. Your suspicion, I suppose, has gone on during that eleven years?—Yes.

6977. And during that time you have not been able to furnish, and cannot now furnish us with a single instance?—I do not propose to furnish any instance.

6978. If it were found out, the penalty would be severe, would it not?—The penalty would be the tonnage dues on the barge—not a very severe penalty.

6979. But it would be to your profit?—Quite so; in mitigation of our loss, I would rather put it.

6980. At all events I think it likely, under the present state of feeling, that every effort has been made to find out such an instance as that?—When you refer to the present state of feeling, I think you must admit that we are forbearing with regard to barges and render them all the services we can.

6981. Is it not your policy, and has it not been your policy for some time, to smash the barges and the barge trade?—Never.

6982. Have you never yourself used that expression?—Never.

6983. Is it not the idea which is running through the whole of these proceedings to do the utmost you can to ruin the trade of the barges?—Certainly not. We want to get a revenue out of the barges, and not to ruin the barges. We are here for a revenue.

6984. And that alone?—Yes.

6985. Whether it affects the trade of the Thames or the trade of the country is a secondary point?—No; it is not a secondary point at all. The whole point is one. We do not propose to raise the revenue by ruining anything, and if we ruined the barge trade we obviously should not get our revenue.

6986. Is it not the rule that goods not applied for within 72 hours of the ship being ready to deliver are placed at full charges?—Yes.

6987. Is there any arrangement between the ship and the dock on the point?—The only arrangement between the ship and the dock is that in our tenancy agreements with the shipowners it is provided that goods that are not applied for within that time are to be handed over to us for warehousing. The agreement will speak for itself.

6988. But five minutes beyond that time would be sufficient to mulct the merchant in these charges?—I do not know whether we should go into a question of minutes.

6989. But a very short time?—There is a time when you must draw the line, undoubtedly.

6990. And it is a time that is very strictly marked out by the dock company?—So far as the dock company can follow it, yes.

6991. Is it not possible that a system could be arrived at under which the shipowner and the dock company could give some notice to the barge owners?—You do not want any system to be arrived at, because you have that right under the Merchant Shipping Act.

6992. But the barges come to the ship?—Certainly.

6993. I want to avoid that, because it is the fact of the barges coming that causes the congestion. Now, is it not possible for some system to be made under which information could be given to the lighterman as to about the time when the ship would be ready to actually deliver goods to the barge?—I think very likely, as a matter of contract between the barge and the ship, some system might be devised.

6994. Will not the dock companies assist in that?—The dock company certainly would render no assistance which would make it easy for barge owners to evade payment of dues for entering the docks.

6995. It is not a question of evading dues. It is a question of avoiding this glut or congestion of barges, and helping you to carry on the work of the dock. That is the whole object. Would the dock company assist in that?—Your suggestion is that the dock company should assist in devising some plan by which they should not have any advantages upon the 25 per cent. of the goods that now become liable to charges.

6996. I said nothing at all about that?—But it comes to that; it is nothing else.

6997. It is hardly fair to put that to me when I asked you a simple question which you could answer?—I answer this. The dock company would render every assistance in facilitating any arrangement by which they would not themselves suffer.

6998. But at present they benefit by this arrangement that the barge has to be there within the 72 hours?—Yes, they do slightly benefit.

6999. And benefit very considerably, do they not?—You really cannot say there is anything very considerable in it, when we charge upon only 25 per cent. of the whole of the goods that enter the docks.

7000. According to your statement to-day, you say that on an average with respect to large ships it might be said that it takes 18 days from the date of the ship breaking bulk before the shipper is able to deal with the cargo. You get 18 days for it?—We get our dock used for 18 days.

7001. The barges are there 18 days?—Some barges are there. They have to be there.

7002. Could not some regulation be made under which that could be avoided?—We could make no such regulation.

7003. Does not one of your regulations, if the goods are not applied for or handed over to you, compel the barges to be there?—I suppose it is a necessity that barges should be in attendance for their goods.

7004. And continuously in attendance?—They should be continuously in attendance. I will explain to you how that is done. Very frequently one barge may be there for two or three parcels.

7005. But that does not matter. The barge has to be there, and as the law stands at present it has a right to be there?—A barge has to be there for each parcel, but one barge is there for half-a-dozen parcels, and the first one which turns up, whichever it may be, that barge has. Therefore, you do not have that congestion.

7005a. They have that right, and the question is whether a system could not be made to work more smoothly by the co-operation of the dock company?—The dock company will co-operate in any scheme which may be devised to limit the number of barges in the docks provided they are not going to suffer by the arrangement.

7006. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) Might I ask the question just to make it quite clear? The dock company have no means of knowing that the lighter will be required to take the goods away?—We have no means of knowing.

7006a. None whatever?—No.

7007. And could give no notice when the lighter would be required?—We could not give any notice.

Recalled 11657.

(Adjourned to Monday next, May 20, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTIETH DAY.

Monday, 20th May, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES CATER SCOTT recalled and further examined.

Mr. C. J. C. Scott. 20 May 1901.

7008. (*Chairman.*) I understand, Mr. Scott, that you have a correction you desire to make?—Yes, my Lord. I would like to call your attention to the part just following Question 6666, the last day on which I was giving evidence. Mr. Wallace said, "My Lord, I do not know whether the witness has got the items of expenditure of £109,000 which your Lordship asked for." Then there was a little conversation about that, and then, at Question 6667, Sir Robert Giffen said, "I think you give a return showing the maintenance of each dock, or something of that kind?" My answer was, "No; we do not keep them separately." That I would desire to correct. On going through the evidence I find that we can give those figures separately. I ought to have known it at the time, because it is a return which from time to time comes through my hands. I am prepared to put in, if the Commission so wish, details of all the expenditure of maintenance. It is split up into a great many small matters.

(*Chairman.*) We shall be obliged if you will do so.

Recalled 7916.

7009. (*Mr. Harper.*) My Lord, now we have the notes of the last day's evidence before us, there is one question I should like some time to have an opportunity of putting to Mr. Hardy. It is with reference to a passage in Question 6905. I understand Mr. Hardy is not here now, but I desired to intimate this to your Lordship.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Would your Lordship allow me to make an application to the Commission? May I refer to Question 6565. A discussion ensued which is reported there. Your Lordship said, "I do not think anyone can claim that the terms of reference are not sufficiently wide, but I do not think your particular point comes within them." I say, "Very well, my Lord, I am very sorry, but it is a most important matter for the trader." My application is this. At that moment your Lordship stopped me when I was cross-examining with regard to the method under which the rates and charges are levied as against the trader. Your Lordship thought at that time that the particular question which I asked did not come within the scope of the reference of the Commission. I mention the matter now to ask your Lordship whether you could consider that question as a question of general principle rather, apart from the particular question which I was then upon; that is to say, considering it as a question of general principle affecting the proceedings of the Commission, because it does raise an issue which is of very great importance.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Is the method of levy the subject you wish to speak of, or is it the quantum?

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I was asking a question at that moment as to the method, the system, upon which the charge was based. I took a particular concrete case of rice. I was dealing with the consolidated rate. I do not ask the Commission to give any decision at this moment, but I understand that my clients have communicated with the Commission in writing, making an application that the matter might be considered. The point is this. In Question 1179, Mr. Rogers said: "Above all, London has suffered by the excessive charges levied upon goods in this port,

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and by the insufficient facilities for conducting the trade on an improved basis. (*Chairman.*) That we should like to have more in detail." My Lord, the point is this. The Chamber of Commerce have, in response to that invitation from your Lordship, prepared evidence to place before the Commission, showing how the charges levied at the docks affect trade in the Port of London. The question I was asking was really a question in cross-examination leading up to the evidence upon that point which they propose to place before the Commission. The Chamber of Commerce feels that the matter does come within the scope of your inquiry, not only under the general terms at the beginning, "To inquire into the present administration of the Port of London," but also the words at the end, "To report whether any change or improvement in regard to any of the above matters is advisable for the promotion of the trade of the port and the public interest." All I ask at this moment is that your Lordship and the Commission would consider that point. I do not wish to raise it just as a matter between my friends and myself when I am asking a particular question, but if the Commission consider that question as a question of important principle to be decided as to the line of evidence which should be tendered before the Commission, my clients would be very much obliged. I do not understand your Lordship to shut out that line of evidence when you stopped the particular question I was asking.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I wish you would point out exactly what class of evidence you want to get. I have listened very carefully to your statement, and I know you are always lucid, but I really do not quite understand what you wish to have admitted. I understand that you do not complain of the ruling of the Commission that we should not go into the justifiability of each rate. It must be obvious to anybody of your experience that that would mean a three years' inquiry.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I would not propose to go into every rate, but in that particular case in which I am dealing I took a concrete instance of rice with a view of testing the principle upon which the rates were based. Part of the evidence given before this Commission has been with regard to a certain charge of 1s. or 1s. 6d. a ton, and it is very difficult, if I may say so, to deal with a troublesome question as to the reasonableness of the charges made or proposed to be made by the dock company, without putting a concrete case and considering it on its merits.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) If you are entitled to do that in the case of rice, why would you not be entitled to do that in the case of every commodity, and if you are entitled to do that in the case of each commodity, what is there to prevent the matter being prolonged into an elaborate inquiry?

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Theoretically there might be a difficulty in drawing the line, I admit, but it does seem to me to be a most important consideration for the Commission. My clients have no intention whatever of putting forward illustrations with regard to every article and every trade; that is not their intention, but they do submit that some of the facts bearing upon that important point should be allowed before the Commission. They understood your Lordship to invite it when Mr. Rogers was giving evidence, and have prepared a certain amount of evidence on that point. I do not ask the Commission to decide the point at this moment: I understand my clients have written to the Commission, setting forth in detail the reasons why they think it is material to this inquiry. I would ask your Lordship to reserve the point.

(*Chairman.*) We need not tell you we have no wish to unduly limit the evidence which may be set before us on the part of the Chamber of Commerce any more than on the part of anybody else, but while we allow questions on system and method, as distinct from those with regard to the amount and justifiability, we do consider that the words to which you have called our attention in the terms of reference: "To inquire into the present administration of the Port of London," are qualified by what follow, and we can only adhere to the ruling which we gave last week, that we are not prepared to go into the question.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) My Lord, I do not wish to be in the least disrespectful with regard to rulings that have been given, but I should like to see if I quite understand. There are two rulings given, following Question 6649. Your Lordship says: "I do not think it is within the scope of this Inquiry to go into the charges which are made by the docks." Then, a little lower down: "We should like to say that we do not think the question of the charges of the docks, apart from the accommodation of vessels, does come within the scope of the Inquiry." I want respectfully to point out how it appears to place my clients (the Corporation of London) and other bodies appearing before this tribunal in a very considerable difficulty if that ruling is strictly adhered to. For instance, the Dock Company are coming before the Commission putting forward a proposal by which they shall be allowed to levy certain further charges. If we are to be shut out from going into those charges it is difficult to see quite why the docks are allowed to put that proposal, that they shall be allowed to levy a charge on barges, and a charge on goods, which they are asking ast heir contribution to the suggestion for the improvement of the Port of London. Again, when we have to consider the adequacy of the accommodation provided for vessels, and the system of charge for such accommodation, which are the second and third matters with which the Commission have to deal, while I quite feel that the Commission cannot possibly be expected to take rate by rate, and item by item, it is difficult to see how the system can be considered without seeing how it works in some particular illustrative instance. May I take one instance to show your Lordship what I mean? It is one of the complaints which is made against London, which I hope this Commission will deal with, that when goods get on the quay there is one consolidated rate which applies to them altogether, and applies to a number of services, and if the goods owner wants much less than those services, he still has to pay the whole rate. Now, that is a matter which I should submit comes within the scope of the inquiry of this Commission, but it would be difficult if we are not to go into the charge, and take a particular rate, say, of 4s. 2d., for a particular thing and say: "Suppose I want to take that away in a cart your rate is still 4s. 2d." We must illustrate it by a particular rate. But your Lordship's ruling, as given, does seem so wide that it shuts us out the moment we mention 4s. 2d. for rice or whatever it may be. I am not pressing it with any disrespect for your Lordship, but if it were understood that with regard to the system we could go into these matters, and, for instance, with regard to the dock companies' proposals, we might ask: What do you propose to charge 3d. a ton on barges, and so on, for, we would understand it better.

(*Chairman.*) We cannot help hoping that you will be able to see your way to speak of one point without necessarily trenching on the other.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) My Lord, on behalf of the County Council, I have been asked to support this application. I do so to this extent, that on such questions as to whether the port is a cheap port or not, and whether the loss of the dock companies is really due to the delay, and any questions on goods that bear upon that, we should ask, so far as it is proper for us to ask, the Commission to go into. I need scarcely say we do not suggest to the Commission that it should hold an inquiry into a rate like the Railway Commission does.

Mr. JOSEPH GUINNESS BROODBANK called and examined.

Mr. J. G. Broodbank.

7010. (*Chairman.*) You are secretary of the London and India Docks Company?—Yes.

7011. You have some evidence you wish to lay before us with regard to certain Continental ports which you have visited personally?—Yes.

7012. Will you proceed with that evidence?—Under the instructions of the London and India Docks Joint Committee I visited, in September, 1900, the following Continental ports:—Antwerp, Hamburg, Cuxhaven, Bremerhafen, Bremen, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Havre, Dunkirk. The facts which I am about to state as regards foreign ports are all derived from my own personal ocular observation on the spot, or in cases where that was practically impossible (such as statements of depth of water) from information given to me on the spot by responsible officials at the respective ports. Judging of the relative importance of the above-mentioned ports by the amount of shipping entering to dis-

charge in 1899 they would be placed in the following order:—

	Tons register.
Hamburg	7,766,000
Antwerp	6,800,000
Rotterdam	6,323,000
Bremen	2,400,000
Havre	2,200,000
Amsterdam	1,800,000
Dunkirk	1,650,000
Bremerhafen	1,460,000
Cuxhaven	Figures not obtainable.
The figures for London for 1899 are	15,400,000
And for Liverpool	9,500,000

7013. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to understand whether this is all sea-going trade?—Yes, all sea-going trade.

7014. (*Chairman.*) Will you tell me where you get these figures from?—From the authorities at the ports mentioned in each case.

7015. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Did you get the foreign shipping separate from the coasting in each case?—It was described to me as the sea-going traffic; that would include foreign and coasting ships.

7016. You have not got them separately?—No, I have not got them separately. There are returns in most of these places of the traffic by barge as well as the traffic by sea-going ships. What I have here is the sea-going ships. The general conclusion gathered from my visit is that as regards present accommodation London is not behind any of the ports on the Continent. In one or two details, perhaps, London may be beaten, but London is in my opinion superior to any individual port which I have visited. Even in the matter of approaches to the port, for which the Thames Conservancy are often blamed, London stands high up in the list. Up to Tilbury the depth is never less than 24½ft. at low water, and 43ft. at high water. Outside the Tilbury Docks there is even at low tide a depth of 40ft. Above Tilbury, and up to the Albert Dock, the depth is never less than 19ft., with about 37ft. at high water. At Hamburg—the most prosperous port of the Continent—for 25 miles below the town, and on the top of a good high tide, 27ft. is the most water that can be found. The effective depth is only 23ft., and if the fall in the tide of 6ft. is allowed for it will be seen that the effective low water depth is only 17ft. At Antwerp only vessels drawing not more than 16ft. can be sure of coming up at low water springs, and the channel is a difficult one all the way up to the town. No recent chart of the channel to Rotterdam is published, but the "Shipping World Annual" states that vessels drawing 22ft. can come up at any time, and those drawing 24ft. to 27ft. at high water. Bremen and Bremerhafen are handicapped by a bar at the mouth of the Weser, where there is never more than 33ft. of water, and only 23ft. at low water. Bremen can only be reached on the best conditions by ships drawing not more than 26ft. The lock at the North Sea Canal has 28ft. at low water, but the canal up to Amsterdam is only available for vessels of 26ft. 2in., so that Amsterdam is equal to London in accessibility at low water only. Then, again, the depth of water in the docks of the London and India Docks Company will be found superior on the whole to that of any of the docks I saw abroad. Contrast the 38ft. at Tilbury, and 32ft. and 27ft. at the Albert Dock, and the 29ft. at the South-West India Dock, with the 21ft. in the deepest harbour at Hamburg, or the 20ft. at Bremen, or even the 28ft. at Rotterdam and Amsterdam. It is a striking fact to find at places like Antwerp, Bremerhafen, Havre, and Dunkirk, large areas of dock made within the last 50 years quite out of date, and yet to find the system of the West India Docks, made at the beginning of the last century, now able to receive vessels of almost the largest class coming to London. The docks at London appear to have been capable of adaptation to modern requirements, whilst in the case of those abroad the only way of meeting the requirements of modern conditions is apparently to build new docks, and leave the old ones idle. In graving dock accommodation London is far ahead of any of the ports I visited, and as regards sheds and cranes, whilst there may be small improvements in details in some of the modern Continental docks made since Tilbury, London as a whole is equal to any of the other ports, and in the number of cranes is relatively far superior. In the separate accounts of each port, which follow, I have given some information as to the money which is being spent or is about to be spent on extensions. It may be well to sum these up:—

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Hamburg	...	£2,000,000.
Antwerp	...	Quay extensions probably costing £1,000,000 already in progress. Further extensions not settled, but a very large expenditure is anticipated.
Rotterdam	...	£800,000 authorised, but much larger expenditure contemplated.
Bremen	...	£2,500,000.
Havre	...	£3,700,000.
Amsterdam	...	Not settled, but very large expenditure contemplated.
Dunkirk	...	£1,000,000.
Bremerhafen	...	£50,000.

7017. (*Chairman.*) Can you tell us from what sources the money which you say is going to be spent comes; is it from local or Imperial sources?—In the case of Hamburg it would come from the Free State of Hamburg; in the case of Antwerp the money is mostly found by the Government; at Rotterdam it is the Municipality; at Bremen it is the State of Bremen; at Havre it is the French Government; at Amsterdam it is the Municipality; at Dunkirk it is the French Government; at Bremerhafen it is the State of Bremen. It was impossible to get any reliable information as to the earnings of the dock undertakings. All of the undertakings are controlled by the town or some public authority, and it was frankly admitted that they never consider the question of yield per cent. on the money invested. The only place that claimed to make a profit was Bremen, where it was stated that 4¾ per cent. was earned on the money spent, but as I point out in my report on that port, a very large capital element has been omitted from the calculation. One or two of the representatives whom I saw admitted that the dock items were purposely mixed up in the town accounts. It is a significant fact that practically all the warehousing business is in private hands. The municipalities are jealously watched by traders whose business would be interfered with if warehousing were undertaken. Two or three instances are given, as at Antwerp and at Amsterdam, where the interests of the port in this respect are sacrificed to the exigencies of individual interests. Even at Bremen, where the State have an interest in the warehousing business, a private company is employed to work the warehouses, the Bremen State only taking a share of the profits. Of the ports I visited, docks exist at Bremerhafen, Amsterdam, Dunkirk, Havre, and partly at Antwerp, whilst the open basin, or riverside quay system, is in force at Hamburg, Bremen, Cuxhaven, Rotterdam, and partly at Antwerp. A great deal of what has been stated about the river quays being preferred at Antwerp is discounted by what I ascertained at that port. At Antwerp they are spending £250 per yard in erecting the river quays. This form of construction is therefore undesirable not only from the point of view of convenience of working, but of capital outlay. This cost of £250 per yard is the cost of erecting the quay only, and includes nothing for the purchase of expensive river frontage, graving docks, sheds, railways, cranes, or any outfit of any kind. It may be noticed in this connection that the quay walls in the Thames would have to be at least 70 feet high, allowing for the foundations, rise and fall of tide, and a reasonable margin of wall above high water level. It may be well to repeat briefly the reasons for the existence of these river quays at the various ports I have visited; namely, at Hamburg there is only a variation of 6 feet in the tide; at Bremen the nature of the soil will not allow the retention of water by lock gates; at Rotterdam there is only a variation of 4 feet in the tide; at Antwerp the town have no alternative but to have river quays, there not being room for docks on the lands at present owned by them. In all cases, too, the soil in suspension in the rivers is comparatively limited, so that the amount of dredging is insignificant compared with that which would be necessary in the case of similar deep water quays in the Thames. In considering the suggestions that the trade of London has not increased in the same proportion as that of the Continental ports, it is well to look at a table which has been kindly supplied to me by Mr. Dryhurst, the Secretary of Lloyd's Register. This table shows the number of tonnage of steamers of 100 tons gross and upward belonging to Great Britain and the principal foreign countries for the years 1886, 1893, and 1900.

(*The witness handed in a table showing number and tonnage of steamers of 100 tons gross and upwards belonging to certain countries during the years* 1886, 1893 *and* 1900. *See Appendix 20th Day, No.* 1.)

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It will be seen that although Germany, America, Japan and Norway have very largely increased their shipping, the British total is far beyond any of them, being six times as great as that of Germany, which is the first of other countries. It should, however, be pointed out that it is a comparatively small matter for a country owning a small amount of tonnage to double or treble it, whereas for a country like Great Britain to double its tonnage shows immense progress. The same principle applies to the large increases in shipping discharging at the ports on the Continent. All the ports show wonderful progress, but that of London is quite as wonderful considering that it has increased its trade from a total of 5,000,000 tons in 1850 to a total of 15,400,000 in 1899. Especially is this the case with the foreign and colonial trade of London which has increased in a far greater ratio than the trade as a whole. In 1850, this was 1,900,000 tons. In 1899 it was 9,400,000 tons. When it is remembered that the large Continental ports did not compete for the world's business before 1850, and that they are, as will be seen, subsidised by their governments and municipalities, it is creditable to the port system in London that its trade with countries outside the United Kingdom has increased five-fold. As a matter of fact, much of the increased trade at foreign ports is with London or its subsidiary ports. Then I will hand in my reports on each of the ports visited :—

(*The witness handed in Reports on the Ports of Antwerp, Hamburg, Cuxhaven, Bremerhafen, Bremen, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Havre and Dunkirk. See Appendix 20th Day, No.* 2.)

I will also hand in a comparative table of facilities and accommodation at London and the chief Continental ports.

(*The witness handed in the table. See Appendix 20th Day, No.* 3.)

7017a. Have you any remark to make with reference to the last table?—No, except that it is a summary of what has gone before in tabular form, with the addition that I give the particulars for London as well as the ports mentioned.

7018. (*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) I am going to ask you one question with regard to the very interesting detailed statement of the different ports. Did you obtain all this information by personal inquiry?—Yes.

7019. From the best sources of information you could get?—From the best sources obtainable, that is, the headquarters in each case.

7020. And subject to that qualification we may take it all as accurate?—Yes, and it has been checked.

7021. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With reference to your table showing the number and tonnage of steamers of 100 tons gross and upwards, it looks to me like a table that you would find in a return called "The Progress of Merchant Shipping" published by the Board of Trade?—That is probably obtained from the same source as that from which I obtained mine. It is extracted from "Lloyd's Register Book."

7022. I just wish to know how far it is an original document made up by Lloyd's?—I received it from Lloyd's just as you see it.

7023. Are you quite sure that the footnote with reference to the United States is correct; as to these figures "including steel and iron vessels trading on the great lakes of North America"?—Yes. This is exactly as I received it from the Secretary of "Lloyd's Register."

7024. Are you quite sure that it includes all these vessels?—Of course I have to fall back on the source from which I received it.

7025. You have not investigated it?—No, I cannot possibly do so.

7026. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In visiting these ports and wharves, did you notice any pontoon gates—a floating pontoon with a bridge from the pontoon to the ship?—No, I did not.

7027. (*Mr. Harper.*) You did not find any place where the warehousing business was mixed up with the whole of the docks?—Only at Amsterdam, and that very slightly.

7028. Now one question with regard to Appendix 1 showing the number and tonnage of steamers of 100 tons gross and upwards relative to the different countries. There has been some disturbance in those figures lately, has there not? The Atlantic Transport line has been sold, has it not?—I believe it has. I have no knowledge myself.

7029. Since 1900 there has been a transfer of some millions of tons, has there not?—I should think it was certainly not millions of tons.

7030. Is there not another line—the Atlas—which has been transferred?—Not going into millions of tons.

7031. The Leyland liners have been transferred, have they not?—If one is to believe what is in the papers they have been transferred.

7032. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead*). With regard to Antwerp, you give certain figures, showing that the registered tonnage of shipping entering that port has increased from the year 1890 to the year 1899 from 4,500,000 to 6,800,000?—Yes.

7033. Can you tell the Commission whether any large proportion of that increase was attributable to the North American trade?—I cannot tell you.

7034. You did not go into that question?—No, I did not go into that question.

7035. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) It was put to you as a matter of fact that the Atlantic Transport line has changed hands. Is that a fact?—I know nothing certain about that.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) My Lord, may I say one word? Some of this evidence may possibly conflict with evidence that has been put before the Commission by Mr. Gomme, the clerk to the London County Council. My view, subject to your Lordship's approval, is that if there is anything of that kind, it is much better for Mr. Gomme to give any explanation, if he wishes, than for me to put questions in cross-examination, which would be only labouring the thing twice over.

(*Chairman.*) I quite agree with you.

Mr. JOHN TROTTER recalled and further examined.

Mr. J. Trotter.

7036. (*Chairman.*) You are the chairman of the Millwall Dock Company?—Yes.

7037. You have, I believe, some statements to put in, in answer to certain questions put by the Commissioners on the occasion of your last appearance?—I put in a statement of the annual income and expenditure of the Millwall Dock Company, arranged in a particular form, as was desired in Questions 1146-7.

(*The witness handed in the Revenue Account of the Millwall Dock Company for the year ending* 31 *Dec.*, 1899. *See Appendix* 20*th Day, No.* 4.)

I also put in a statement showing the estimated net tonnage of vessels entering Millwall Docks during the years 1869, 1879, 1889; and the actual tonnage for 1899, in answer to Questions 1003-4.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the estimated net tonnage of vessels entering the Millwall Docks for the years* 1869, 1879, 1889 *and the actual tonnage for* 1899. *See Appendix* 20*th Day, No.* 5.)

I have to explain that the records of the earlier years were destroyed by fire, so that they are only estimates. I also put in a statement showing the analysis of the tonnage of vessels entering the Millwall Docks during the year 1899, in answer to Questions 1008-9.

(*The witness handed in the table. See Appendix* 20*th Day, No.* 6.)

7038. Will you give us some explanation as to the crowding and delays in the Millwall Docks, of which Mr. Jones and other witnesses have complained?—I have to explain that the crowding and delays in the Millwall Docks, of which Mr. Jones and other witnesses have complained, have been due chiefly to the want of sufficient warehouse accommodation for grain, of which there has been a large quantity often afloat in barges, and also to the absence of means for moving grain and wood goods quickly from the quays and barges. The dolphins erected in the Docks, which were mentioned in Mr. Duckham's evidence, have provided the means of dis-

charging large grain cargoes rapidly; and since I last gave evidence the Millwall Dock Equipment ment Company has been successfully floated, by which Company an amount of £200,000 will be expended to provide (a) additional granary accommodation to the extent of 100,000 quarters, with all the most modern machinery for the rapid reception, storage and delivery of grain; (b) a new timber yard of 20 acres, with sheds, railway sidings, etc., communicating with the quay side by a series of rapid mechanical transporters, new to this country, and worked by electricity; and (c) sundry plant which will greatly add to the facilities of working the docks. It is anticipated that this outlay will enable the Millwall Dock Company to meet all reasonable requirements that may be made upon it. For example, the three pneumatic elevators to be installed at the new granary will have a capacity for discharging and housing grain at the rate of 300 tons per hour. This, as compared with hand labour, will be of immense advantage to shipowners, merchants, and the Dock Company; added to which will be the increased facility of being able to carry on the discharge of vessels continuously, both day and night, irrespective of the weather. The provision of new machinery will quadruple the output of the present pneumatic appliances, as shown in the following table:—

Present Machinery.	Capacity in Tons per Hour.	Proposed Machinery.	Capacity in Tons per Hour.	Total future capacity in Tons per Hour	Excess over present capacity in Tons per Hour.
Pneumatic Elevators	130	Pneumatic Elevators	410	540	315·38%

Similarly the timber transporters about to be erected will enable the Company to transfer from barges in dock some 60 standards of wood goods per hour to their unused land at Cubitt Town, east of the Millwall Extension Railway and East Ferry Road, over which the transporting machinery will be carried by bridges. The quantity of wood goods landed by manual labour only with the present facilities, as compared with the quantity estimated to be landed by the proposed new elevating and transporting appliances, is shown in the following table:

At present by Manual Labour.	By proposed Machinery.	Excess by New Machinery.
Standards per hour.	Standards per hour.	Standards per hour.
14	60	46=328·57%.

You will see that at present by manual labour we are able to do 14 standards per hour, and by the proposed machinery we shall be able to do 60 standards per hour, showing an excess by the new machinery of 46 standards per hour, equal to 328·57 per cent., as compared with the present ability of the Dock Company to deal with this class of goods. Even as matters stand, a trade resorts to Millwall Docks which is considerably greater per acre of water area than the trade of the other docks in the Port of London, as shown in the following table:—

Net Tonnage of Vessels entered the Docks of London in 1899.
Statement showing the Relation of Tons dealt with per Acre of Water Space at Millwall as compared with other Docks.

Dock.	Water Space. Acres.	Net Tonnage	Tons per Acre.	Excess at Millwall Docks.
Millwall Docks	36	940,005	26,111	13,002=99·18% *Tons.*
Other Docks	521½	6,836,428	13,109	

I was asked on a previous occasion whether Millwall Docks had any vitality, and I thought it would be interesting to show that we are really a very busy dock. Millwall Docks have a water space of 36 acres and a net tonnage of 940,005 tons, which equals 26,111 tons per acre of water space per annum. That was in the year 1899. I may mention that in 1900 we had a very much increased tonnage, namely, 30,253 tons per acre of water space per annum. So that Millwall Dock, instead of going back, is progressive, and with the expenditure which is about to be made through the Equipment Company, we shall provide all the necessary accommodation for the two great trades which resort to Millwall Dock.

7039. Have you any further remarks to make with reference to the tables?—No; I do not think I have any further statement to make.

7040. You have referred in your statement to the evidence of Mr. Alfred Jones. I should like to call your attention to Question 4827, in which he stated that, owing to the continual breakdown of hydraulic cranes in the Millwall Dock, considerable loss of time and expense has been incurred. Are you aware of that?—That is perfectly accurate, as far as it goes. Millwall Dock was doing a very much increased business, and therefore our cranes at that time were strained to the utmost, and no doubt on occasions, with this intricate hydraulic apparatus, a crane will go wrong, and naturally there is some delay in consequence; but the company has under consideration the provision of some extra cranes to be worked by electricity, which will relieve the hydraulic cranes, and give us increased hydraulic power so that the cranes will be worked quicker, and which will also give us more cranes. I may also state that we have taken the very best electrical expert we can find to advise us on the question of introducing electricity for the working of lifts throughout the granaries of the company, which are now worked by the same hydraulic power that works the cranes; and when that is carried out I think there will be a very much increased power for the cranes, and they will work more satisfactorily.

7041. Now be kind enough to refer to the same question, 4827, where the witness complains of the charge of 10s. 6d. per hour paid to the company's men for working on the quay between the hours of 7 and 8 a.m.?—We do make that charge.

7042. Have you anything to say with regard to that?—It has been customary always to make it, and I do not know that there is any reason why we should not. We have to have men there watching, and we have to keep the machinery going and the engine at work.

7043. Have you received complaints from various shipowners on the subject?—I do not think we have had any from anybody but Mr. Jones.

7044. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I see from the account of your revenue and expenditure that £19,000 was spent last year upon dredging?—In the year 1899.

7045. If the other dock companies were spending in the same proportion to the size of the docks, would there not be an enormous expenditure by those companies?—I cannot answer for the other companies. I do not know whether the amount of mud which comes in at the dock gates is the same as is the case with ourselves. It differs, I believe, at various points on the river.

7046. According to your statement the other docks have about fifteen times your water space?—Well, somewhere about that, I suppose, it would be.

7047. So that if they were spending fifteen times what you spend upon dredging, I think there should be a different account of revenue and expenditure?—I think I ought to explain that in the year 1899, which was the first year after the catastrophe, we did a great deal of dredging to bring the dock, which had been much neglected in the past, into a proper state, so that is more than the normal amount.

7048. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You have received £200,000 for equipment by the agency of a separate company?—Yes.

7049. Have they a prior charge, or how is the interest for that money provided?—The ground is unoccupied at present. The dock company gives them the lease of that ground, and it takes a lease from them for the same period, and agrees to pay them 6 per cent. on the outlay. They then have the security of this lease, and also the improvements, buildings, and so forth, which they place on the ground.

7050. Do they provide £200,000 which is mainly spent in the dock itself?—It is spent in buildings, and in roads and in machinery of various kinds which belong to the Equipment Company.

7051. And then do the Equipment Company get what may be called the warehousing?—No. The Dock

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Company lease them back from the Equipment Company and take the rent for the warehousing, paying a definite rent to the Equipment Company for the whole provision that they make of buildings, roads, and so forth.

7052. Then the Dock Company practically guarantees 6 per cent. ?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

7053. The London and India Dock Company have come forward with proposals for increased powers of charging. Do you ask anybody for increased powers of charging?—We have not asked for any such powers yet.

7054. Neither on lighters nor on goods?—We ask for nothing at the present time.

7055. Is increased money wanted for improving the entrances?—No, I do not think so at the present time.

7056. Is any increased capital expenditure, say within the next ten years, wanted by your company in your view?—We are providing for £200,000 to be spent immediately.

7057. By the subsidiary company?—Yes.

7058. With the exception of the provision by the subsidiary company do you regard any increased capital expenditure as necessary within the next ten years, say?—There are a great many improvements that we might make undoubtedly. We are at the present time making them out of income.

7059. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What is the term of that lease?—99 years.

7060. If you failed to pay the guaranteed interest of 6 per cent. to the company, they would enter into possession of the demised premises for 99 years?—Of the portion that is leased to them.

7061. Then they do get a priority over the debentures?—The rent is part of the working expenses.

7062. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Then they do come in priority over the debentures?—As far as that rent is concerned.

7063. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) Now I want to ask you upon another matter. Has the charge for weighing out loose grain and working it out remained the same for the last 20 or 30 years?—That I am afraid I cannot answer. My knowledge is only recent as regards these details. I can hardly inform you with regard to anything before about 18 months ago.

7064. Is there any gentleman coming from the Company who knows about the working of the Docks for the last 14 years?—Mr. Duckham can tell you, no doubt.

7065. He is the engineer?—Yes.

7066. He would not be familiar with the rates charged?—The General Manager, of course, is not available.

7067. I am not going into the details, but you have introduced in the last four or five years considerable improvements in the way of elevators and pneumatic machinery for getting grain out of vessels, have you not?—It is more than four or five years ago.

7068. How long is it?—I should say it is seven or eight years ago.

7069. And no change at all has been made in the rate—No.

7070. The rate has remained the same as it has been for the last 20 or 30 years, has it not?—I do not know about so long ago as that. It has not been made recently, anyway.

7071. The pneumatic machinery and other matters have been introduced?—Yes; not the hydraulic machinery. The elevators are pneumatic. The hydraulic apparatus was there I believe at the commencement of the Docks almost.

7072. Do you make any proposals or suggestions to the Commission as to the way in which the River should be dredged?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

7073. Your dock undertaking can scarcely be described now as being in a sound financial condition, can it?—Yes, I think it can..

7074. Then may I take it that it has always been in a sound financial condition?—No.

7075. The dock undertaking dates from the year 1864?—Yes.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) The Act dates from 1864, but the dock from 1868?—Yes.

7076. (*Mr. Daldy.*) What I want to get is when this dock came into an unsound financial condition?—That I cannot tell you.

7077. Are the craft in this Dock principally the craft of the Company; that is, belonging to or hired, or given by the Company?—No, decidedly.

7078. Could you give me a rough proportion as to what part of them belong to or are used by the Company?—I could not give you an accurate account. I should say somewhere about 10 per cent. probably.

7079. The Millwall Dock Company has not got a very good land access, has it?—Yes, I think it has very good land access. Do you mean railway access or road access?

7080. Both?—It has all that is sufficient.

7081. Can you tell me why it is that the Surrey Dock on the other side of the River nearly opposite your dock is so prosperous and your dock has not been prosperous?—Simply because they do a different trade. They do a trade in timber which remains for a long time in the dock and does not go away, and we do a general trade in grain and other things which go away overside, and we get nothing for it.

7082. And you complain of the congestion of barges, which causes delay as the London and India Dock Co. do?—Undoubtedly they cause delay.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

7083. As I understand you express a desire not to be exterminated?—We do not wish to be exterminated.

7084. You think there is a future for your Dock?—I think there is a future for our Dock.

7085. I understand that in answer to Mr. Scrutton you said you do not want any alteration at the present time in the existing condition of things?—I did not say that. I said we had not asked for any.

7086. When did this £200,000 expenditure take place?—It is about to take place now.

7087. When was the arrangement entered into?—In February of this year.

7088. I see you are proposing large additional granary accommodation, and that provision is to take effect whether any alteration be made with regard to lighterage or landing dues, or not?—We shall do that, anyhow.

7089. And your belief is that your company has sufficient vitality to pay this 6 per cent. interest on this £200,000 in addition to the future you have described?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

7090. Can you give me any idea of the number of barges that enter your dock during the year?—I think I can.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) It has been given in evidence as over 40,000 barges.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) A good many of these points have already been gone into.

(*Witness.*) A table has already been put in.

(*Chairman.*) I was going to point out to you, Mr. Cranstoun, that a good many of these questions were asked of Mr. Duckham on the 15th November last.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We heard then the whole position of the Millwall Dock Company.

7091. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Take, for instance, an average day. How many barges would you say were on an average lying in the dock?—It varies in the most extraordinary way.

7092. Would you have as many as 500?—Yes. I should say some days we might have 500, some days not more than 100.

7093. How many of these would be doing your own work on an average?—That is difficult to answer. At the present time, I think we have only got about 20, or something of that sort, doing our own work.

7094. On an average, how many of that 500 would have your own grain on board?—It is very difficult to answer that. At some times of the year we have more than at others. In the middle of winter we have more. It might be 100, perhaps.

7095. It might be 100 doing your own work in one day?—Yes, it might be.

7096. Might I not say 300?—I do not think we have had more than 250, to my recollection.

7097. Can you give me any idea of the number of barges that you have permanently in your dock, that do not go out or come in, that are used by yourselves?—25.

7098. Is that all?—That is all.

7099. What would be the average size of these barges?—I suppose they would be 60 to 65 tons.

7100. What are they used for?—They are used for taking grain from the vessels to the shore, for unloading or putting timber on and taking that ashore—any purpose of that sort. They are used principally for grain and timber.

7101. And these are permanently in the dock?—I think it is about 25 that we have permanently engaged.

Cross-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

7102. One question with regard to the machinery for moving timber. Has your company the exclusive right for the use of that machinery?—For the Port of London, yes.

7103. You said that the Surrey Docks have a timber trade, and are therefore prosperous. That is what I understood to be the effect of your answer?—That is what I believe.

7104. Is it not the fact that you have had an agreement with the Surrey Dock Company?—Not since I have been Chairman of the Company.

7105. Until recently?—There was one prior to that.

7106. The effect of that agreement was——

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) Is not this going too far? If there are agreements they will speak for themselves.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) This gentleman says that, as compared with the Surrey Commercial Docks they are not prosperous; that the Surey Commercial Docks have a large timber trade?

(*Chairman.*) What is the point that is material?

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I was going to ask this witness whether it is not the fact that this company have had an agreement until recently with the Surrey Commercial Docks Company under which the timber trade was allocated to the Surrey Docks?

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) That agreement, whatever it was, ran out some five or six years ago.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) And this witness became chairman only about eighteen months ago.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I submit it is relevant. If this witness cannot deal with the point, I must pass from it, of course.

7107. Are you aware whether there was an agreement in existence?—I know there was an agreement some years before I became chairman, but there has been nothing of the kind since I became chairman of the Dock Company.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

7108. You said in your previous evidence (question 1,134) that you considered that the barge question was a very serious one and entailed great expense and took away a very large amount of goods that otherwise would come to the dock and you get nothing for it. You have not changed your mind since you were examined on that point?—No, not in the slightest.

7109. When you say that you have not asked for further powers of charging at the present time, does not your asking for them depend upon the success of the joint committee's application?—No; we have not come to a decision on the point.

See 8463-5.

Re-examined by Mr. Lewis Coward.

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7110. With regard to the question of the timber, and the transporter, you put in a table dealing with the number of standards per hour by manual labour and by the proposed machinery. Have you under-estimated there what you think is the capacity of this transporter?—We have had one trial of the machinery and that one trial has considerably exceeded what we had given in this table. It was only one trial, but I think what we have given in this table will be considerably exceeded.

7111. When do you expect to have this transporter actually working?—It will be working this week.

7112. I do not know if you could in your own words at all describe it. It is a most interesting thing if any of the committee would like to see it. It is a most interesting manner of dealing with this timber. The timber is hoisted out of the barges very rapidly by means of cranes one after the other and put on the top of a slide. Then it is taken some 450 yards away so that the dock space, of course, will be very much larger in consequence when you have this timber away?—Yes, we shall be able to utilise the land on the other side of the railway, which has hitherto been used for football grounds and gardens, bringing in no income to the company. We shall be able to use the whole of the land which is not occupied for the dredging of the dock.

7113. It is a Swedish invention, I think, is it not?—It is three Swedish inventions.

7114. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) When you say you have an exclusive right to the use of this apparatus, I suppose you have purchased the exclusive right from the inventor?—We got it for a consideration.

7115. But is that how you got it, by purchase in one way or another?—In meal or malt.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) My Lord, might I ask, as a matter of information, whether, before any evidence putting forward new schemes for the river is dealt with, we should know whether the Conservancy make any proposals? I see at Question 5567, when Sir Frederick Dixon Hartland came before the Commission, he stated that the Conservancy had not yet had time to fully discuss the proposals they would make for dealing with the river, but they were pushing on as quickly as they could. It occurs to me that it would be convenient if, before anybody put forward a new scheme, we knew what the existing authorities were proposing to do. We know now what the dock companies are proposing to do.

(*Chairman.*) We shall have Sir Frederick Dixon Hartland appearing before us after we have heard the evidence of the Corporation of the City of London.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) The difficulty that occurred to me was this: Both the Corporation and the County Council are putting forward new schemes for dealing with the organisation of the river, and they will be putting them forward without knowing what the existing authorities propose.

(*Chairman.*) I think, if it is more convenient for your clients, we might ask the Thames Conservancy and also the Trinity House to appear before the Commission in order to give evidence with regard to their proposals.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) The question is whether it is not desirable to have the schemes proposed by the existing authorities before you hear any of the schemes proposed by the County Council or the Corporation. We know what the dock companies propose to do, but we do not know what the authority responsible for the dredging proposes to do.

(*Chairman.*) That will not, I think, prevent us from hearing the London County Council's evidence to-day.

Recalled 8463.

Mr. Thomas McKinnon Wood called and examined.

Mr. T. M. Wood.

7116. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us as representing the London County Council?—Yes.

7117. You have been Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee and Chairman of the Council?—Yes.

7118. You are also a member of the Rivers Committee, to whom the consideration of the subject matter of the inquiry of this Commission was referred?—Yes.

7119. You now appear before us in order to state the policy of the London County Council?—Yes, that is so.

7120. Will you kindly give us your evidence?—It is hardly necessary to dwell on the importance of the Port of London as a centre of British commerce. The tonnage of the shipping that enters the Port of London with cargo amounts to more than one-fifth of the total shipping entering the ports of the United King-

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dom. The value of the commodities imported at the port is one-third of the total value of the imports of the United Kingdom, and the value of the exports is more than one-fourth of the total value of the United Kingdom. Liverpool, which ranks next in quantity and importance of its shipping, had in 1899 a tonnage entered of 8,282,774, against 14,682,971 for London, and a tonnage cleared of 7,458,218, as against 8,250,733 for London, excluding Cardiff, where the trade is of a more special nature; Glasgow is the next British port with a tonnage of shipping entered in 1899 of 3,034,680, and of shipping cleared of 3,415,296. Of foreign ports, New York comes first with a shipping entered with cargo and in ballast of 8,115,528 tons, or 52·7 per cent. of shipping entered into London with cargo and in ballast, namely, 15,388,228 tons; then Hamburg, with a shipping entered of 7,765,950 tons, or 50·5 per cent.; Antwerp with 6,842,163 tons, or 44·5 per cent.; and Rotterdam with 6,323,072 tons, or 41·1 per cent. In 1890 the shipping of New York was 50·5 per cent. of London, of Hamburg was 39·6 per cent, Antwerp 34·4 per cent, and of Rotterdam 22·2 per cent. It would appear that the increase of trade in several of the Continental ports, which have been developed during recent years, by the expenditure of capital by the State, or by the municipal authority, has been very remarkable. They have become very formidable competitors of London. At present the development of the Port of London is arrested. The financial position of the Thames Conservancy and the chief dock companies (with one exception) is such that these bodies are unable to raise, at any rate on advantageous terms, the capital necessary for development, and this condition of affairs is certainly placing the port at an increasing disadvantage compared with its rivals. Among improvements which are necessary, and for which fresh capital will be required, are (a) the deepening and improvement of the Thames on the lines indicated in the report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission, and in the evidence given before the present Commission by Sir Alexander Binnie. The Council's engineer has estimated the cost at less than two million spread over several years. I think his estimate was a million and a half, and the estimate of the Thames Conservancy was a million and a half to two millions. I have taken the larger sum. (b) The improvement of the docks, their equipment and approaches. It is evident from the evidence already given by those at present responsible for working the docks that large and important improvements are necessary. The Bill promoted this Session by the London and India Dock Company proposes to raise further capital to the extent of upwards of 2½ millions. I see that by that Bill two millions of that sum are to be raised by ordinary or preference stock, and one-third of the new additional capital only by debentures. I merely wish to call attention to the fact that if the money is raised under present circumstances by ordinary stock it would be raised on very disadvantageous terms indeed. The Millwall Dock Company is making arrangements for increased warehouse accommodation by means of a syndicate to whom they are leasing land and guaranteeing interest at 6 per cent. But I do not propose to enter into any details as regards these improvements, which can only be adequately considered by the new authority. Apart from the necessity for the expenditure of fresh capital, the Council thinks that it is desirable that the future administration of the docks should not remain in the hands of private companies, but should be placed in the hands of a body whose sole object should be to serve the interests of the shipping and commerce of the port, with which those of the London ratepayers are very closely connected. Evidence has already been given by the Clerk and the Engineer of the Council that the area of the Port of London should be the same for all purposes of jurisdiction, and should be defined as extending from the tidal limit of the Thames at Teddington on the west to an imaginary line drawn from the Naze to the North Foreland, subject only to provisions similar to those in the Thames Conservancy Act 1894 (section 3 and the second schedule) with regard to charging shipping dues. The Thames Conservancy should remain with the necessary change in constitution, as the river authority above Teddington. The powers of the Conservancy below Teddington should be taken over by the new authority, which should also manage the undertakings of the following dock companies:—

East India Docks.
West India Docks.
St Katharine's Docks.
London Docks.
Royal Albert Docks.
Royal Victoria Docks.
Tilbury Docks
} Owned by the London and India Dock Company.
Millwall Docks.
Surrey Commercial Docks.

The desirabilty of consolidation of the docks is clearly pointed to by the amalgamation which has already taken place in the case of some of the existing companies. A considerable saving in administration is to be expected from such consolidation. The new authority proposed is to be an unpaid body like the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. The remuneration of the directors of the above-named dock companies, allowing for the increase provided for by the Act of 1900, section 37, together with that of the Thames Conservancy, will be between £14,000 and £15,000 per annum. The consolidation of management should result in important savings, and it is to be expected that a wise expenditure of capital on improvements and on the replacement of old equipment by modern appliances, of the necessity of which the Commission has had evidence from previous witnesses, would result in more economical working, and in obviating the delays of which the shipowners make the most serious complaint. The new authority should also have the power of appointment of pilots and the superintendence of pilotage and the regulation of watermen and lightermen, and in general should control all matters within the Port of London, including the provision and maintenance of a proper channel, the removal of obstructions, lighting and buoying, the provision of sufficient and suitably-equipped docks and quays, and means of land and river communication therewith, the regulation of the traffic, mooring, loading, and unloading of vessels, the licensing of new piers and embankments and making charges therefor, the provision of moorings, piers, and landing stages, the fixing, revising, and levying dues and charges on vessels and goods, the sanitary duties relating to the port, and the making of bye-laws in connection with the above-mentioned matters. This would mean the transfer of powers now exercised by the Thames Conservancy, City Corporation, Trinity House, the Watermen's Company, and the dock companies mentioned. In dealing with the question of the constitution of the new authority to be proposed by the Council, one of the most important considerations that have determined its decision is that of finance. There must be an expenditure of many millions for the acquisition of the property of the dock companies, and fresh capital must be raised for deepening the river and other improvements. For the management of an undertaking of this kind, which differs in its nature from that of water or tramway undertakings, I think it is most desirable that the managing body should contain a large representation of experts elected by the shipowners, merchants, and others directly interested in the commerce of the port. As the trade of the capital is not only a matter of local but also of national concern—which, I think, is indicated by the figures I have given—the Council thinks that the Government should be asked to contribute to the improvement of the port, and that representatives of certain Government departments should be appointed to serve as members of the new authority. It may be mentioned here that the Commissioners of Woods and Forests receive one-third of the amount paid to the Thames Conservancy in respect of the licences for works on the river, which the Commissioners might perhaps be asked to forego in the interests of the trade of the port. The Council has had to consider the matter from the point of view of the financial interests of London in their broadest aspect. It is necessary to bear in mind how much the prosperity of commercial London, and, indeed, of the ratepayers and the inhabitants generally, is bound up with the prosperity of the port and its adequacy for modern requirements. After much consideration I can see no method of raising the necessary capital which will be so economical as that of raising it upon the security of the rates of London and by means of the high credit enjoyed by the Council. It would be indefensible, in my opinion, to give the power of raising money by rate to any body which had a direct interest in reducing charges on ships and goods at the expense of the ratepayer. The Council is therefore willing to undertake the responsibility of raising the capital which is necessary.

7121. Have you made any estimate of the amount which you suggest?—Of course, we have considered it, but we thought it would not be proper for us to put forward any estimate which might appear to be the sum which in your opinion we should be required to raise, because, of course, that would tend to become the minimum sum in the event of this scheme being carried out. We are the buyers, and we have, of course, considered what the Stock Exchange value of the companies is, what capital they have raised, and all those questions, and we have formed our estimates in that way, but we have not thought it right to publish any

calculation of that sort. I think that the Council should purchase the docks and properties of the dock companies already mentioned, and should retain the control of capital expenditure in order to safeguard the interests of the general body of ratepayers. Interest and sinking fund would be a charge on revenue after payment of management expenses. I do not think that it should be the object of the Council to make a profit for the ratepayers, who would reap sufficient advantage from the prosperity of the port. The Council is of opinion that repayment of capital should be by instalments spread over 100 years, on the annuity system, and having regard to the necessary provision of fresh capital, I think no more onerous terms should be imposed upon the ratepayers of the present day. Having regard to the nature of the property, I think the proposal of long-deferred repayment is sound and justifiable as regards future ratepayers. The dock companies make no provision for a sinking fund. On the proposed system the charge would be under 5s. per cent. (0·2312 per cent. on the 23 per cent table). As to management, I think that all administrative control should be left absolutely to a statutory authority, to be called "The Port of London Committee," of not more than 30 members, of whom ten members should be from the Council, two from the City Corporation, and ten should be representatives of the shipowners, merchants, and others interested in the commerce of the port, elected on the Liverpool system, by all who have paid in the preceding year £10 of port dues. We thought from the expressions which have fallen from the Commission that they would prefer a definite scheme should be laid before them, rather than something general and vague. Other members should be appointed by Government departments, one representing each of such departments as the Board of Trade, the Customs, the Admiralty, the Treasury (in case of an Imperial grant). The Trinity House should also be represented by one member. With regard to the constitution of the authority, it was felt by some members of the Council that a larger proportion should consist of members of the Council, in view of the great responsibility undertaken in regard to finance, and the necessity of protecting the interests of the general body of ratepayers. Some members thought it unnecessary to suggest the appointment of members by the Government departments. But, on the main principle that the Port Committee should contain members of the Council as representing the ratepayers and representatives of the shipowners, merchants, and others directly interested in the commerce of the port, the Council was unanimous. There would thus be a managing authority representing the various interests concerned in the development and the efficient and economical administration of the port, and the manifest necessity of arranging for capital expenditure would be adequately provided for. In the event of the income exceeding management expenses, together with the payment of interest, and sinking fund, surplus revenue should be expended on improvements of the port, and on lowering dues and charges. Of course, I have not entered into the question of laying up a reserve fund. That is a matter of comparative detail. I think that the sources of revenue of the new authority, after the necessary improvements are carried out, should be sufficient to meet all its proper expenses; but it is necessary to contemplate the case of expenditure exceeding revenue as an exceptional occurrence before the proposed improvements have become remunerative. In this event, the Council should have power to make a contribution, and the committee should with its application submit an estimate of its income and expenditure. Such contribution should be repayable to the Council out of the surplus revenue. Should the Commission approve of the general principles of this scheme, and should a bill be introduced to carry it into effect, it will be necessary very carefully to consider in detail the precise procedure to be adopted in such a case. During the debate in the Council Lord Welby expressed his opinion that, in the event of the Port Committee being obliged to apply to the Council for assistance in regard to maintenance, it would be necessary to introduce some special safeguard in the interest of the ratepayer. While I would desire to leave the largest powers of control and management to the Port Committee so long as income balances expenditure, it does seem reasonable that, if the ratepayers are called upon to contribute, their interest should be specially safe-guarded. The Port of London Committee should have complete powers of management, including appointment of officers, and should also have control of expenditure and income, subject to its obligation to repay interest and sinking fund to the Council, but it should have no borrowing powers or right to pledge the credit of London. Its accounts should be separately audited and published.

7122. Do you wish to put in the report of the Rivers Committee?—If your Lordship pleases.

(*The witness handed in the report of the Rivers Committee of the London County Council on the administration of the Port of London. See Appendix 20th Day, No. 7.*)

7123. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Assuming that such a proposal as you make was carried out have you considered the time it would take to transfer the property of the dock companies to such a body as you contemplate?—In the event of its being considered desirable to purchase the property of the dock companies it might appear to Parliament desirable that as some of these improvements appear to be urgently necessary, some proposal such as was made in the case of the water companies of vesting the property in the purchasing body at once before the arbitration was completed—securing the interests of the shareholders and the debenture holders by a provision that the debenture interest and some dividend on the shares should be continued to be paid to them,—might be carried out and no time would be lost in that event. The property would vest within a short period after the passing of the Act of Parliament.

7124. Urgency is of course a matter that we have heard a good deal of here. It has been said that the matter is urgent and that some expenditure at any rate should at once be authorised. You have considered that point?—Of course we quite feel that that is so.

7125. The result of your consideration is that a procedure something like that proposed in the case of the water companies might be adopted?—Yes.

7126. And that the existing companies might raise capital?—No. I do not mean that. I mean this: that, instead of waiting for the transfer of the property of the dock companies until a long arbitration was concluded, Parliament might vest that property in the purchasing body at once, the purchasing body being one able to give to the shareholders and debenture holders a better security than they have at present. Parliament would look after their interest. Supposing the Council bought it they would be obliged to pay the interest on debentures and the preference shares and so on. I should say they would not be injured in any way because they would have their dividends secured to them on a better security than before. The urgency in the case of the water companies was held by us to be sufficient to induce us to make that exceptional proposal, that the property should vest before the arbitration was concluded, and that might be done in this case.

7127. It might be done if the urgency which is suggested exists to the extent that has been urged?—Yes.

7128. So far as I gather, the principle which you suggest as the foundation of the trust is a representation of the nation in the first place, through Government officials?—Yes.

7129. A representation of the shipowners and the merchants as interests peculiarly affected?—Yes.

7130. And lastly, a representation of the London County Council as the body finding the credit for the raising of money?—Yes.

7131. You do not express, I think, an opinion as to the relation of the several interests?—We do suggest the proportion on the authority. We suggest ten from the London County Council, two from the City Corporation, ten members representing trade and shipowners, and five members representing the Government and Trinity House, 27 in all. Roughly speaking, it is in thirds.

7132. You do not suggest a preponderance of anybody?—No.

7133. (*Chairman.*) You were speaking just now of paying interest on debentures and some dividend on shares. Is there any reason to suppose that the suggested new authority to which you make reference would be able to work the port at a profit without recourse to any new dues on goods and barges suggested by the dock companies, and without recourse

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to which they claim they are unable, with all their long experience, to work the port?—That would require me to give an opinion which I do not feel that I am expert enough to give as to the way the charges of the port are arranged. I have an opinion of my own on the subject, but I do not think it would be of sufficient value to place before the Commission.

7134. Would you mind answering my question? Is there any reason to suppose that this new authority would be more successful than the present dock companies?—Of course we should save something by an amalgamation. The effect of the amalgamation would mean a saving of money.

7135. The amalgamation would be practically confined to the Millwall and Surrey Commercial Docks?—Yes.

7136. It is a small matter; it is not a very big sum in question?—It is not the saving merely of the expenses of management, the directors' salaries and so on. That is a small thing. But you would have one staff of officers, and you would have no competition between the docks.

7137. You do not suggest that this economy would be sufficient to put another complexion on the face of affairs?—I look forward to the improved docks, the deepening of the channel, and giving more up-to-date appliances, bringing more trade to the docks and bringing greater revenue to the new authority.

7138. Do you consider that the new authority would be able to work the docks at a profit without having recourse to the ratepayers (which is a course I think you deprecate) and without the imposition of these new duties which are suggested by the dock companies?—I should not venture to say that no change would be made in the charges. I am not prepared to say that.

7139. You think, then, that the new authority would raise the present charges?—No; I do not think so. I think we should be able to do it without raising the present charges, but alterations in the present charges might be necessary.

7140. I believe that the present charges are not equally levied?—I do not think the incidence is equal, and I think, if preference was done away with, larger revenue would come to the dock companies; and that would happen with any public trust.

7141. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I think, in answer to the Chairman, the first ground you gave of your anticipating that you would not be obliged to raise the rates was that a greater amount of business would be done owing to your improvements?—Yes, and with those improvements one would get rid of what is the great objection at the Port of London, namely, the exceptional delay which occurs in the loading and unloading of the ships.

7142. We have heard, I think, that 76 per cent. of the goods that use the docks pay nothing for them?—That is so.

7143. It looks therefore as if a mere increase in the volume does not necessarily connote a very large increase in profits?—Yes, that is so.

7144. Therefore if the improved method was introduced, and you got a great volume of additional business, you would have to look for your profit on that additional business; on the 25 per cent. and not on the 100 per cent.?—Yes. If there were no change in the system of charge.

7145. We all know and are deeply indebted, if I may say so, to the County Council for the immense amount of labour they do unremunerated, but do you think that another burden can be laid on the public spirit of London, of a dimension such as this, without any remuneration?—I do not think there would be any difficulty in finding ten members of the Council to serve, and serve efficiently, on such a board, and I may perhaps give a reason for that. At the present moment we have six members serving on what is a body of much less power, the Thames Conservancy, and we have no difficulty in finding members. There is quite a competition among members to serve on the Thames Conservancy, and I think there would be a keener competition to serve on this much more important body.

7146. I was for a moment wishing that you would look outside that public-spirited body, the County Council, and give us your opinion with regard to the remaining members of the Trust that you suggest?—As to the members representing the shipowners and merchants and manufacturers, I have some acquaintance with Liverpool. I have business there, and there I know that they have no difficulty in getting first-class men to serve on their Harbour Board. We propose to follow the example of their system.

7147. That is so, of course, with Bristol and other provincial towns, but is not the difficulty in London, from the enormous size of the community, that men do not have the same civic spirit that they have in the provincial towns?—I am afraid that is true to some extent. I think it is ceasing to be true to the extent that it used to be.

7148. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to the proposal that the Government should be asked to contribute to the improvement of the port, I should like to ask whether that proposal is that the Government should be asked to contribute to the river improvement, or to the whole scheme which you have laid before the Commission. I do not know how you interpret the words "the port"?—I am afraid we do not interpret it very exactly. We were not in a position to make a proposal to the Government, so we do not define exactly what the contribution should really be. Our general argument was simply that the trade of the Port of London is so large a proportion of the trade of the Kingdom that we thought it stood in an exceptional position, and that the Government might contribute.

7149. The reason I ask is that some of the witnesses have made a proposal that the cost of the river improvements should be dissociated from the expenditure on the docks?—Yes.

7150. Do you propose to buy on arbitration?—Yes.

7151. Would that be taking all circumstances into account?—Yes.

7152. When you talk about purchasing the dock property do you include the warehouses?—Yes. We have not been able to see our way to separate the warehouses from the quays.

7153. If that is so, and the Public Trust become owners of the warehouses, they will become a competing body with those who own the warehouses on the river?—They would on the one hand.

7154. Do you see no way out of the difficulty?—I think it must be said on the other hand that they would be bringing more trade to the port through their improvements, and that would be to the benefit of the wharves if anything like the proportion of the goods taken to the wharves continued.

7155. That might be for the benefit of the wharves if the present system of the free use of the docks was continued, but supposing the public authority considered that they were entitled to make a charge as the dock directors do, then you would be competing with the wharf property with a great advantage on the side of the public trust?—Yes. There would be a certain amount of competition undoubtedly.

7156. At present the proposal of the dock company is to lay charges which amount, I believe, in the aggregate to about £135,000, on the traffic which is barged?—Yes.

7157. On the existing traffic?—Yes.

7158. It would be important to know whether the County Council propose anything of the same kind?—I have no authority to say. The County Council have not formed any view as to whether barges ought to be taxed or not.

7159. I think you will see the difficulty from the point of view of a public trust becoming a competitive body?—Yes.

7160. Can you not give us any leading on that point?—No. There might be other ways, of course, of raising revenue besides a charge on barges. The whole thing is so complicated that these changes, it seems to me, must be left to the new authority to propose. We are hardly in a position to propose a change of that sort.

7161. That might be done by legislation?—Yes. It might be a matter to consider if a Bill were introduced for the purpose of the dock companies, but at this moment we have not sufficient knowledge to form a decided opinion.

7162. The County Council quite realise that the present position of the Port of London is quite exceptional with respect to the barged traffic?—Yes.

7163. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to ask you a few questions

on the history of this. When was that Committee appointed by the County Council. I have a paper in my hand dated the 24th March, 1896?—Yes, that is in the report of the Rivers Committee.

7164. That Committee has been sitting for a number of years thoroughly investigating the matter?—Yes, it has been investigating the matter.

7165. And they have presented a report recently to the County Council. What is the date of the most recent report?—The 17th of January of this year.

7166. That was adopted by the County Council?—Yes.

7167. You appear before us as an authorised witness of the London County Council?—Yes.

7168. There is no question about that?—No.

7169. It was a unanimous resolution?—Yes, there was no division and there was no opposition. It was carried *nemine contradicente*. Certain members made suggestions which I have embodied in my evidence as to their view that we ought to have a large proportion of members and matters of detail of that sort, but the report was unanimously adopted in principle.

7170. Your evidence is on the lines unanimously approved by the County Council?—That is so.

7171. You suggest a certain saving in salaries and the consolidation of powers and improvements?—Yes.

7172. You have been Chairman, I think, of the County Council?—I was Chairman of the County Council.

7173. Therefore you are not only speaking in a representative capacity, but you are a person of considerable experience?—I have some knowledge of the subject.

7174. You are an interested person?—Yes.

7175. You tell us the trade of the capital is not only a matter of local but also of national concern. I should like to ask you to develop that a little. When you speak of the Government, you mean the British tax-payer, of course?—Yes.

7176. Will you give me in a word why you think the British taxpayer is interested in the Port of London?—Because the tonnage of London is one-fifth of the total tonnage coming into the whole country. It is such a very large proportion of the total trade of the country.

7177. Do you wish us to infer that the interest rests solely upon that, and that exhausts the matter? Supposing that the tonnage fell to 10 per cent. owing to the improvement of other ports?—I should say I am dealing with it as a national matter in regard to the competition of foreign ports rather than of other English ports. I should hardly expect the Government to assist London as against other English ports, but if it is a question of the trade being drawn away by Hamburg and Antwerp and other foreign ports, it does become a national interest.

7178. You are aware that these questions do come up; the townspeople in Nottingham, for instance, or even Warwickshire, would want to know why they should come to the assistance of London?—Yes; I am quite aware there is a difficulty there.

7179. You rather suggest the volume of trade. Have you any other reason?—There is the consideration that London is the capital.

7180. That London is the seat of Parliamentary functions, and also of other things?—Yes; the capital of the country and of the Empire, as we are often told.

7181. Have you any other reason to suggest? I want to get at what is in your mind, because the question is sure to be raised?—I do not think that I can suggest any other reason, except that they are drawing a certain revenue, which is revenue that ought to go to the Thames Conservancy; but that is a detail, rather. The Government has contributed to the docks of London a great many years ago.

7182. We have had all that very fully. I think we have that deep down in our minds; at least I have, speaking for myself. Then you have said that the Council should retain the control of capital expenditure in order to safeguard the interests of the general body of ratepayers?—Yes. We are guaranteeing the whole of the money. In our view, we are giving an enormous advantage by this scheme to the shipowners and merchants and manufacturers of London, because we are giving them a guarantee, a security, which enables them to raise the money on very much better terms than the dock companies can ever hope to raise it on, or than the Thames Conservancy could, or even a port authority which was not a municipal authority. I have gone into that matter with a great deal of care, and the result of my investigations is that, where you have a good port authority the difference of the terms on which they could raise money as compared with the municipal authority of the same town would be roundly ½ per cent. Where you have a body in the condition of these docks, it seems to me the difference would be great. If you take the proposal before Parliament this year, they would be obliged to raise money on very onerous terms indeed. That is the point in this scheme which I think dissociates it from other schemes; and it is of advantage to the commercial community of London. Of course, I do not think we should be justified in offering that advantage unless we felt at the same time that the ratepayers' interest was concerned. We think it is, because they are the consumers of the goods, and extra charges on the port means extra cost of the goods.

7183. I want to get the fact clear. In the first place, what do you mean by capital expenditure. Do you mean the provision of a new dock, for instance?—The cost of deepening the channel of the river; and the purchase of the companies' undertakings, which is the biggest expenditure.

7184. When the thing is started, do you class improvements and deepening of the dock under capital expenditure?—Yes, so far as they are defrayed out of borrowed money. Improvements which would be made out of revenue I should suggest the Council should not interfere with.

7185. To whom do you leave the determination of the question whether expenditure was capital expenditure or revenue expenditure?—I presume what would happen would be that the Port Committee would consider the matter, and if they thought they could effect an improvement out of revenue, they would do so and have the power to do so without coming to us. If they felt they required to borrow money for that purpose, then they should come to us as representing the ratepayers.

7186. You appreciate my question; it is a very serious point?—It is a very difficult thing, of course, to give the Port Authority sufficient powers, and yet secure the interests of the ratepayers. That is the thing one has to be careful about.

7187. I am coming to the Port Committee in a moment. I understand that the County Council, in your proposed scheme, would retain in its hands the control of any expenditure that the statutory authority, to use your term, could not make out of income?—Yes; any expenditure that required the raising of a loan.

7188. That would not come out of income?—That is so, otherwise a certain section of the port has a natural interest in cheapening, and any improvements that would tend to cheapening charges, and no direct interest in the rates.

7189. You have never considered, for instance, statutory bodies who hand out to another statutory body—the School Board, for instance?—I think that would be dangerous. It is a very large sum to add to the indebtedness of London; it is doubling the indebtedness of London.

7190. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) With reference to the answer you gave to my honourable friend, I want to be quite sure whether I understood it. It was with regard to the question of capital expenditure. Supposing your trust was constituted, you would first have by your ten representatives on the Port Authority a voice as to whether that capital expenditure should take place?—Yes.

7191. Then supposing they decided, you having a third of the say on that question first, they have to come to the County Council, and there would be a separate decision to take as to whether that capital expenditure should be undertaken?—Yes.

7192. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Now, passing to the statutory authority, you say that here would be no difficulty in finding persons willing to perform these functions without remuneration?—That is so. I appeal to experience on that point. We do not find a difficulty.

7193. And you instance the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—Yes.

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7194. Of course, you are aware that the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board has nobody controlling its purse strings?—No, nor has it any guarantee from or any power over the rates or any guarantee from the Corporation.

7195. But it can do what it likes in the way of improvements out of its own resources without going to any man?—Yes.

7196. Then you think that the granting of the credit of the London County Council, whatever value it may be (and of course you rate it highly), demands that they should have this provision of veto if necessary on any capital expenditure?—Yes.

7197. In other words you do not trust this statutory body with its own power to say, "We think that the River must be deepened to this extent; we think that the docks must be extended," without another body coming and revising that?—I do not think it is right to give the power of spending the rates to any body which is not representative of the ratepayers, and which cannot be called to account by the ratepayers. Therefore, though I would give them the fullest power of management, and the fullest power of spending money within their income, when it comes to a question of capital expenditure I think the representatives of the ratepayers must be consulted.

7198-9. You do not think the ten of the thirty members of the Board would be a sufficient protection to the ratepayer?—No, I think not. I think one must adhere to the principle of the representatives deciding on the expenditure of rates.

7200. You can hardly trust your ten members?—I trust the ten, but then they are only ten out of 27. Supposing you had a proposal coming up from the Port Committee carried by a large majority, it would be extremely invidious for the County Council to refuse to carry out a suggestion like that. I think as a matter of practice the pressure would be that way and not the other way. The County Council would be very reluctant to refuse the recommendation which was carried by a strong majority of the Port Committee as in the interests of the port.

7201. You think as a matter of practical working the statutory authority would be a body of such power and influence and reputation that it would carry weight in the County Council?—I think so.

7202. I notice you suggest that the Government should put a member on in case of an Imperial grant; but not otherwise, I suppose?—That was only in the case of the Treasury; I do not make a great point of that.

7203. In what form would you make what you call the Imperial grant—what I should call dipping into the Exchequer. Would it be on application by the body?—I thought really, to be quite frank about it, that it was a matter that we ought to put before the Commission for their consideration not in too much detail. I thought it was a matter that the Commission would consider, but we might suggest that Government might assist us with the deepening of the channel of the river. It is a matter which would affect them as a Government; it is a matter important for them from an Admiralty point of view for instance. That is the most definite suggestion I think I can make about that.

7204. I gather that your wish would be that this Port of London Committee should be a body of great power and reputation such as is the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—Yes.

7205. You think if its functions were of that character it would attract to it men of capacity and high position?—Yes.

7206. You have very little doubt of that?—I have very little doubt of that.

7207. (*Mr. Peel.*) You have said that the representation of the Government on the Board rather depended upon the contribution?—Only in the case of the Treasury.

7208. In the case of the other Government members, if there was no Government contribution, you would still say the Government should be represented by those members?—Yes, I think it would be useful to have representatives of the Board of Trade, the Customs, and the Admiralty.

7209. If there was no contribution you would make no further change in the position of the Board which you suggest, beyond withdrawing the member representing the Treasury?—I should not make any very great point of that. If the Government thought it was desirable to have a representative of the Treasury, I certainly should not oppose it. There did not seem to be any special reason for it if there were no grant.

7210. You rather suggest that the Council should make no profit at all?—No, I think not.

7211. And that any surplus of the revenue should go to lower the charges?—Yes. My own idea is that it should build up a reserve fund first and then lower the charges.

7212. I was going to ask you in the case of a deficiency in one year would you suggest that the Board should go to the Council and ask for a rate in aid?—I hope that will not be necessary, but it might be necessary in the event of large improvements being carried out quickly. There would not be time to reap advantage of these improvements and there might occur an occasion of that sort and, therefore, I thought it was franker in bringing up this report to put this case. I think in that case the Port Committee should bring up a budget statement and give a report to the Council of their receipts and expenditure and that the Council should have power to assist towards the maintenance.

7213. That is to say possibly in the case of some improvements being made out of revenue?—Yes.

7214. Of course, all these new improvements would have to be fully considered by the Council themselves. If the Board came up to ask for powers to borrow largely they would go into the question of how the proposed money had been laid out?—Certainly it would be in their power to do so.

7215. It would lay a very great labour on the Council in addition to its other labours?—I do not know that it would, because the Port Committee would have gone into the matter thoroughly, and would have the reasons for its own action drawn up in some accessible form, and the Council would be able to consider that, and would lean very greatly on the authority of such a Port Committee as we propose; it would be a body of great weight.

7216. With reference to putting rates on goods; in looking at Mr. Gomme's report there is a comparison, I believe, of the expense of the Port of London as compared with other ports?—I believe there is.

7217. From that report I think one sees that the charges on shipping are heavy in London, as compared with other ports?—I do not know that that is so.

7218. Supposing we admit for a moment that they are. The great principle of managing a Trust, I think, it is generally admitted, is to attract the shipping, and to make the rates on the shipping as low as possible?—Yes, you want to attract the trade.

7219. So that really one of the first things to do would be to lower the rates on the shipping, would it not, to attract the trade?—It does not follow that by lowering the rates on shipping, if you proportionately raise them on goods, you would attract the goods. A shipowner is not entirely independent as to where he will bring his goods.

7220. If you lower them on shipping you would probably have to make up the deficiency by raising them on goods?—Yes.

7221. But the great way in which you expect economies to be made is by the less amount of money that you would have to pay in interest?—That would be a serious saving. My difficulty is to see how the necessary improvements are to be carried out unless you can raise money on better terms than at present; it seems to me impracticable.

7222. Perhaps you have seen the scheme which has been proposed by the City Corporation as to the composition of a board to manage the shipping of the Port of London?—Yes, I have seen that.

7223. I think on that board it is not suggested that the London County Council should have any representation at all?—No, it is not.

7224. That, I suppose, would hardly commend itself to the London County Council?—I would not put the objection on that ground; I should put it on the ground that it fails from a financial point of view.

(*Chairman.*) I think we will not criticise that, because the scheme is not at present before us.

7225. (*Mr. Peel.*) You say this proposal of the County Council was carried without a division and without contradiction?—Yes.

7226. Would it be fair to suggest that it was so carried only on the understanding that evidence was to be tendered to the Royal Commission on those lines?—Certainly.

7227. And that really a large portion of the Council deferred expressing a considered opinion at that moment?—Certainly. It was a recommendation that the Council authorised the Rivers Committee to arrange for evidence to be given before the Royal Commission of the Port of London on the following lines, stating them; but it does not pledge the Council in the event of a Bill being introduced to particular details. It is the general principle really.

7228. It was a recommendation of the Rivers Committee?—Yes.

7229. You can hardly call it the considered opinion of the whole body of the London County Council?—Well, it was agreed *nemine contradicente*, and that is a very strong thing with the County Council.

7230. I want to ask you about this proposal of Lord Welby with regard to maintenance. What is the safeguard that he suggested?—I do not think that he suggested an actual safeguard in detail, but his suggestion was that the matter would be very carefully considered. A question was raised, for instance, whether the Council should have any power over the dues on goods or the port dues. For my part I think that would be very unfortunate; I should not like to take away from the independence of the Port Committee. I do not think Lord Welby suggested that—I think that was suggested by some other member. I think we ought to leave as much power as possible to this Port Committee, subject to the expenditure of capital.

7231. The Council would be able to control it by refusing the rate in aid?—Yes. What was felt was if there was a deficiency in maintenance the Council practically would be obliged to make a grant in order to make up that deficiency. That would be necessary as a matter of practice, and, therefore, there should be some safeguard in the interest of the ratepayers. For my part, I should be prepared to trust a Port Committee, and I think that is the best safeguard. I think you get a body of high *personnel*, and personally I should be prepared to trust them and ask for no more safeguard.

7232. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Your answer virtually covers what I was going to ask, namely, if the Port Committee was constituted they would not be interfered with by the London County Council except when they wanted more money for their capital expenditure?—Certainly.

7233. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With regard to your suggestion of the appointment of Government officials on the Port Committee, do you think that the Customs and the Board of Trade are adequately represented by one member upon it, considering the magnitude of their interests in the Port of London?—I thought so. We did not wish to make too big a body, and it seemed to me that that was proper. Of course, they would be influential out of proportion to their numbers if they were taking a serious interest in the work.

7234. The Customs have a great deal to do with the actual administration of the Port of London?—Yes.

7235. And questions are continually coming up in which they are immediately concerned?—That is so.

7236. Still, I suppose all that was before you when you made the suggestion about numbers?—Yes. It might be quite possible to put two members on from the Customs if that was thought an advantage.

7237. I am suggesting there might be a case for the larger representation of the official element on account of the interest of these two bodies in the actual daily administration of the port?—Yes.

7238. Is it not the case, to mention a small point, that as far as concerns the Customs, they are not altogether an independent body, but are entirely dependent on the Treasury?—Yes.

7239. So that the appointment of Customs officials to some extent would be an appointment of the Treasury?—Yes; so that we really should have two appointments of the Treasury.

7240. Are you aware of the legal position, that in the House of Commons the Treasury always answers for the Customs, and the Customs is a department of the Treasury?—Yes; I was aware of that.

7241. Then with reference to the list of docks which you give that ought to be amalgamated and consolidated, and taken over by the Port Committee, there are one or two minor docks as to which I should like to know what your opinion is. There is the Poplar Dock, and the Regent's Canal and Dock?—The Regent's Canal and Dock we have considered. Our difficulty with regard to that was, that it is not a dock undertaking pure and simple. The larger part of it is a canal undertaking, and therefore we have not put it in, but it is certainly a case which would have to be considered again, and a conclusion arrived at about it, before a Bill was introduced into Parliament. But the dock is so mixed up with the canal that I am not prepared at the moment to say that it should be bought out, as is clearly necessary in the case of the other docks.

7242. That is a matter which we should have to consider as a Commission?—Would you like us to come to a decision about it, and tender further evidence about it, because, of course, we will do so if you desire it.

7243. I think that is to some extent a matter for yourselves to consider. I bring the point before you to elicit what your opinion is, whether you think it is in your interest to assist us on that point?—The Poplar Dock is in a different position; it is the private property of a railway company. We rather regarded that as in the position of the private wharves than a public dock.

7244. But they are subject to that exemption clause of which we have heard so much, are they not?—Yes, I believe they are.

7245. At any rate, we should have to form an opinion as to whether the Poplar Dock was to be taken over along with the other docks, possibly?—We have not formed an opinion.

7246. Have you considered the question as to the extent to which you would interfere with the business of wharfingers, if you take over this business. I think you told us that you were quite prepared to say that this Port Committee should be established, and should have all that business in spite of its interfering with the trade of the wharfingers?—I think so. I should not think it would be the object of the new authority to interfere with that trade in any way otherwise than must happen by the competition, but it is a competition which exists at present.

7247. Would you not interfere to a large extent, also, with the business in the nature of dock business carried on by other people; I mean all the private companies and docks which exist upon the river?—Yes; we should be in competition with them in the same sense as the dock companies now are, but of course with the rates behind us; I quite admit that.

7248. Are you aware of any case of any harbour which is now in a similar position, so that you could give us an illustration of the working of it, where there is a central port and river authority, and where there is such a miscellaneous business going on beside it?—No; I do not think there is anything to so large an extent, at any rate. There may be some things like it in kind, but nothing like it in magnitude.

7249. So that that is really a somewhat unusual condition, which would have to be faced in constituting a Port Committee for London?—Yes; I think it is.

7250. You are not in favour of the idea which some have supported here, that the whole river frontage should be bought up, and the whole placed in the hands of the Port Committee?—No, I do not propose that.

7251. You still think that you ought to go on with all that miscellaneous competition after you acquire the business?—It would be a proposal of enormous magnitude to suggest buying up all the wharves of London. I almost think it would break the back of any legislation. I have had some experience as Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee, and one has to be practical. I should not like to place the Bill before Parliament.

7252. You are not afraid of any evil consequence resulting from the competition of the State in this particular business?—No, I am not afraid of that. I do not think that a port authority would have any inducement to build dock warehouses that would render the wharves unnecessary. And the advantage to the port, I think, would counterbalance the disadvan-

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tage of competition, of which I can quite understand the wharves are afraid.

7253. Have you considered the question, looking at the amount of private business that goes on in the Port of London, whether the Port Committee, after it acquired all these docks and the other business, might not lease or give up part of the premises to be dealt with in a similar manner to the way in which the Poplar Dock is now dealt with?—Let them to railway companies and other people—millers and people like that? No, I have not considered that. I think that was a matter really for the new authority to consider, not for us at this stage.

7254. Still you might have some suggestion to make about it which would facilitate our consideration of the matter?—I do not think we could sever the warehouses from the quays. I do not think we could assent to that proposition.

7255. You do not think there can be any disposal of the warehouse business now carried on by the dock companies by the new Port Committee?—I do not think it is advisable.

7256. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) The importance of this question is the reason I want to ask again about it. Do you agree with the opinion which I think was expressed by the late Lord Farrer, that ratepayers' interests are not necessarily harmonious with dock companies' interests?—With private dock interests?

7257. Or even public dock interests. The first consideration, as a rule, with a ratepayer is to get the rates down, is it not?—Yes.

7258. On the trust which you are proposing you are proposing to have ratepayers' representatives, shipowners and merchants?—Yes.

7259. Therefore you have trade interests and ratepayers' interests?—Yes.

7260. And the ratepayers' interests *qua* ratepayers may be opposed to the commercial interest?—Yes, it may be.

7261. It is for that reason that you propose, quite fairly, the representation of the trading interest as well as the ratepayers' interest, notwithstanding that you would have the credit of the London County Council?—Yes, and to get the expert knowledge and the experience which is necessary.

7262. Are you not, by placing a veto upon all improvements from capital expenditure in the hands of the Council, obtaining the representation of the ratepayers twice over. First, getting the ten members on the statutory authority, and then putting into the hands of the ratepayers, whose interests you have admitted to be antagonistic, as a whole, the power to veto the entire expenditure. I do not say you are doing this, but I am suggesting it to you?—I think it is necessary, on the principle I have ventured to lay down, that you ought not to give the right to spend the ratepayers' money to anybody over whom the ratepayers have no control. The ratepayers ought to be able to call to account those who spend their money.

7263. Do you put that proposition as far as a case where as to this very expenditure the ratepayer is represented to an extent of more than one-third of the whole?—Yes, I think even that is insufficient.

7264. I rather understood, in answer to a question of one of my colleagues, that you said personally (I should like to know if I heard accurately) that you would be content to leave that matter to the statutory authority, you being so represented?—I was not speaking of capital expenditure then at all. I was dealing with quite a subsidiary point. The question which Mr. Ellis was asking me was a question as to a temporary excess of expenditure over income and a grant in aid.

7265. I must take you then as adhering firmly to the opinion that not merely do you want ten representatives on the statutory authority, but you want in respect of capital expenditure, an absolute veto to the Council?—Yes.

7266. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to take you for a moment or two back to the report of this Rivers Committee; I have omitted to ask you one or two questions which I intended to put on that. I believe the London County Council have by the Thames Conservancy Act of 1894 a representation on the Thames Conservancy of six members?—Yes.

7267. What we have known before this Commission as the Wolfe-Barry Commission reported on the 26th March, 1896?—Yes.

7268. And made certain recommendations as to the deepening and improvement of the channel of the Thames?—Yes.

7269. That was considered by the Thames Conservancy, was it not?—Yes.

7270. On the report of their Lower River and General Purposes Committee?—Yes.

7271. That Committee of the Thames Conservancy Board suggested a modification of the Wolfe-Barry Commission proposals, did it not?—Yes, I believe so.

7272. When that was considered by the Thames Conservancy, what was the action of your representative six?—They first of all proposed that the recommendations should be carried out.

7273. I think we had better have the terms of that?—"That, having regard to the representations mentioned in the report as made to the Commission by the London Association of Shipowners and Brokers, who are stated in the report to practically represent almost the whole of the large steam vessels trading to and from the Port of London, and to the representations of the agents of the shipowners, representing the most important lines of steamers, trading to various parts of the world, as to the necessity of a navigable channel of a depth of about 30 feet, suitable for vessels of the largest draught, at least up to Gravesend, and to the concurrence expressed in paragraph 35 of their report by the Commissioners in that scheme, and in the views of the shipowners, and to the findings of the Commission in paragraph 37 of the Report, that the present channel might be easily and cheaply deepened to the extent of providing a channel sufficient for the passage of the largest vessels trading to the Port of London, at all states of the tide, and that such improvement could be maintained at comparatively small expense, this Board is of opinion that the channel up to Gravesend should be of a navigable depth of about 30 feet, and that any lesser depth will not satisfy the requirements of so important a port as London."

7274. Was that moved and seconded and supported by your representatives, with the authority of the County Council?—I should think there was no resolution of the Council.

7275. But it was in fact the action of the London County Council representatives on the Thames Conservancy Board?—It was.

7276. What was the fate of that?—That was lost, and another amendment was then moved and seconded by two other members of the Council (Mr. McDougall and Mr. Strong) to the effect that the works proposed by the Committee should be undertaken merely as the first instalment of the larger scheme.

7277. What was the fate of that?—That was lost. All the members of the Council, I believe, voted for it, but it was lost.

7278. That may be taken for what it is worth, as an indication that your representatives on the Thames Conservancy did their very best to support the Wolfe-Barry Commission?—Yes, certainly.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) My lord, I represent the same interest as this witness; perhaps your Lordship will allow me to ask him a question or two at the end?

(*Chairman.*) Yes.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) I do not know what course your lordship would like to adopt with reference to this witness?

(*Chairman.*) Will you settle it among yourselves, gentlemen. Perhaps you would like to proceed with the cross-examination?

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) The evidence of this witness is largely opinion, and I do not know how far the Commission would desire cross-examination to be directed to matters of opinion?

(*Chairman.*) Could you point out any question of fact with reference to which you would like to cross-examine.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) I should just like to ask perhaps one or two questions if I might put them now?

Cross-examined by Mr. Lewis Coward.

7279. Have you here at all the constitution of the County Council, that is to say, what the representatives

consist of—their various avocations?—I have not it here, but I could easily get it.

7280. A most valuable document was put in within my recollection, during the proceedings of the London Water Commission, showing the various avocations of your Body, and I think it might interest the Commission to know what your members really consist of?—We have a very large proportion of business men on the Council, and really all classes are represented.

7281. There are, I think, a very large number of members of the Bar and members of Parliament?—We had a very large number of candidates from members of the Bar, but we have very few members of the Bar on the Council.

7282. I think I may say without fear of contradiction that the election was conducted on purely political lines?—Certainly not.

7283. What! not the last election of the London County Council?—No, it was conducted on non-political lines, and I think the result proved it.

(*Chairman.*) This is a little wide, I think, of our inquiry.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) There was a question asked by Sir John Wolfe-Barry as to whether the ten gentlemen, who it is suggested should be on the Committee, would be able to give their time to it. I do not want, of course, to follow up matters that the Commission may think unnecessary.

7284. You told Sir John Wolfe-Barry that your proposal was that the purchase should be on arbitration terms?—Yes, if we did not come to an agreement, of course.

7285. Would you amplify a little what you mean, because we are familiar with the ideas of the London County Council of what constitutes arbitration terms. For instance, the history of arbitration clauses as regards the question of Water Companies was such, I think, that you did in every way endeavour to guard against an arbitration conducted on ordinary terms under the Lands Clauses Act. Do I understand you to say, first, that your proposal was that the whole of this property should be conveyed to you without any of the purchase-money being paid?—No. I was asked the question whether improvements were not urgent in this case, and whether it would be possible to get over the difficulty of the long delay that would occur in purchase, and I gave a suggested way in which that delay might be obviated; that was all.

7286. It is a scheme, I understand, that you simply gave on the spur of the moment?—Certainly. I was asked how the delay could be avoided, and I gave that answer.

7287. When you say arbitration terms I want to understand are those going to be Lands Clauses Act terms?—I think I should be satisfied in this case with the terms that were laid down by the Royal Commission in regard to water. The Royal Commission laid down certain principles of arbitration which I think were entirely satisfactory. They said an arbitrator would take the income of the companies, and he would decide how far that income was stable, and then fix a number of years' purchase, and that it was not a case in which the customary allowance under the Lands Clauses Act should be given.

7288. I want to appreciate your idea. The Commission on water never suggested what you suggested a short time ago, namely, that the property should be conveyed to you before the purchase-money had been paid?—I do not suggest that unless it is considered by Parliament to be to the advantage of the port.

7289. I will accept certainly the decision of Lord Llandaff's Commission on the question of the terms of purchase, but is that what you intended to convey?—I may say at once that we are not now bringing in a Bill for the purchase of the Dock Companies, and that therefore we are not going into the details of the purchase scheme at all or pretending to do so.

7290. I do not know if your scheme is abandoned at present as regards the purchase of the water companies, but that is a scheme on which you expect to spend some 40 millions of money, is it not?—Not quite so much as that, I think.

7291. That is the figure. Mr. Dickinson put it at 30 millions?—That is less than 40 millions.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) Does your Lordship think we ought to go into this.

(*Chairman.*) I do not think this is relevant.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) Only in this way, my Lord. Of course, if this large sum is to be raised by the County Council, and I believe the argument is they could do it cheaper than it could be raised in any other way, it seems to me to be material.

(*Chairman.*) I think not; I think we must hold that these questions are too general; you must restrict yourself more to matters of fact.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) There are no matters of fact at all to cross-examine upon if I am stopped in regard to this.

(*Witness.*) You are only substituting one security for another.

7292. What were you referring to when you spoke about preferences?—Preferences as to charges.

7293. But what preferences?—I think it is in evidence—the admission as to agreements for special charges.

7294. That is what you were referring to?—That is one thing I was referring to.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

7295. You have mentioned the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board as the very efficient body which you had in your mind when you proposed this scheme?—Yes.

7296. The Mersey Dock and Harbour Board have six-sevenths of their body elected from the dues payers?—That is so.

7297. Your suggested body has only one-third elected from the dues payers. Can you tell the Committee why you make the difference of six-sevenths in Liverpool and one-third in London?—Because in Liverpool they have no power of drawing on the rates, and they have no guarantee from the rates. It is an entirely independent body.

7298. In Liverpool they are able to pay their way and make large improvements solely by dues on ships and goods. You propose to go on the rates. Do you not think that London might do it on ships and goods?—Ultimately, I do. The difference is in the origin of the body. Now we are face to face with urgent improvements in the river, on which money must be spent. The facts are different in the two cases.

7299. Then I am right, am I not, that the key to the change of constitution which you propose, and the large representation which the County Council asks on the body is the fact that you intend to come on the rates instead of on the dues on the ships and goods?—Not to come on the rates, but to use the rates as security.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You mean with regard to representation on the port authority?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes, and as to the constitution of the port authority, and as to the fund from which the port authority has to get its funds.

7300. If a scheme can be devised which does not require the security of the rates, the reason for the large representation of the County Council is gone, I take it. As it is, at Liverpool, the Corporation has no representatives on the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board?—No.

7301. For the reason that the rates at Liverpool are not liable?—I do not know whether that was the reason, but that is a sufficient reason.

7302. And, if the same reason existed in London, you would not be able to suggest such a large representation of the County Council?—If the thing could be managed without the security of the rates, with equal economy, then I should not suggest the same representation.

7303. Now I just want to ask you with regard to two other matters of fact. Am I right in saying that, if a member of the County Council attends his committee meetings and does his work, it means about two and a half days a week?—Afternoons, not mornings.

7304. Do you mean five afternoons?—No, it does not mean that. Most of our committees meet in the afternoon.

7305. Assume the member does his work and attends his meetings?—He will expend three afternoons a week.

7306. Do you tell the Commission that you think

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you can rely upon getting gentlemen in addition to that to take the share of work that would be required to manage a very extensive dock?—We should have these members released from the Thames Conservancy at once.

7307. But with much more work added to them?—More important work. It does not necessarily take more time.

7308. Now one other question. Have you considered the difficulty of a publicly-elected body which might have a large constituency, managing an undertaking which employed a large amount of labour, in the case of strikes?—Yes.

7309. Do you think it is a serious matter?—It is a very important matter.

7310. In the time of the dock strike it would have been a serious matter, would it not, if the dock had been managed by a publicly-elected authority?—Yes. Of course I cannot tell what might have happened. They might not have had a strike.

7311. It is a serious consideration?—It is a serious consideration, but I am not advising that the County Council should be the authority.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

7312. Have you yourself done much business with the docks?—Yes, I have done a certain amount of business.

7313. In what way: as a merchant or shipowner?—A merchant.

7314. In what trade?—Importing goods from America and Australia. I have a house in London and a house in Liverpool.

7315. What goods are they?—All kinds of preserved provisions, canned goods, and things of that sort.

7316. Can you give us roughly an idea of the amount of your goods that come through the docks of the dock companies in a year?—No.

7317. No idea at all?—No. I have not come at all to give evidence as a trader in the matter. I have merely come to represent the Council. I have not gone into that matter at all.

7318. You are not speaking at all from the point of view of a trader in the evidence you have given?—No, certainly not.

7319. Then I pass from it. Is the evidence which you have given (which I see corresponds fairly well with the report of the Rivers Committee) based really on the information given to you as a member of the Rivers Committee?—Yes.

7320. And that is the evidence you had a resolution on, on the 24th March, 1896?—Yes.

7321. Just let me draw your attention to that. On the 24th March, 1896, the Council passed a resolution that it was to the best interests of London to get improved and cheaper dock accommodation?—Yes.

7322. When the County Council came to that resolution had they any evidence of any kind before them or was it a mere matter of opinion expressed by the members in debate?—I was not a member of the Rivers Committee at that time nor for some years afterwards. I could not answer that.

7323. That purports to be a resolution of the Council?—You are asking whether the Council had evidence before them?

7324. Yes?—They had not.

7325. Upon that that was the opinion of the Council which they came to in debate in 1896?—Yes.

7326. And upon that there was an instruction to support that resolution, was there not?—Yes.

7327. Mr. Gomme is your statistical officer?—No, Mr. Gomme is not statistical officer.

7328. I know he is not now?—I do not know that he was then. I am not sure.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) Yes, he was?—Yes, I believe he was.

7329. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) Then Mr. Gomme's duties were to get evidence to support that resolution?—Certainly not; to get evidence on the subject.

7330. General evidence on the subject?—Yes; not necessarily to support the resolution, if it was a mistake.

7331. Has anybody said that it was a mistake?—No.

7332. Not in the Council?—No; I think not.

7333. Can you give me any instruction, or give me the reference to the instructions that were given to Mr. Gomme, as to what evidence he was to prepare?—No; I have not them here.

7334. Are they in writing?—Not that I am aware of.

7335. Who gave the instructions to Mr. Gomme to get his evidence and his figures?—The Rivers Committee, I presume; but I was not then a member, and I cannot tell you.

7336. Would you tell me when you became a member of the Rivers Committee?—About fifteen months ago, I think.

7337. Quite recently?—Yes.

7338. Was that after Mr. Gomme's evidence was before the Council?—Some of it had been prepared, and some of it, of course, has been prepared since especially for this Commission, a good deal of it.

7339. But I gather that the Commission have had before them from Mr. Gomme the whole of the evidence which has been before the Council?—No.

7340. Or the Rivers Committee?—No; all the evidence that was pertinent to the reference to the Royal Commission; not necessarily all the evidence that was before the Council.

7341. Perhaps the Council were very strict as to what was evidence and what was not. I can only deal with the resolution at present. The resolution was as to improved and cheaper dock accommodation, which is only one part of this inquiry?—That is so. That was in 1896. I am dealing with the evidence. Mr. Gomme prepared very comprehensive information to enable us to deal with this reference.

7342. Has Mr. Gomme given us here all of that information which is relevant to the present Commission?—Yes; I should think so.

7343. Then the Commission are in a position to decide for themselves upon the same information as that which was before the Council?—No; because, of course, we could only give evidence that could be given by our witnesses of their own knowledge. The Commission would not have received a great deal of evidence that might be good enough evidence for the Council to consider, but which it was not for them to give as witnesses.

7344. The Commission have a great deal more evidence of facts which Mr. Gomme did not give, but have they the benefit of all Mr. Gomme's relevant evidence before them?—No, I do not know that.

7345. If not, what evidence has Mr. Gomme got that is material to this inquiry now that has not been given?—Of course, a great deal of information has been before the Rivers Committee which it has not been their duty to lay before the Commission. It was not for them to lay it before the Commission. There is a good deal which would be opinion, which was more proper to be given by other witnesses. I think we must distinguish that point. For instance, we have had here a good deal of opinion given by the dock witnesses which had not been given to us at all.

7346. I asked just now where you got the information from, and you said you got it from Mr. Gomme, and I referred to the page of your Rivers Report Committee, so that you would see. You acted on that resolution, and you instructed the statistical officer to obtain the information. Had you any other evidence before you except Mr. Gomme's?—Yes, other officers have reported, and we have had several members of the Committee who had a good deal of knowledge themselves of the practical working of the docks.

7347. Would you kindly mention the names?—There was Mr. McDougall, the present Vice-Chairman of the Council, who was chairman.

7348. What is he?—He was a miller at one time.

7349. Where?—I believe he had large premises in the Millwall Dock; and there was Mr. Matthews, who gave evidence before the Commission, and other members.

7350. The evidence that has been given by Mr. Gomme has been seen and approved by the Rivers Committee or the Council?—Yes.

7351. I think Mr. Gomme told us, if I recollect rightly, that he came here accredited, on behalf of the London County Council, or something to that effect?—Yes; he is Clerk of the Council.

7352. On behalf of the Rivers Committee, do you now rely on Mr. Gomme's so-called facts and figures?—I have no reason to do otherwise.

7353. In your view, then, Mr. Gomme's suggested facts and suggested inferences from figures are really the reasons for the scheme which you put forward?—No, not exclusively. I will not be taken to say that. There were other reasons in our minds besides that particular class of evidence.

7354. Will you kindly tell us the reason?—I have done that to the best of my ability in examination.

7355. No, there is no reason given in this report whatever for the alteration except that I give you credit for one thing—a small sum that would be saved by the cost of amalgamation—some directors' fees, I think?—It seems to me the reason for dealing with the private dock companies and the Thames Conservancy and handing over the management of the port and docks to a new public authority is stated very clearly in my evidence. The reason given is that all these bodies with one exception are financially at the end of their tether; they are not capable financially of carrying out the improvements which are necessary in the port and docks.

7356. That is your reason?—Yes.

7357. The reason is that the present dock authorities cannot raise a sufficient revenue. Is that the reason?—They are not in a position to carry out the necessary improvements. It is not a question only of revenue.

7358. Do you mean they are not in a financial position?—That is my opinion.

7359. Does that mean, or does it not, that they have got sufficient revenue at present?—I suppose it means they cannot offer sufficient security for the public. It comes to pretty much the same thing.

7360. Do you, in fact, say that there has been any mistake in the present management of the docks?—No, I am not here to do that. I have not pretended to criticise the management of the docks. It is quite enough for me that the fact is as I have stated.

7361. You have also spoken of many improvements that are wanted?—Yes.

7362. Have you any list or schedule, or have you considered the improvements?—Yes, we have.

7363. Specifically?—Yes, some of them very carefully. Some of those improvements are not improvements that the dock company can be expected to carry out. For instance, the deepening of the channel to 30ft. That is one of which we have had a careful estimate from the engineer.

7364. I will try to confine myself altogether to the dock company's case. I do not want to ask you other questions. I mean as regards the amalgamated dock company, if you please?—As regards the dock company, the evidence has been given before the Commission as to those improvements. I have not a list here, although I have carefully perused it. I see that the London and India Dock Company consider a new dock is necessary, and have a Bill in Parliament for that purpose. It is not for me to say what improvements should be carried out by the dock company, and I do not pretend to do so, but that we have considered that there are improvements proved to be necessary, and that we have considered those improvements in detail, I do assert.

7365. You have considered specific improvements in detail?—Yes, we have considered them, certainly.

7366. Before or after the evidence of Mr. Scott?—That depends upon the particular improvement you are referring to. We knew a good many of them beforehand.

7367. You knew of the Albert Dock extension?—Yes, and we knew what the Millwall Dock were doing.

7368. Will you please keep to my company—the London and India Dock Company?—I thought you were dealing with all the docks.

7369. Then the Albert Dock is the only one that you can specify as far as my company is concerned?—Of course we had to consider generally what in our opinion were the necessary improvements.

7370. Will you kindly mention what in your opinion were the necessary improvements as far as the docks of my company are concerned?—No, I think I would rather not.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, I ask the witness answer the question.

(*Witness.*) I do not pretend to be an expert on dock management. All that we have to deal with is the fact that improvements are necessary. I cannot prove that here.

(*Chairman.*) We would rather the witness was not asked engineering questions.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, if there is somebody else coming who will give us this information, I am quite content. I have to deal with witnesses as I get them.

(*Chairman.*) This witness is admittedly a witness as to questions of policy. I do not think specific alterations of particular docks come within his scope.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) The point was this: I do not want to argue it, but just to put it quite shortly to your Lordship. They say if they had got this trust they would be able to carry out the improvements necessary for the port. As regards my company I want to ask somebody (I do not care whether it comes from Mr. Wood or not) what improvements it is suggested ought to be carried out, and to find out whether we are prepared to carry them out. I do not wish to say that no improvements are necessary. My case is, that improvements are necessary. That is the position. But if some other witness will tell us what improvements are suggested, which we have not suggested, I could ask him.

(*Chairman.*) In any case I do not think we can take Mr. Wood, who has been good enough to give us his evidence to-day, as a witness on technical detail.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, I accept your Lordship's ruling.

7371. Have you, in fact, considered the proposals of the dock companies—my company, I mean?—Do you mean the proposal in the Bill, or the proposals before the Commission.

7372. It is the same—the proposal to tax barges and the goods in barges?—That was before us, but as I have already told the Commission, the Council and the Rivers Committee have not come to any decision on the matter. They felt they would require to have more information before they could come to a decision on the matter. It is a matter for the new authority to decide, not for the County Council.

7373. Do you suggest, or not, that the new authority should pay its way with, first of all, the present charges?—I really must decline to give an opinion about present charges, or what is the necessary change.

7374. Have you considered that question?—Yes; I have considered that question to this extent. We find that there is a revenue under the present charges of a certain amount—I think it is £654,000, and we have considered what could be done with that revenue. We have considered it to that extent.

7375. Then have you come to a conclusion or not, whether your proposed Trust body would pay its way with the present charges?—It seems as if it would be able to do so, as far as our calculations have gone.

7376. I think you said that at present the charges are not equally distributed or equally levied, or something of that kind?—I was referring merely by way of illustration to reasons why I thought a public body would have a somewhat better revenue than the private docks.

7377. I beg your pardon; that was not the reason. The reason you gave for the better revenue was that, with your improvements, you would bring increased trade to the dock?—Yes; that was one reason.

7378. That hinges on the improvements again?—Yes.

7379. But, if the docks carried out the improvements, the revenue should be the same, so far as it turns on the improvements?—Yes; if the docks carried out the improvement economically. Of course, there is the whole point. If the docks carried out the improvements as cheaply as the new body, they would

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reap the same advantage, but if it cost them twice as much to carry them out, of course they would not reap the same advantage; that is obvious.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, I suppose I must not ask as to the cost of carrying out the improvements by the County Council?

(*Chairman.*) You have already asked the question.

7380. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) Have you considered the present system of charging?—If you mean am I prepared to criticise the present system, I am not.

7381. Have you considered it yourself?—Yes, I have considered it.

7382. It was in reference to that, was it, that you said the charges were not equally distributed, or whatever the phrase was?—Yes.

7383. Was that with reference to the fact that more than three-fourths of the goods paid no dues or rates at all?—No, I am not expressing an opinion upon that point either one way or the other.

7384. Have you an opinion one way or the other about it?—I have no opinion as representing the Council, which has not come to any conclusion on the subject.

7385. I think Mr. Gomme has told us he found on his figures that the proportion of the trade of the Port of London was diminishing. I am sure, if I may say so, and Sir Robert Giffen will remember it because there were some questions by him on the point?—The proportion as compared with certain other ports.

7386. No; as compared with the ports of the United Kingdom?—Yes.

7387. At Question 3360 what Mr. Gomme said was this: "The statistics relating to shipping pointed in the direction, if they did not absolutely prove, that the trade of London was suffering from the condition of its port, and I pointed out that other ports of the Kingdom which have developed their docks and harbours, have secured an increased proportion of the trade of the Kingdom." Then he went on: "I think it would be hard to resist the correlative conclusion that the proportional falling back of London is due to the want of corresponding development and attention in the docks and port—"

See 7891-915.

(*Chairman.*) We hope to hear Mr. Gomme himself as to foreign ports; he is the next witness; perhaps it would be more convenient to ask him the question?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) It may be that if I mention it now I may get the information exactly in good form from Mr. Gomme.

7388. Mr. Gomme has taken out and given us figures showing that the proportion of the trade of London to the trade of the United Kingdom has decreased in the last few years. Has he in point of fact taken out a corresponding table for the trade of the docks of London?—I will ask him that question.

7389. I understand that you do not propose that the trust should take over anything but the docks mentioned in the list that you have given?—Subject to the consideration of the cases mentioned.

7390. Leaving other things open for argument?—Yes.

7391. That is as far as you are prepared to go at present?—Yes.

7392. You have taken, as I understand it, no figure at all, and you have no figure to put before the Commission as to the cost of this?—If I had I should suggest that it was not proper to put it forward.

7393. May I ask you whether or not you have considered the figure of what it would cost?—We have done so to the best of our ability for our own information.

7394. That is a figure including those docks you have mentioned and nothing else?—Yes.

7395. There is no provision for anything outside?—Not in this figure that we have considered. Of course, if we take over other docks we should also take over the revenue. If we take over the Regent's Canal and docks we should be taking over their revenue.

7396. Does that include the up-town warehouses of the dock company?—Yes, it does.

7397. The whole of their property of every kind?—Yes, this particular calculation did. Of course, that does not prejudice the question one way or the other of whether we should take over the up-town warehouses; that is a matter for consideration. I am explaining that we have calculated in such a way that it would include that.

7398. All the information you wish to lay before the Commission is simply that it is an expenditure of many millions. You do not wish to give any further information?—Of course, it was a very controversial matter in regard to water, and the Royal Commission justified us in that attitude on that question. It is a dangerous thing for a public body which may be a purchaser to name a price; it immediately becomes a minimum, and it does not seem to be wise business so to set up a price against ourselves.

7399. "It is nought, said the buyer"?—We are not saying it is nought; we are not expressing an opinion.

7400. In the duties that you are enumerating you give the provision of sufficiently equipped docks and quays. Had the Rivers Committee formulated any dock provision at the time?—No, not in the sense of having a detailed scheme. We had not gone further than to satisfy ourselves that more docks or quays were required. We had no definite scheme.

7401. When did the Rivers Committee first come to the conclusion that more docks were required?—I think they came to that conclusion when they had to consider seriously what the evidence was that they had to give before this Commission. They may have done so before, but I was not a member then.

7402. Do you suggest that the docks have been full until quite recently?—I can only answer that question from evidence given before the Commission; I do not myself know.

7403. You refer to the provision of suitably equipped docks and quays and improvements of land communication therewith. What do you mean by land communication with the docks?—Suitable roads with approaches and communication, perhaps by light railways. I will say railway communication. I am not suggesting that there is not considerable railway communication now.

7404. The road approaches are at present under the hands of the local authority?—Yes, partly inside London and partly outside.

7405. Then how do you propose to deal with that? How far is the road accommodation to extend under the new authority? Is it from the docks to London or from the docks to where?—It is merely road accommodation to facilitate the traffic, whatever that traffic may be.

7406. Take Tilbury. Do you propose to have a road from Tilbury to London?—I should not like to say that traffic could come from Tilbury in that way; it is a very great distance. I should think it would mostly come by barges.

7407. Would you say from the far end of the Albert Dock?—There is road accommodation at the Albert Dock.

7408. But you propose that the new authority shall take it over?—You are asking me to give you a lot of information as to what the new authority would consider, and what it would be absurd for us to consider, because there never may be any new authority. I could not give you any details as to what the new authority would do.

7409. You say road accommodation. What about the railway accommodation. Take Tilbury, for instance, Do you propose that the new authority should take the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway from Tilbury to London?

(*Witness.*) Perhaps it would save time, my Lord, if I mentioned in connection with these questions which counsel is asking that in response to a letter from the Commission, we have prepared a plan and a statement as to the improvements that have been made in connection with access to the docks, and as to the present position of railway communication, and perhaps it would be most useful to give that information in that way.

See 7750-68.

7410. (*Chairman.*) Do you propose to put it in?—The plan is almost completed, and the London County Council will put it in.

7411. Perhaps it would be more useful if it is put in before the appearance of the County Council witnesses. Do you propose to put it in after the gentlemen who represent the London County Council have given their evidence?—Yes.

7412. Then counsel would have no opportunity of asking questions upon it. I am afraid it would duplicate the appearance of witnesses?—It would be a very short statement.

7413. Would you like the Commission to call the engineer in reference to the question?—I think perhaps it would be well. We will hand in the statement and the plan, and then your Lordship could decide. The engineer would be a great deal more able to give information as to these roads than I can.

(*Chairman.*) Perhaps that would be the better plan, Mr. Wallace.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I quite accept that, my Lord.

7414. You talked about having gone fully into the matter of the charges, and I think your phrase was that when you have a good port authority the port was prosperous, or successful, or something of that kind. It was in answer to Mr. Ellis, I think?—I think I was speaking then of the rate of interest at which money could be raised as between the port authority and the Corporation.

7415. Will you mention to me what you consider as a good port authority; what was the good port authority you referred to?—I was speaking of authorities like the Clyde Navigation Trust and the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

7416. Any others?—The Tyne Commissioners I have some particulars about, and the Swansea Harbour Board, also.

7417. When you spoke of a good port authority, I want to know what authorities you were referring to?—I did not mean the word in any invidious sense; I merely meant that, where you had a financially strong port authority, you still paid a higher rate of interest for money raised by that authority than if it was raised on the security of the rates by the Corporation of the same town.

7418. You have not, have you, an instance of a municipal port which is a financial success?—We have hardly any municipal ports. There is Bristol.

7419. Then you have got one which is a financial success?—I was not talking about municipal ports.

7420. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Bristol is not a municipal port, is it?—Bristol is a municipally-managed port.

7420. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) Have you any port—

(*Mr. Ellis.*) What does it matter what he has got? We know all these other ports; we can form our own opinion upon them. It does not affect my mind for a moment, with all respect to Mr. Wood, what he tells us. We know from first hand about these ports; we have got it in evidence; I must submit that these questions are quite irrelevant.

(*Chairman.*) It would seem to us that the witness has been careful to limit his evidence to financial and general considerations, without any questions either of detail or municipal interest in other ports. Perhaps, Mr. Wallace, you could limit your questions to the general and financial part.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) One question will dispose of it, my Lord.

7421. Can you tell me of another port which gets charges out of one-fourth of the goods only that come into it?—No, I cannot.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

7422. Are you the father of the scheme which has been propounded here to-day, or do you merely support it?—I am one of the members of the Committee who drafted the scheme.

7423. You know the interest that I represent—the Wharfingers' Association?—Yes.

7424. You have read the evidence, I suppose, if you did not hear it—that the capital invested in 1899 of the wharves which made a return was about 8 millions?—Yes.

7425. And the total number of wharves was about 320. I suppose I shall not go far wrong if I put the capital invested in wharves and warehouses at about 10 millions. As I understand, you leave out of your scheme entirely the whole of that interest?—Yes.

7426. You ignore it as a thing that is not worth consideration?—Oh, no.

7427. Just let us see. Firstly, on your supposed representation, you do not propose that there should be a wharfinger on your Board?—No.

7428. Why? Is it because you are going to compete with them?—We do not exclude wharfingers, of course, but as such we do not put them on.

7429. But you are going to compete with them. Is not that what was present to your minds?—Yes, I suppose we are going to compete with them.

7430. And therefore you left them out?—They are not interested in the management of the docks. I do not think as wharfingers they are specially qualified to be on the Dock Trust. Of course, they might get on it by the ordinary process of election.

7431. Through your Council?—They might get on through the Council, or they might get on through the election of the payers of dock dues. They might be large payers themselves possibly.

7432. That would be because they were either shipowners or merchants, not because they were wharfingers?—That is so. As wharfingers they are not put on.

7433. You would have within certain limits the right of varying your charges?—Yes.

7434. Within your Parliamentary limits?—Yes.

7435. And your business would, of course, consist of the two things which, except for the accident of their being together now, could be separated, namely, warehousing and docking?—Yes.

7436. In regard to the warehousing part of it, if it could be separated you would be direct competitors?—Yes.

7437. Could not you so alter your charges as to penalise the outside wharfingers, and take business from them into your own warehouses?—It could be done, no doubt.

7438. You know Mr. Holland's memorandum and his phrase, which has almost become classic now: "It is the warehousing business that pays." It would be a strong temptation to you, or such portion of you as were business men, to foster the particular branch of your business which pays?—I think a public authority of the kind proposed would take a broad view of the interests of the port.

7439. But the public authority has excluded from its constitution all the other people in the same interest. That is what it has begun by doing. Do you suggest that, having excluded them, it would be likely to make concessions in their favour—that is, to rival traders?—No, I do not think they would make any concession in their favour, or have any particular interest for interfering with their business. There is plenty of business in London for all the docks and wharves, and there is more business than there appears to be accommodation for. All I mean to say is, that technically there is competition, but as a matter of practical business I do not see that this public authority would necessarily damage the wharves at all. It might do them good.

7440. As I understand, you put on the shipowners and merchants because you wanted the leaven of the practical element?—They are not put on as shipowners or merchants in the Liverpool scheme; they are put on by the constituents who are the payers of dock dues, who may appoint whom they please so long as they are qualified. Our proposition is the Liverpool model, so that they may be wharfingers, or barge-owners, or shipowners, or merchants, or anything.

7441. You say that administrative control should be left to a statutory authority, of whom ten members should be representatives of the shipowners, merchants, and others interested in the commerce of the port, elected on the Liverpool system by all who have paid in the preceding year £10 on port dues?—Yes.

7442. Port dues are ship dues are they not?—If you had an amalgamated authority covering the docks the dock dues would come in there, but the Liverpool system is different to ours.

7443. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You do not suggest that your authority should not consist in part of shipowners?—Certainly not.

7444. You have not the slightest doubt that it would consist in a large part of shipowners?—I hope so. I think we should have shipowners and merchants of all classes.

(*Mr. Harper.*) My point is that I cannot see the word there which would enable a wharfinger to be elected. I cannot see that the wharfinger pays port dues.

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(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) As I understand the witness wishes to say that he does not see any words which include shipowners and merchants.

7445. (*To the witness.*) Is that so?—They are not put on as shipowners but the electors would be largely of that class and, of course, would put on members of their own body, I should hope.

7446. (*Mr. Harper.*) They are put on as payers of port dues?—Through the electors of course.

7447. Then who pays port dues now, because this is your scheme and you must know about that?—Under that new authority certainly the shipowners would pay the new dues and the merchants who imported or exported would also pay port dues.

7448. Is that inclusive; it is nobody else?—Anyone may pay port dues, but he is not on the Board *qua* wharfinger.

7449. It is because he is something else?—Yes.

7450. With regard to your suggested one-third representation of your Council you do not suggest that members of your Council have any special qualification to enable them to assist in the management? You put them as a sort of check upon the proceedings of the Port Committee because you are finding the finance?—Some of them would, judging by past experience, have qualification.

7451. I understand that you propose to retain an absolute veto *quo ad* any capital expenditure.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We understand about that.

7452. (*Mr. Harper.*) I was going to lead up to this with regard to current expenditure, if there was any deficit do you propose that there might be a rate in aid?—As an exceptional occurrence, yes.

7453. Do you propose a veto of the Council as to what the Port Committee might do on that?—Certainly if they got a rate in aid they would have to get it through the Council.

7454. You propose identically the same veto with regard to anything that is required for further capital and what is required for current expenses?—My idea is that there should be no claim for a rate in aid. The thing should be self-supporting.

7455. But if it were necessary the Council should have the same veto?—That is so.

7456. What then is the object of having any representation at all of your Council upon the Port Committee itself if the Council is allowed to retain the veto on both branches of expenditure?—The whole basis of this scheme is that the inhabitants have an interest in the port. If they had not there would be no justification for claiming this credit. As representing their interests we ought to be on the Committee.

7457. Are you proposing that your initial capital expenditure should be raised on the security of the London County Council?—Yes, in our ordinary stock.

7458. Is that charged upon the City at all in any way?—Yes; there are exceptions; some accounts are not chargeable to the City.

7459. For this particular purpose would the City be chargeable with its proper proportion of the sum raised?—Yes, the rateable value of the City would be part of the security.

7460. What is the rateable value of the City as compared with that of the Municipal County of London outside?—I cannot give you the latest figure, but it is something about one-eighth of the whole roughly.

7461. You have never considered any question, supposing your proposals should have a harmful effect upon the wharfingers, as to what compensation would be due to them?—No.

7462. There is such a thing as first depreciating a man's property, and then buying it cheaply?—Yes.

7463. And if the docks were on that basis to start with, the wharves might follow?—There is this check upon that, that we should be calling on the ratepayers, and I think the ratepayers would have a very strong word to say on that subject. I do not think you need fear that this authority would try to make the port not self-supporting. Certainly the County Council portion of the authority would be most anxious to avoid coming on the rates, because our ratepayers far from the neighbourhood of the docks would be very critical in this matter, and would blame us very much if we put a charge upon the rates.

7464. Have you considered at all supposing a rate were made to meet any deficit, what proportion would fall upon the wharfingers' industry?—No; it would not be a very large proportion.

7465. At Question 2464 it is put by Mr. Marten Smith that there are 124 wharves, with a total rateable assessment of £197,057. At any rate, there would be a considerable sum falling upon them. It is valuable wharf property, is it not?—Yes; it is a very small portion of the rateable value of London.

7466. But, *quo ad*, any rent they had to pay, they would be paying to set up a competition against themselves?—Not to set up a competition.

Cross-examined by Mr. Loehnis.

7467. The Surrey Commercial Dock is the one exception, in your view, I believe?—Yes.

7468. In taking over their property you told the Commission that you had taken the Stock Exchange figures. You have made your calculation on the Stock Exchange value, I think?—We have taken the Stock Exchange value.

7469. That is hardly fair, is it? Have you not to take into consideration what is the present value of the land and warehouses belonging to the various docks?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I think my friend is rather going into a question of value, which is beyond this inquiry.

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) I only want to know on what basis the County Council have gone; I do not want to ask any figure.

(*Chairman.*) Has not the witness already told us that he proposed to appeal to arbitration?

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) It was only with reference to a figure which they had been considering. I suggest that a proper view to take of the properties they are going to take is not the Stock Exchange value of the stocks, but the actual present value of the land and warehouses, which in my account stand at what they were purchased at something like 50, 60, or 100 years ago.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) The witness only said that the Stock Exchange value was one way of looking at it.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) The arbitration would consider all the circumstances, and this is only an element.

7470. (*Mr. Loehnis.*) Do you suggest that the Surrey Commercial Docks have not been properly and economically managed?—No; I have made no hostile suggestion to any of the docks.

7471. Do you suggest that the body which you are going to appoint to manage the various docks will be a bit better fitted to deal with the timber trade of London, which at the present moment is managed by the gentlemen in the timber trade?—No; we do not. We take a much larger view of it. It is a question of the port as well as the docks—not of one particular trade.

7472. (*Chairman.*) I think you told us just now that you preferred not to mention any figure with reference to the amount of capital which might be expended in relation to this new authority?—Yes.

7473. Would you give us an idea of what rate you think would raise it?—Our last loan was raised a few days ago; 3 per cent. at 98. The amount was two millions, and that was subscribed three times over, and the thing was closed within two days.

7474. You call it many millions?—The year before we raised five millions, and I think that amount was subscribed five times. This would be a much larger sum.

7475. The only thing that one can go by is what you have lately raised money at for two millions in the money market?—Yes.

7476. Do you suggest that the stock should be a redeemable stock?—Our stock is redeemable at the option of the Council.

7477. But not at the option of the holder?—Not at the option of the holder. Some of our stock is redeemable at a fixed date, but we have an irredeemable stock in the last three or four years which we may redeem after 1925. Of course we have raised money on very much much more advantageous terms. Our 2½ per cent. stock

stood considerably over par when the money market was easier. Of course, I propose to have a sinking fund on the annuity system spread over 100 years.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, I wish to say on behalf of my friend Mr. Claude Baggallay, who appears for the Thames Conservancy, that he has been unfortunately kept elsewhere. Would your Lordship allow him to ask any questions that he might think fit later, if the Witness happens to be here?

(*Chairman.*) I am afraid we can give no promise to that effect.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) If the Witness is here perhaps your Lordship would allow him to ask a question? I do not want to ask the Witness to attend specially.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) With regard to the question that was put just now, may I say what the Manager of the Stock Exchange said when the question arose on the Water Commission of the raising by the County Council of 40 millions?

(*Chairman.*) Who is the Manager of the Stock Exchange?

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) Mr. Banbury. This is the finding of the Commission: "He informed us that the 2½ per cent. stock of the London County Council was now issued at a minimum of 93, and if they wanted to borrow as much as 40 millions they would probably have to issue it at 86 per cent.

(*Chairman.*) That is a question of opinion on the part of the Manager.

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(*Witness.*) I should like to say this: In this case of purchase the greater part of the capital we should have to raise would be merely in substitution of other securities. We should be substituting one security for another; we should not be putting a fresh loan on the market, and, of course, the matter might be capable of adjustment with the owners of dock securities.

7478. (*Chairman.*) You mean to suggest that so far as the dock capital is concerned, this would be a conversion scheme?—It might be.

Re-examined by Mr. Daldy.

7479. This omission of the wharfingers from your board was not for the purpose of facilitating competition with them or anything of that sort?—No.

7480. Have you considered a public authority of the kind you suggest, specially competent to deal with such questions as these; for instance, the provision of communication in the various docks?—Yes. There is no subject to which we are giving more attention now than the question of communication.

7480a. The change of system in the practice of the port, if a change is called for. If the port, for instance, required diminution of the barges or anything of that kind, would that be much better considered by a public general authority of this sort, than by a number of separate private interests?—Yes, I should think so. Of course, there would be absolute equality with the public authority necessarily. There would be no special arrangements.

(Adjourned to Wednesday next, May 22, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

Wednesday, 22nd May, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

22 May 1901.

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

(*Chairman.*) Before we proceed with the business of to-day, I should like to be allowed on behalf of my colleagues and myself to express our deep sense of regret at the sudden death of Sir Courtenay Boyle. Those among us who had the privilege of his acquaintance can appreciate the services he rendered the country in the office he filled with such ability, while the fact that this Royal Commission has been appointed under the auspices of the Board of Trade, in the affairs of which he played such a conspicuous part, renders us more particularly sensible of the loss we have sustained. I feel confident I am expressing the sentiment of my colleagues, of the learned Counsel present, and all who knew him, when I venture to give utterance to these few words of sincere regret.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) My Lord, I am sure that we on this side of the table all share in the regret which you have expressed on behalf of the Commission at the loss which the Board of Trade and the country have sustained through the death of Sir Courtenay Boyle.

Mr. H. C Baggallay

Mr. HENRY CHARLES BAGGALLAY recalled.

7481. (*Chairman.*) You desire, I believe, to make some correction in your evidence?—Yes. In reply to Sir Robert Giffen, at Question 6718, in which he asked me whether to some extent that particular week would not be a fair average, I replied, "No." The fact was Sir Robert asked me to make certain calculations which seemed to prove that the number of locks were over 20,000 instead of the 10,000 that I had given. I thought I had made a mistake from these figures, and therefore I accepted the correction, but I find on referring to my evidence it was not so, for I stated that the number of barges in and out in that particular week was 5,555, and from that I got my averages; but when I came to deal with the actual figures of the year I gave the number of loaded vessels that arrived and the number of barges that entered. Therefore, naturally, the figures were only one-half. Every barge which came in had to be locked out again. Therefore that would give the 20,000 against the 10,000. In dealing with the figures I merely took the actual figures of the barges of the year, so that that week was an average week, and not as I stated at the time not an average week.

Sir F. D. Dixon-Hartland, Bart., M.P.

Sir FREDERICK DIXON DIXON-HARTLAND, Bart., M.P., recalled and further examined.

7482. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us in order to state the financial proposals of the Thames Conservancy?—Yes.

See 5460

7483. Will you give us them?—As you are aware the Conservators have furnished the Commissioners with an estimate prepared by their engineer, which shows that the cost of deepening the river to 30 feet at low water of ordinary spring tides up to the Royal Albert Dock, allowing for the necessary training walls between Canvey Island and Shoeburyness, would be £1,649,838, and that the cost of providing new moorings in the positions indicated on the chart which was handed in by the Secretary of the Conservators would be £45,000, making a total of £1,694,838. The consequent increased expenditure on revenue account is estimated to reach at least £100,000 per annum, and this would of course be further increased if the cost of the above-mentioned new works is from any cause exceeded. This amount added to the average expenditure, on that account of £75,000 for the five years to the 31st December, 1899, will bring the total annual sum to be provided to about £235,000.

7484. Have you any details to give us as to why a larger expenditure is required?—The difference is the interest and sinking fund, on the 1¾ millions added to the cost which we already expend. The average

receipts of the Conservators on revenue account for the past five years amounted to £87,000, which, deducted from the above-mentioned sum of £235,000, leaves a balance of £148,000, say £150,000, per annum to be raised, that is if the estimates are kept to. As stated in the evidence given by their secretary the Conservators are empowered to demand tonnage dues in respect of vessels entering and leaving the port, as follows: To and from coastwise ports and foreign ports north of Ushant, one halfpenny per registered ton. To or from all other ports three farthings per registered ton, subject to the exemptions mentioned in Section 155 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894. The Conservators have not power to levy dues on vessels for use of moorings for loading or discharging cargo in the river, nor have they power to charge dues on goods. When the ships load and discharge in the river they get off without any payment whatever. The Conservators have power to charge for use of moorings in respect of vessels not paying tonnage dues, but they have no power to charge dues on the latter class of vessels for the use of the river except on those trading above London Bridge. The Conservators have carefully considered the subject of the provision of the necessary funds to meet the additional expenditure on revenue account which would be entailed by the carrying out of the proposed additional works. They would suggest for the consideration of the Commissioners that the amount could be obtained as follows:—(*a*) By increasing the tonnage dues on vessels. We should increase the tonnage dues from a halfpenny per ton register on those coastwise to three farthings; and from three farthings per register ton foreign to a penny. By these means, taking the average amount received for tonnage dues in the five years ending 1899, £24,000 additional revenue would be provided. (*b*) By the abolition of the exemption from tonnage dues of certain vessels mentioned in Section 155 of the Thames Conservancy Act with the exception of fishing boats. The number of vessels under 50 tons—the lowest classification — registered at the various Custom Houses in the local districts which principally trade with the port is 2,293, of a total tonnage of 73,287. Deduct 140 vessels between 45 and 50 tons, which pay dues as per returns furnished by Customs, which leaves 2,153 vessels; also deduct 500 yachts and tugs, and it comes down to 1,653, or, say, 1,600 vessels of average tonnage of 40 tons, and making, say, 20 voyages each per annum—that is, $1,600 \times 40 \times 20$, making 1,280,000 tons per annum. This at a halfpenny a ton would give £2,666. Then vessels bringing in corn coastwise I estimate at 1,133 vessels of a total tonnage of 103,115 registered tons at a halfpenny a ton, say, £250. Then vessels plying to outports for passengers only, which should pay the same as cargo vessels, would bring in, say, £1,000. That makes £4,000 per annum. Then (*c*) By the imposition of dues for use of river and moorings by vessels not paying tonnage dues. This would bring in £10,000. (*d*) By the imposition of dues on vessels for the use of moorings for loading or discharging cargo. That is, we consider it most unjust that these vessels should use the buoys and use the river in this way, and pay nothing for it. We consider that as they use it as a dock they should pay for the use of those moorings for loading and discharging cargo. That will bring us in about £15,000. Then there only remains this. We are, I believe, the only river where no dues are paid for goods, and we see no reason why, if the goods have the advantage of the port, they should not be obliged to pay something for the use of the river. We propose to put in a tariff which would be about one-fifth of what is charged in the Tyne. Of course, there are various things that come into London which are rather different from what go into the Tyne. This is only just an idea as showing how we can get a charge on goods without any detriment to the trade of London. We propose to put on about one-fifth of what is charged in the Tyne. At the Tyne rates the dues would come at the present moment to £553,500. That you see would bring in on the same principle as that which has worked so well there, about £100,000; that would make the two sides balance, and we should be able then to carry out the works if the Commission order us to do so. I may say that we are quite willing to carry out these works. We have always thought they should be carried out if we had the money to do it, and we are prepared to do it, and consider that we should be able to do our duty as well in the future as we have done in the past. There is one more remark if your Lordship will allow me to make it. This is my own idea. It will naturally occur that if the ships and the goods are to pay an increased taxation, they should have something to say with regard to it, and personally I should think it would be a fair thing that we should double the representation of the shipowners, and give the merchants another six too, so that they will be both there to watch their own interests in carrying out this scheme which we have the honour to lay before you.

Sir F. D. Dixon-Hartland, Bart., M.P.

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7485. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I wish to ask you a few questions with reference to the Parliamentary attitude. Will you refer to Questions 1612 to 1624 in the evidence which you gave when we had the advantage of seeing you before. These proposals that you now place before us would require further Parliamentary powers, would they not?—Clearly, if you recommended them.

7486. That is exactly what I am wanting to get at. They would require a Bill in Parliament?—Yes.

7487. Do you propose to promote that Bill?—It would be useless our trying to promote it. It must be a Government Bill.

7488. These proposals stand in the same relation to the procedure you recommended or suggested at Questions 1612 to 1624 as your own proposals; that is to say, you would go to the Government and ask them to promote a Bill?—Yes, we should do that; but if you were good enough to strengthen our hands by recommending this scheme, then naturally we should have the advantage of going to the Government and saying, "The Commission recommend this. Will you take it up?"

7489. You want us to help you, in fact?—Yes, certainly.

7490. It would not be a private Bill; it would be a public Bill?—We would not mind a private Bill; but it would be perfectly useless.

7491. But you do adhere to the position you took up?—Yes, we are quite willing to do everything if we can get the money. It must be done by this Commission, or in some such way, so that we have some power behind us.

7492. (*Mr. Peel.*) You said that this new arrangement would give you £160,000 a year more?—Yes, about.

7493. I only wanted to know whether in that estimate you take into account the increased charge of keeping the river channel at that further depth as well as of making it?—Yes, we do. That would come into the yearly sum. We have provided a sum for keeping it in repair when it is once done.

7494. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Provided the river was deepened to the extent that you have suggested here, would this sum of money still be required to keep it deepened after it had been done?—The sum of money is to form the dredging works. When they are once made there would be only the expenditure of keeping it in order by our regular dredgers and things. We have provided a sum of money for keeping it up after it has once been done.

7495. Would this sum of money that you say you require per annum go on after it was actually completed?—Not after the sinking fund had been paid off. It is wanted for interest. We should have to raise this £2,000,000 of money or something like it, and we have to pay the interest and the sinking fund upon it. It would last as long as the interest and sinking fund were required.

7496. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Could you give us any idea of what the increase on the tonnage dues on vessels would be under the first heading?—It would be an increase of from a halfpenny per ton register coastwise to three farthings; and from three farthings on the foreign register to one penny. That will produce £24,000.

7497. What would be the effect of the abolition of the exemption under your heading (b)?—£4,000.

7498. Then by the imposition of dues for the use of river and moorings by vessels not paying tonnage dues?—We ought to get £10,000 by that. We have worked it out.

7499. And by the imposition of dues on vessels for the use of moorings for loading or discharging cargo?—That would leave about £100,000, which we should get by charging about one-fifth of what the Tyne charge upon all goods coming into the river. I have here a list of charges on the Tyne. Our Secretary was Deputy Secretary of the Tyne for a great number of years before he came to us, and he is thoroughly up in the working of how the tax upon these goods is obtained.

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It would work on the principle of about one-fifth of what the Tyne charge is.

7500. Is that put upon all goods coming coastwise as well as from foreign countries into London?—We have not been able to get the coastwise figures on the Thames, but we should charge coastwise too. At any rate, we should make it as light as we could so long as we got £100,000.

7501. Your object is to get a sum of £100,000 by dues of some kind?—Yes, by dues on goods. We want £160,000 to pay our interest, sinking fund and working expenses.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

7502. Are those proposals your own, or are they fortified by a resolution of the Thames Conservancy?—They are all resolutions of the Thames Conservancy, with the exception that it was my own suggestion that it seemed fair if these gentlemen were taxed that they should have some representation. That was an idea of my own.

7503. The resolution as to raising money is a recent resolution, I suppose?—Yes.

7504. Have you considered at all what the effect of putting this extra charge on goods of £100,000 a year would be as regards foreign ports?—It has been brought to my knowledge (I do not know whether I can give the exact facts) that, being the only river which has no charge on dues whatever, it would not be more onerous to people using this river than it would to any other place.

7505. You do not mention anything about raising capital funds?—We should naturally have to raise capital funds, and this money that we get is, firstly, to raise the capital fund and to pay interest on it, and to pay off a sinking fund, and the balance is to keep up the works that are carried out by this money, so that they may always be effective. We raise it naturally on the security of the dues the same as we have done before.

7506. I suppose there is some information as to the rate at which you have raised loans before, and the rate at which you would be able to raise money?—Last time we were very lucky. It was done very well; we got £107 at 3 per cent., but I am afraid we shall not do it so well this time. I think we shall not get it so well as that.

7507. You cannot raise it on the same terms as the County Council?—I think we could, but we have based our calculations on a 4 per cent. loan in order to have a good margin.

7508. About how many years would the improvement that is mentioned here be spread over in your programme?—I should think about ten years, and it would be a great advantage in doing it in that way, for this reason. I daresay you are aware that retaining walls are very important on the Essex coast. They broke down, causing half Essex to be overflowed in the time of Queen Anne, were put up again then, and those walls are naturally not so strong to-day as they were then. So we shall have to take it gently, so as not to upset the whole of those walls; but in ten years we should be able to do the whole thing. We should begin at once if we had the powers.

7509. How do you propose to collect the principal portion of the river dues? Would it be by means of the dock companies?—We must work it in what would be the best way; I do not know yet; I have not worked that out; but in many places going up river we have to do that collecting. We take the tolls as they pass. We would work out some system which would be no impediment to trade.

7510. If you raise this £100,000 and the dock companies get a further charge in order to do the necessary work at their docks, there would be a very substantial increase in charges on goods?—Ours is very small, and I cannot say what the docks are proposing, or what the Commission will say with regard to the docks. We are only getting sufficient to do the dredging, which we consider we ought to do.

7511. Your proposal, then, is not with reference to any alterations in the docks at all?—No.

7512. You stand entirely independent of that?—Entirely.

7513. You leave that out of your estimate altogether?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Porter.

7514. You propose to give shipowners and merchants increased representation?—That is my idea.

7515. I wanted to know whether it was your idea or that of the Conservancy?—It is simply in this way, that I thought if the Commission were good enough to approve of the scheme they might say: "We think if we give you this extra taxation you ought to give a little extra representation." I only put it as an idea of my own for the consideration of the Commission.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

7516. I understood that so long as you get the sum which you have named by tonnage dues and in other ways, you are not very particular from whose hand it came?—I do not quite understand you.

7517. Whether you collect it yourself, or whether the dock company or other body collect it, does not matter to you?—I have never said that.

7518. Would you collect it yourself?—I like to collect my own money.

7519. Where would you take it in the case of a foreign ship going out?—We have no objection to make an arrangement with another body in any way whatever, but we should like to have power over our own purse. I daresay we should be quite able to come to a very amicable arrangement with the docks, so that there would be one collection, and there would be no difficulty of any sort.

7520. Have you considered the question whether it is at all desirable that the docks should be under one authority?—Yes.

7521. Have the Conservancy, as a body, considered that?—Yes.

7522. What resolution have they come to in regard to that?—We wish to be left alone to do our work as well in the future as we have done it in the past; we do not want to interfere with anybody else.

Cross-examined by Mr. Whitehead.

7523. With regard to the proposed dues on goods, I did not gather from you whether you proposed to confine that to imports or to include exports as well?—All.

Re-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

7524. With regard to the separate authority, would that have any direct bearing upon the upper river navigation?—On the lower river it would have an immense bearing. If the upper river were to be separated from the lower river they have no interest in allowing the water which is so important to the lower river to come down. All their interest would be to get as much income as they could, because they are a very poor body. They get nothing worth speaking of from the pleasure traffic and barges. Almost the whole of their income is derived from water companies, and if they were separated from the lower river their interest would be to get as much as they could from the water companies, and not to send water down the lower river. It will also become a very serious question, because if Parliament should decide that water was to come from any other source besides the Thames, of course, the water companies or the body who succeeds them would not then be anxious to pay for both sources of supply.

7525. Putting it shortly, it comes to this, that it is very inadvisable to consider the separation of the lower navigation from the upper navigation without considering fully the bearing it would have upon the position of the upper navigation and the relations of the two bodies covering the two parts of the river after a separation took place?—It was thoroughly threshed out in the Bill of 1894, and it was brought up in the House of Commons again about three years ago, and Mr. Ritchie said it had been so thoroughly examined that he utterly declined to entertain it.

7526. There was one point referred to by my learned friend, Mr. Daldy, with regard to raising capital. At what price was your existing Thames Conservancy stock placed?—At 107, I think.

7527. I think it was 107 and a fraction?—Yes.

7528. That is a three per cent. stock, is it not?—Yes.

7529. Do you happen to know what that stock is standing at to-day?—There are no transactions in it, I think. Everybody considers it so good that they hold it.

7530. It is a stock which has been purchased to hold?—Yes.

7531. There are practically no dealings in it?—There are practically no dealings in it.

7532. That was issued at over 107?—Yes.

7533. It was Three per Cent. Stock?—Yes.

7534. And it is redeemable in either 50 or 60 years, I think?—Under the Act it is 60 years.

7535. You are putting aside a sum at the present time for the redemption of that, which works out to something under 5s. per cent.?—We are putting by a fund which will redeem it, as a matter of fact, in 50 years.

7536. You do not anticipate, I take it, that you could issue another three per cent. loan at the present moment on such favourable terms as over 107, but still your borrowing powers have been shown to be easily exercisable in the past?—I think at 98 we could easily float a three per cent. loan.

7537. Your existing borrowing powers under the Act of 1894 are not exhausted, I think?—There is £100,000 left.

7538. Do you happen to know the date when that loan was placed. Was it either January, 1895, or January, 1896?—It was January, 1895, the year I became chairman.

7539. As to the promotion of any Bill which might have to be promoted, supposing this Commission recommended a Bill, I take it in the first place you would consider it necessary that a Bill which increased taxation on shipowners frequenting the port and coming from all parts, and upon goods belonging to owners in all parts, should be a public Bill rather than a private Bill?—Clearly. We could not pass it.

7540. If it were a public Bill do you see any hope of being able to pass such a Bill, unless it were promoted by the Government?—No. I do not know whether Mr. Ellis would help us.

7541. If this Commission recommended it, would you do your utmost to help the passing of such a Bill?—Clearly, and I would take charge of it in the House if the Government wished it.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You suggested, Mr. Baggallay, in a question which you put to the witness, that it would be necessary before considering any Trust, which you know is one of the proposals the County Council have made, that the relations between the authority of the upper and lower river should be thoroughly considered.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That is my suggestion.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) And you further suggested that that had been fully considered in 1894.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) It was considered to a certain extent in 1894, when there was a proposal to separate the portions of the river, and place them under different authorities.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What I wish to ask you is, whether you propose to adduce any evidence here as to those relations, or whether you propose to comment upon the matter in a speech.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I think it is quite sufficient to comment upon it. Until a definite proposal is made I would not care to take up the time of the Commission with it.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) If you thought it important you would reserve the right to comment upon it.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Quite so.

Mr. ROBERT PHILIPSON re-called and further examined.

7542. (*Chairman.*) You are secretary to the Conservators of the River Thames?—Yes.

7543. I understand you wish to draw attention to several matters that have been referred to by witnesses who have appeared before the Commission?—Yes.

7544. Do you wish, in the first place, to refer to the subject of charges for services in mooring and unmooring vessels at public moorings where buoys are not provided?—Yes, that is referred to at Questions 2334, 2369 to 2381, 3434, and 3532.

7545. Will you tell us where those moorings are situate?—These moorings are situated as follows:—South side: Battle Bridge, Upper; Battle Bridge, Lower; Mill Stairs; East Lane, Upper; East Lane, Lower; Fountain Hole; Platform; King's Stairs, or Prince's Stairs, Upper; Prince's Stairs, Middle; Prince's Stairs, Lower; Church Hole; Mill Hole, Upper (or Hanover Hole); Mill Hole, Lower. North side: Alderman's; Hermitage, Upper; Hermitage, Lower; Union Stairs, Upper; Union Stairs, Lower; Tower Stairs, Upper; Tower Stairs, Lower; Bell Wharf; Stone Stairs; Ratcliff Cross. To moor a vessel at these tiers the ground chains, put down by and at the expense of the Conservators and maintained by them, have to be picked up and the ship made fast to them by means of bridle chains. I have a sketch here which I can hand to the Commission. (*The witness handed in a sketch of a mooring, ground chain, and bridle chain.*) The Conservators have never undertaken the work of making vessels fast to the groundwork of the tiers. For the last sixty years or more this service has been performed, and the necessary chains, lighters, and anchors and boats provided, and the ships berthed by men not in the employment or pay of the Conservators. The names of the persons at present engaged in this work are as follows, and the whole of the men have been appointed by the Conservators on the recommendation of the Harbour Master to take charge of the various moorings during pleasure:—T. Laws, Battle Bridge, Upper; S. R. Walker (employs two hands), Battle Bridge, Lower; J. W. Rooke (employs two or three hands), Mill Stairs; A. J. Lloyd (employs two or three hands), East Lane, Upper; G. Voss (and two hands), East Lane, Lower; R. Deal (employs two or three hands), Fountain Hole, Platform, King's Stairs; G. Rugg (and four hands), Prince's Stairs, Middle; Prince's Stairs, Lower; Church Hole; Mill Hole, Upper; Mill Hole, Lower; Bell Wharf; Stone Stairs; Ratcliff Cross; S. Griggs (and one hand), Tower Stairs, Upper; Tower Stairs, Lower; C. Gowens (and four hands). Alderman's; Hermitage, Upper; Hermitage, Lower; Union Stairs, Upper; Union Stairs, Lower. There does not appear to be any uniform scale for the services of the men and the use of the requisite plant. The following charges have been furnished to me by the principal mooring man as being those generally made, namely:—

For steamers regularly trading:—
An all-round charge of 1*l.* irrespective of tonnage.

For steamers casually using the moorings:—

	£	s.	d.
Up to 900 tons burden	1	0	0
900 tons and up to 2,000 tons	1	10	0
2,000 tons and upwards	2	0	0
For sailing vessels:—			
Up to 70 tons burden	0	7	6
70 tons and up to 150 tons	0	10	0
150 tons and upwards	0	12	6

These charges (in the fixing of which the Conservators do not appear to have had any part) are made irrespective of the time the vessel remains at the moorings, and uses the bridle chains, and are not for the use of the moorings, as is erroneously stated on the form of account of some of the men. In rendering the account some of the men have used the expression "for use of moorings," but that is not so. This form of account has now been altered to read, "For services in mooring and unmooring Ss. ———, and supplying bridle chains for the purpose." The nature of the work renders it necessary for the men to be afloat on each tide, and for the charges mentioned every vessel has to be moored both head and stern, and also cast off when leaving the moorings. No objections to the charges made have been received by the Conservators except from one firm. The Harbour Master reports that it would not be practicable to provide buoys at the moorings, as, if this were done, barges would constantly make fast to them, to the inconvenience and possible exclusion of ships. The number of vessels using the moorings in question, between the 1st August and 31st October, 1900, was 647, with a net registered tonnage of, say, 348,000 tons. As I stated in my previous evidence (Question 19), the only power the Conservators possess for charging a mooring rate is in Section 157 of their Act, and this power has not been exercised by them. The levying of a charge was some years ago fully discussed, but after consideration it was not thought desirable to go on with it. In connection

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with this matter it may be pointed out that if the men were not in attendance at the moorings to make the vessels fast, this would have to be done by the ship's crew, and could only be performed by them with great difficulty. The Conservators have before them the question of the advisability of themselves providing chains and craft, and appointing men in their own service to attend to the moorings and of levying fixed charges for the services rendered to the ships.

7546. Have you anything to say with reference to the complaint of pilots as to danger of navigating vessels on information supplied by the Conservators, referred to at Questions 2154 to 2157?—I should like to read a letter and the reply thereto with reference to that. It is as follows: "Thames Conservancy, Victoria Embankment, 4 December, 1900. Sir,—I am desired by the Conservators of the River Thames to state that their attention has been drawn to the remarks made by Mr. J. G. S. Anderson in the evidence he gave before the Royal Commission on the Port of London on the 27th ultimo (Questions 2154 to 2157) to the effect that the pilots employed by the Orient Steam Navigation Company state that the company's vessels cannot be safely navigated on information supplied by the authority of the River Thames. The Conservators will be much obliged if the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House will be so good as to state whether they have received any reports from the pilots bearing out the statement in question, and, if so, to furnish the Conservators with particulars of such reports. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, (Signed) R. PHILIPSON, Secretary. To the Secretary, Trinity House, E.C." The reply to that letter was: "Trinity House, London, E.C., 5th December, 1900. Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th inst., drawing the attention of the Elder Brethren to a statement made by Mr. J. G. S. Anderson to the Royal Commissioners to the effect that the pilots employed by the Orient Steam Navigation Company state that the company's vessels cannot be safely navigated on information supplied by the authority of the River Thames, and requesting that the Elder Brethren will be good enough to state whether they have received any reports from the pilots bearing out that statement, and, if so, that you may be furnished with particulars thereof; and I am to acquaint you that no reports, verbal or otherwise, of any kind bearing upon the subject have been received at this House or come within the knowledge of the Elder Brethren. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, (Signed) CHARLES A. KENT. To the Secretary, Thames Conservancy, E.C."

7547. Do you wish to say something with regard to Question 3534 as to the attention of the Conservators being called in 1896 to the insufficient depth of water at Bell Wharf Tier, Ratcliff, and nothing being done?—On the 8th October, 1896, the Tyne Steam Shipping Company, Limited, stated that their steamers used Stone Stairs Tier, which is right off Free Trade Wharf (not Bell Wharf Tier), Ratcliff, and requested the Conservators to deepen the tier so that steamers could lie there in safety. The Conservators were advised by their engineer that the tier might be dredged to a depth of 18ft., and on the 22nd October they asked the company whether this would meet their requirements. The company replied in the affirmative, and thanked the Conservators for their action in the matter. They added, however, that as the trade was busy at the time, any interference with the tiers would cause very great inconvenience, and asked that the work might not be put in hand until they again addressed the Conservators. No further communication has up to the present been received from the company on the subject.

7548. Then have you anything to say with reference to the alterations in public stairs mentioned at Question 3536?—At that question a statement was made that before an alteration in the position of a set of public stairs at Ratcliff could be effected, the consents of a number of authorities would have to be obtained. Of the authorities named, the Vestry, the District Board of Works, the magistrates in petty sessions, and the magistrates in quarter sessions, could only have a voice so far as the land approach to the stairs might be affected. The Conservators' consent is all that would be required for the alteration of the stairs themselves, and no charge of any kind would be made in respect of such consent. If the watermen plying at the stairs were prejudiced in the earning of their livelihood by any alteration of this nature, it is probable that a claim would be made by them for some compensation.

7549. Have you anything to say with reference to Questions 3723 and 3724, as to the speed of steamers?—The bye-laws of the 18th March, 1880, contained two separate regulations as to speed as follows:—Bye-law 3: Every steam vessel navigating the river shall be navigated with care and caution, and at a speed and in a manner which shall not endanger the safety of other vessels or moorings, or cause damage thereto, or to the banks of the river. Bye-law 15: Steam vessels navigating the river between Barking Creek and London Bridge, other than river passenger steamers in smooth water only, shall never exceed a speed of seven statute miles per hour over the ground, whether with or against the tide. The penalty for an infraction of either of these bye-laws was limited to £5. As a matter of practice, proceedings were in nearly every case taken under bye-law 3, the scope of which is much wider than that of bye-law 15. Furthermore, difficulty was experienced in obtaining evidence as to speed, sufficiently precise to ensure convictions. Representations having been made by the Thames Traffic Committee, 1879, as to the inadequacy of the penalty, the Conservators, when before Parliament in 1883 inserted in their Bill which became the Thames Act, 1883) a provision in similar terms to bye-law 3, and the penalty fixed by the Act was increased to £20, and thenceforward proceedings were taken under the Act, and not under the bye-laws. When the Conservators consolidated their powers in 1894, a provision similar to that contained in the Act of 1883 was inserted, and when revising their bye-laws in 1898 the Conservators omitted the bye-laws from the new code, as they were unnecessary. Every case reported to the Conservators, either by their officers or other persons on the river, of the improper navigation of any vessls. is referred to the solicitor with instructions to proceed should the evidence justify such a course, and since 1895 20 convictions have been obtained. Numerous complaints have from time to time been made by the owners of craft which have sustained damage from the wash from steamers, but although the Conservators have in all cases signified their readiness to institute proceedings in respect of the breach of the Act if the required evidence was forthcoming, the complainants frequently declined to come forward with the evidence necessary to enable proceedings to be taken, and in many cases the Conservators have reason to believe compensation was received from the owners of the offending steamers, and for that reason the complainants did not proceed with their complaints to the Conservators. When the Conservators know they are being set in motion solely with a view to civil proceedings for damage they decline to prosecute. This has not infrequently happened.

7550. Do you wish to say anything with reference to Questions 3962, 3975, 3976, 3977, as to vessels laid up?—Two of the "Belle" line of steamers lay last winter at the moorings off Messrs. Yarrow's and Stewart's shipyards at Blackwall, undergoing repairs. These moorings were placed specially for vessels under repair at the yards. When unoccupied the moorings are available for vessels trading, which, however, make but little use of them. The General Steam Navigation Company's steamers lie alongside the company's hulk at Deptford, which is moored off their own premises.

7551. Do you wish to refer to the replies given to Question 4393 and Question 4439 with regard to the subject of lights on the river?—Section 137 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, confers on the Conservators the power of requiring lights which interfere with the navigation to be screened, altered, or removed. The terms of the section are as follows:—The Conservators may by notice in writing require any person placing or using on or near the Thames below Teddington Lock any light which is in the opinion of the Conservators calculated to mislead persons navigating on the Thames below Teddington Lock or to interfere with the safe navigation of vessels upon the Thames below Teddington Lock from and after the receipt of such notice, to screen, alter, extinguish, remove, or discontinue such light, and if any person for the space of three days after the receipt of such notice refuse or fail to screen, alter, extinguish, remove, or discontinue any light so placed or used by him, or if any person at any time after screening, altering, extinguishing, removing, or discontinuing any light with respect to which he shall have received any such notice, replace or again use such light or place, or use any other light in lieu thereof, so that the same in the opinion of the Conservators is calculated to mislead persons navigating on the

Thames below Teddington Lock, or to interfere with the safe navigation of vessels upon the Thames below Teddington Lock, such person shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds, and to a daily penalty not exceeding the like amount. The Conservators' officers in the harbour service report to the chief office any light which in their opinion is calculated to mislead persons navigating the river or to interfere with the safe navigation of vessels. In addition the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House forward to the Conservators each year a list of all lights to which the pilots have taken exception on the occasion of their annual examination. Notice in writing is at once given to the persons responsible for the lights to either screen or remove the same, and each case is pursued until the Harbour Master certifies that the necessary screening, shading, or other alteration has been made. Up to the present the Conservators have been able to get this done without having recourse to legal proceedings.

7552. Then with regard to the discharge of hoppers in the Barrow Deeps mentioned at Questions 4137 to 4144?—With respect to the evidence given by the pilots on 25th March, the hoppers and hopper barges engaged on the river are owned by the London County Council, the London and Tilbury Lighterage Contracting and Dredging Company, Limited, and by the Thames Conservancy. The hoppers of the London County Council carry sludge, separated at the Barking and Crossness Outfall Works from the sewage of the metropolis, and the other hoppers carry dredgings from the docks and the river. Under the sanction of the Board of Trade the vessels are allowed to discharge their cargoes in the Barrow Deeps below the jurisdiction of the Conservators, within an area marked out by buoys. The Conservators felt the necessity of keeping the movements of these vessels under observation with a view to deter the masters of the vessels from discharging their cargoes elsewhere than within the appointed limits. For this purpose they initiated a system by which a distinctive signal is assigned to each vessel, and this signal has to be given both on the downward and upward journeys to the "Mouse" Lightship, which is stationed just above and in sight of the discharging ground. The crew of the lightship take the bearings of each hopper when discharging, and make a weekly return of the same to the Conservators. A weekly return is also made by the owners of the hoppers, and these are carefully compared and any irregularity is thus detected. This system has been working since 1899, and on four occasions in that year the hoppers of a company were detected discharging outside the buoyed area. These cases were brought to the notice of the company and of the Board of Trade, and no irregularity has been discovered since 17th June, 1899.

7553. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With reference to the levying of a charge for moorings you say that the question was some years ago fully discussed, but after consideration it was not thought desirable to go on with it. Can you give me a reason why it was not thought desirable?—No, I cannot; it was before my time. I mentioned in my examination on the first day that I had found a minute on the subject, but there were no reasons given in the minute.

7554. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) To whom do the bridle chains belong?—The mooring men.

7555. Do they put them down of their own free will of any size or strength?—The harbour master examines them.

7556. In case of an accident to the moorings who would be responsible?—I should say if the accident happened in consequence of the breaking of the bridle chains, the owner of the bridle chains would be responsible.

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7557. With reference to the last part of your evidence about taking the bearings of each hopper when discharging, is any record taken of the time of the tide when discharging, which is a most important thing?—I think there is. These vessels all come down on the tide, and I understand that they discharge on the ebb.

7558. Of course, they ought to discharge on the ebb, but with regard to this precaution that you have put of fixing their positions, though they might discharge within the right limit of ground, yet they might discharge on the young flood?—Yes, the Conservators really have no power in this matter. They have no control, the discharging being done outside their jurisdiction.

7559. (*Mr. Ellis.*) With reference to the speed of steamers, can you give us the number of vessels reported for improper navigation by your officers since 1895?—I have a list of the convictions.

7560. My question is how many were reported to the Conservators by your officers since 1895?—I cannot tell you at the moment, but I will have it got out.

(*The witness subsequently handed in a list of the cases relating to the improper navigation of vessels on the River Thames below London Bridge reported to the Conservators during the years* 1895 *to* 1900 *inclusive. See Appendix,* 21*st Day, No.* 1.)

7561. Are there any reported by other persons?—Yes.

7562. I want to get at the proportion of reports to convictions, but you cannot furnish that?—Not at present, but I can get it.

7563. Twenty convictions are all that have been obtained since 1895?—Yes.

7564. Is there any particular class of vessel in respect of these or do they range over all the classes of vessels?—Generally passenger steamers.

7565. Do you consider the penalty is sufficient?—Yes, it has been found so.

7566. You have all necessary power, you consider, with regard to that?—Yes.

7567. It is quite sufficient if you can get the evidence?—That is so.

7568. That is the difficulty, is it?—That is the difficulty.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

7569. With regard to this proposed charge of mooring rates amounting to £15,000 a year, you were asked on the first day by Admiral Hext about it at Questions 129 and 130. "(Q.) You stated just now that the Conservancy had not exercised their power to charge fees for moorings?—(A.) That is so. (Q.) Can you give any reasons for their not exercising that power?—(A.) The matter was fully discussed some years ago. All interests were represented, and it was considered inexpedient to make any charge." Can you give us the reasons for which it was considered inexpedient to make the charge on that occasion?—No. I have just answered the question in reply to Sir Robert Giffen

7570. I did not hear you answer that question?—I said I could not give any reasons.

7571. May I take it, then, so far as you are concerned, the charge is still an inexpedient one?—That is a matter that is under consideration. The Conservators are of opinion that that part of the additional revenue they require should be derived from this source.

7572. Are you proposing to keep on this method of private charges for moorings?—The Conservators have this question before them now.

Mr. WILLIAM FORREST MALCOLM re-called and further examined.

Mr. W. F. Malcolm.

7573. You are Chairman of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company?—I am not chairman at present; I was chairman when I gave my evidence before, and my colleagues thought I had better continue the evidence.

7574. You have already appeared before us in order to give general evidence with regard to the company?—Yes.

7575. And you are now going to give further evidence with regard to the exemption of lighters and craft from payment of rates?—Yes.

7576. Have you a list of your board of directors?—Yes, as it stands at present.

(*The witness handed in a list of directors of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company. See Appendix,* 21*st Day, No.* 2.)

7577. Now will you kindly proceed with your evidence?—Before giving you my further evidence, with your permission I should like to answer a few questions that were asked me when I appeared before, which then I was not in a position to answer.

7578. Will you give us the reference to the questions

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to which you allude?—I was asked by Sir John Wolfe-Barry at Question 1753, "Do you know of any vessels in the wood trade at present which go to other ports in preference to London in consequence of there being a greater depth of water at those ports. Do they go to Hull, for instance"? I cannot ascertain as a fact that any vessels engaged in the wood trade have actually been prevented from coming to London in consequence of the depth of water, nor can I say definitely that other ports have had a preference on that account. London is so much the largest wood-importing port that I think steamers specially adapted for wood loading would scarcely be built of dimensions unsuitable for London. Then I was asked by the late Chairman of the Commission at Questions 1766 to 1769, as to whether a tax upon goods should be applicable to the whole port, or only to the docks? I am of opinion that lighters taking cargo from steamers in the river, and the goods loaded in those lighters, should be subject to dues. It seems to me that the vessels discharging in the river, and the goods they carry, get the benefit of the accommodation afforded them in the river, and that dues upon lighters loading from vessels in the river, and the goods loaded into these lighters, would afford a source of revenue to the Thames Conservancy, or to whoever may be the authorities for the river. In connection with this answer I may state that I think vessels discharging in the river might very fairly have to pay heavier dues than at present. No doubt many coasting lines of steamers, and also many of those in the near foreign trades might fairly be placed on better terms than tramp steamers which discharge in the river. At Question 1816 I was asked by Mr. Ellis as to how much of our income arose from rent. I answered that, speaking from memory, our total receipts from rent were about £80,000. I have since ascertained that our total receipts from rent in 1900 were £87,902, after deducting £546, the amount paid for insurance on grain, as the rent we charge upon grain includes also fire insurance to be effected at our cost. With regard to Question 1839, asked by Sir John Wolfe-Barry, as to the cost of dredging the docks, which I stated roughly to be £5,000, I find that for the last ten years the average has been £5,710.

7579. I think that is a question of detail; it is hardly necessary to go into any small details like that; after all, your answer there was practically correct?—The only other points I have are points arising out of evidence which has been given by others since I gave my evidence, and which I consider to be inaccurate.

7580. Do you wish to correct some statements you have already made?—No, not that I have made, but statements made by other witnesses.

7581. We have the privilege of hearing you to-day in connection with the particular matter of the exemption of lighters; I think it would be well for you to confine yourself to that?—Under the provisions of the dock company's Act of Parliament lighters and craft entering the docks to deliver to or receive goods or ballast from vessels in dock are exempt from the payment of rates. The clause in the Surrey Commercial Dock Company's Act of 1864, which provides for this exemption, is as follows:—(Sec. 117.) Provided always, that all lighters and craft entering the docks to discharge or receive ballast or goods into or from any vessel lying therein shall be exempt from the payment of any rates so long as such lighter or craft is *bonâ fide* engaged in discharging or receiving such ballast or goods; and the ballast or goods so discharged or received shall be exempt from the payment of any rates. Similar clauses are inserted in the Acts of the other dock companies. See Sec. 136 of the London and St. Katharine's Act of 1864; the East and West India Dock Act, 1 and 2 Wiliam IV., Ch. 52, Sec. 83; the Millwall Docks Act, 27 and 28 Victoria, Ch. 255, Sec. 59. In order to understand the position of the dock companies on this question it is desirable to refer to the origin of this exemption. The exemption clause first appears in the Act 39 George III., Ch. 69, which provides for the establishment of the West India Docks. This Act gave the West India Dock Company a monopoly of the West India trade. Sec. 87 provides, that for the term of 21 years from the completion of the docks, all ships from any port of the West Indies arriving in the River Thames with a cargo of West India produce shall unload and land the whole of their cargoes within the docks, and by Sec. 90, the Commissioners of Customs are empowered to order that all ships arriving in the River Thames from any other part of the world than the West Indies, having West India produce on board, shall unload and land so much of their cargoes as shall consist of such produce within the said docks. By Sec. 137, the rate of 6s. 8d. is to be paid to the company by the ships using their docks. These provisions gave the company extensive and lucrative privileges in compensation for the enormous outlay they incurred, and the public benefit derived from the construction of the docks. The wharfingers and lightermen of the port naturally opposed the granting of these privileges, which adversely affected their interests. The wharfingers were compensated for their loss of business by a heavy money payment, and in the interests of the lightermen the clause was inserted in the Act which gives them free access to the docks, and the right of delivering goods and ballast and receiving goods and ballast from ships in the docks free of dues. In plain terms, the bargain between the Government and the dock company was to this effect: We will give you powers to compel ships to enter your docks, but you shall not levy charges on lighters coming into dock to take goods to or receive goods from these ships. The term for which the special powers were granted expired. The Act above referred to (39 George III., Ch. 69) was repealed by 2 William IV., Ch. 52, the company's monopoly was determined, but the exemption of lighters and craft from charges was continued. The case of the East India Dock Company was similar. They, too, had exclusive privileges granted to them by their Act in respect of East India produce, but when their privileges expired the restrictive clause was re-imposed. It is to be observed that while the original Acts exempted lighters from charges, the goods which the lighters conveyed were not exempt from dues, but this exemption clause in subsequent Acts was extended to the goods as well as to the lighters. Having regard to the fact that in the first instance the reason for granting the free use of the dock waters to lighters and craft was the compulsory diversion to the docks of certain shipping, which had previously had the right to discharge in the river, it is surely a reasonable contention, that when the provisions of the Act compelling vessels to discharge in the docks were withdrawn, the right of access to the docks free of charge, which was conceded to the lightermen by way of compensation for the dock monopoly, should also have been abrogated. Since the expiration of the dock privileges the fiscal changes of the past half century have limited the number of articles liable to Customs duties, and almost all kinds of goods can now be landed at private wharves and warehouses, whereas formerly they could not be landed to any extent except at the docks. For instance, until the repeal of the duties on timber, the Surrey Commercial Docks, in respect of the wood business, had the advantage of bonded privileges. It is manifest then that the circumstances under which this exemption was originally created by the Legislature in favour of the wharfingers and lightermen no longer exist, and that the dock companies have now no exclusive privileges to compensate them for the loss and obstruction which is imposed upon them by the free access of lighters to their docks. The docks have been constructed at an immense outlay of capital, and are maintained at a heavy and increasing expense to the company, yet the lighters and craft not only appropriate, free of charge, the advantages and facilities the docks provide, but owing to the work imposed upon the company in docking, undocking and regulating the craft, they add materially to the company's expenditure. The serious nature of the burden imposed upon the company is clearly shown by the following figures:—In 1899, the number of ships received into dock was 1,274, with an aggregate tonnage of 907,547 tons register. During the same year 22,050 barges were docked of a tonnage estimated at 882,000 tons (taking the average barge using these docks at 40 tons register). I put in a table showing this:

(*The witness put in a statement showing the number of craft entering the Surrey Commercial Docks each year from* 1890 *to* 1899. *See Appendix, 21st Day, No.* 3.)

The number of barges was thus seventeen times greater than the number of vessels, and the barge tonnage more than 97 per cent. of the total tonnage of the vessels received into dock. Of these 22,050 barges, 5,770 passed through the docks on their way to the canal. After deducting these there remain 16,280 barges of an aggregate tonnage of 651,200 tons, or 71·75 per cent. of the total shipping tonnage. In respect of the shipping, the company received dues and charges amounting to £54,500, but for docking and undocking

these lighters and craft with a tonnage nearly equal to that of the shipping tonnage, they received no payment. Not only do the lighters pay nothing in return for the accommodation and facilities afforded them by the docks, they are the direct cause of increased expenditure, and seriously hamper the dock business. In the busy season, when it is most important to keep the dock entrances clear for the passage of vessels, the numerous craft so obstruct the basin and entrances that it is absolutely necessary for the dockmaster to assist them with men, appliances, and tugs. Further expense is incurred in docking and undocking these lighters owing to their numbers; sometimes as many as 100 have to be locked in and out at one entrance on one day, and it is impossible to defer the locking until high water. To do so would make the entrance inaccessible to the shipping and, in order to get through the work, the dockmasters are obliged to turn out their men and begin locking out the craft four or five hours before high water. I hand in a table with regard to this.

(*The witness handed in a statement showing times of attendance before and after high water and number of barges docked and undocked at the Surrey lock of the Surrey Commercial Docks in the months of August, September, and October*, 1900. *See Appendix* 21*st Day, No.* 4.)

It is sometimes necessary to make as many as seven locks before the basin is cleared of craft, and the vessels waiting to enter dock can be admitted; and after the vessels have been docked the admission of lighters often occupies two or three hours after high water. The level of the dock water is, of course, lowered every time the lock is emptied. Comparatively clear water is withdrawn from the lock and replaced by an equal quantity of muddy water from the river which settles in the docks and has to be removed at considerable expense to the company. There can be no question that this incessant locking before and after high water considerably increases the cost of mudding, which is a heavy item in the dock company's expenditure. The increased size of the lighters now employed is a further source of difficulty and expense to the company. It may be taken that 50 years ago the carrying capacity of the average barge did not exceed 40 to 50 tons. Now it is no uncommon thing to dock craft with a carrying capacity of from 100 to 150 tons, and even larger than these are not unknown. It is worthy of note in this connection that when the exemption clauses came into operation the average tonnage of vessels engaged in foreign trade did not exceed 200 tons. The average tonnage of vessels of all classes entering the Commercial Docks from 1810 to 1840 was 243 tons and the average tonnage of grain-laden vessels during the same period was 152 tons. I hand in a table showing this.

(*The witness handed in a statement of the number and tonnage of vessels of various classes which entered the Commercial Docks from* 1810 *to* 1840, *and the average tonnage of these vessels during that period. See Appendix* 21*st Day, No.* 5.)

On this shipping the company were entitled to take dues of 2s. per ton. Now the company are required to receive into dock, free of charge, lighters of a tonnage equivalent to or exceeding that of the ships upon which the Legislature empowered them to take dues. Additional labour and expense is involved in docking and undocking these large lighters, it being impossible for the lightermen in charge to handle them without considerable assistance from the company's staff aided by the company's appliances. It not infrequently happens that there is only one man to attend to two or more craft, and without the assistance of the company's servants, and the tugs and hydraulic machinery provided by the company, it would be impossible to cope with the numerous craft which seek admission to the docks, even when the tide work is extended for some hours before and after high water as above explained. It is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately estimate the proportion of the expenses which the company incur in consequence of the use of their docks by lighters and craft, but it is evident that the expenses of the dockmaster's staff, the cost of mudding, the wear and tear of plant and machinery consequent upon the frequent lockings, are all increased, and that the additional expenditure thus incurred is a heavy charge upon the company's revenue. The hardships imposed on the company are, however, not confined to those before reviewed. The clause which exempts the lighters and craft from dues also exempts the goods they carry. The company suffer a double grievance, inasmuch as the lighters and craft are for the most part engaged in taking goods direct from the ship's side and diverting from the docks to the private wharves and warehouses goods, some portion of which might at any rate remain with them and contribute to their revenue, but upon which when so removed they are precluded from levying any charge whatever. It is true that all the craft frequenting the docks are not employed for this purpose. The several purposes for which they are employed in the docks may be briefly summarised:—(a) To take delivery of goods direct from the ship's side; (b) to deliver goods for export, coals, and ballast to the ship; (c) to take goods from the company's quays, yards, and warehouses, which have been landed with them either by the merchant or for account of the ship. It is clear that lighters employed for the purpose named in (a) and (b) are by the exemption clause free of dues, but there is nothing in this clause which precludes the company from making a charge on lighters engaged as in (c). It is surely an anomaly that the company should be prohibited from making any charge upon lighters taking delivery from the ship of goods which contribute nothing in return for the protection and accommodation afforded by the docks, whilst at the same time they are allowed the right to levy a charge upon lighters engaged in taking from the company's wharves, quays, and warehouses goods which have contributed their quota of charges to the company. Of the 16,280 lighters docked in 1899 (excluding from the total 22,050 the 5,770 passed up the canal), 10,220, or 62·7 per cent., were employed in taking goods direct from the ship's side. As before stated, the wood and grain trades form the chief part of the company's business. With respect to the wood trade, the growth and extent of the overside deliveries is shown in a table I will hand in. It will be seen that the overside deliveries, which in 1890 were equal to 49,900 standards, or 18·9 per cent., of the total sawn wood goods landed and delivered overside, had increased in 1899 to 123,759 standards, or 40·5 per cent. of the total quantity landed and delivered overside, and on this large proportion of the wood goods received into their docks the company were precluded from making any charge. This enormous increase in the overside deliveries, which is a comparatively modern development, could not have been anticipated when lighters and craft receiving goods from the ship and the goods so received were first exempt from charges, and it may be asserted that when the Schedules of Rates on shipping and goods were fixed by the Legislature, it was never contemplated that nearly half the total quantity of goods received in the docks would be delivered overside and removed for storage elsewhere, without contributing anything to the company's revenue. The present Schedules of Rates were framed to meet the conditions which formerly existed, but the methods of business and the description of goods imported have materially changed; the cost incurred by the company in handling the goods, the increase in the labour charges, and other expenses, has considerably increased, and the rates prescribed by the existing Schedules are now inapplicable and inadequate. Turning to the grain business. I will also hand in a table with regard to that.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the quantities of sawn wood goods delivered direct from the ship to craft from* 1890 *to* 1899, *and the percentage of these quantities to the total quantities of these goods received into the Surrey Commercial Docks. See Appendix*, 21*st Day No.* 6.)

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the quantities of grain delivered direct from ship to craft from* 1890 *to* 1899, *and the percentage of these quantities to the total quantities received into the Surrey Commercial Docks. See Appendix*, 21*st Day, No.* 7.)

It will be seen that whilst there has been no increase in the proportion of the overside deliveries such as marks the wood business, the quantity of grain delivered overside for the ten years shown averages 46 per cent. of the quantity landed in the company's warehouses. Inasmuch as the exemption from the payment of rates of lighters and craft, and the goods they carry, was originally granted for reasons which no longer exist, and under conditions that have entirely changed, it is submitted the continuance of this privilege is inequitable; that it entails a great expense and heavy burden upon the Dock Company, delays and hampers the conduct of the business, and by taking from them a legitimate source of revenue to which they are justly entitled, deprives them of the means of continuing to make the important and costly

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improvements which from time to time become necessary, to enable them to deal successfully with the increasing volume of business and the alterations in the conditions under which the trade at these docks is carried on.

7582. Have you any further remarks to make with reference to the tables?—I have no special remarks. I might draw attention to the table showing the quantities of sawn woods delivered direct from ship to crait from 1890 to 1899. That shows the enormous increase which takes place almost annually in the extent of overside deliveries of timber.

7583. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Let me ask you one general question with regard to this celebrated exemption clause. Do you wish us to infer that all the grievances that the other docks have detailed before us with respect to that apply broadly to you?—Broadly, they do; but in our dock the great grievance is the quantity of wood goods taken away overside.

7584. That is your special grievance?—That is our special grievance.

7585. Then do you put before us that all the arguments, of which we have heard a great deal, against this exemption clause from the dock companies, apply to you also?—I have read Mr. Scott's evidence very carefully, and I agree with the remarks that he has made on the subject.

7586. You fall into line with the other docks on the subject of exemption?—I fall into line with the statement made by the chairman of the London and India Docks. I may add that with regard to the rates upon barges and cargoes loaded therein, the figures which have been stated by the chairman of the London and India Docks would be accepted by us.

7587. Have your docks ever been to Parliament to claim exemption from this. Have you ever promoted a Bill in Parliament?—No, never.

7588. (*Mr. Peel.*) With regard to your table showing the number and tonnage of vessels which entered the Commercial Docks from 1810 to 1840, does that apply to vessels of various classes; does it mean all—coastwise and foreign vessels as well?—You will remark that this is a very old statement. It is from the year 1810 to 1840. It is put in more to show that many of the vessels which we received into our docks at that time were actually not larger than many of the lighters that come to us to-day.

7589. Does it apply to all classes?—Yes.

7590. Is there any special reason for this large increase in the percentage of overside deliveries in the last eight or nine years?—I think I have dealt with that in my previous evidence.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

7591. I do not think you have been asked about it, but could you tell us whether by far the greater portion of the goods coming into your dock do not come in for consumption in the London area?—Yes, the greater portion do.

7592. For example, timber coming into your dock would go either into the London district or only so far from London as it is profitable to take timber?—Not exclusively so, but a very large proportion would come in that category.

7593. Again, take the case of grain. A very large portion of the grain coming into your dock is consumed in the London area?—The same answer would apply to that as to timber; the larger proportion would be.

7594. As regards goods coming in that way you can really almost defy competition?—I do not quite catch the effect of your question.

7595. I mean other ports cannot supply London. Goods for London must come to a London dock?—Yes. In a very large proportion of our trade we have not the competition to fear.

7596. I want to ascertain whether you owe your favourable financial position as compared with other docks to that?—I do not admit that our financial position as compared with other docks is solely to be attributed to that.

7597. I do not say solely, but you do concede that is an element?—Undoubtedly.

7598. Could you in any way separate the quantity of goods that go overside to warehouses and yards competing with your own from the rest of the goods that go overside?—That would be impossible.

7599. Could you give us any idea in the shape of a percentage. It might be one thing for you to put a charge on goods going overside to competing warehouses and another thing to put a charge on goods that are merely going overside in the ordinary course of transit?—We have no figures on that point.

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

7600. Am I right in saying that for the last three autumns there has been a very great block in your docks?—Last autumn there was a great congestion in our docks. In the other two years I do not admit that there was anything very special.

7601. Was it very common for steamers coming with wood to have to wait three or four or five days at Gravesend before they were brought up the river?—In the year 1900 that was the case.

7602. Was it not also the case in 1899 to a less extent. You issued a printed circular, I think, to all ships, which was handed to them at Gravesend, saying that they were not to come beyond Gravesend until they got orders from you to come up?—Are you speaking of 1899?

7603. I am speaking first of 1900, as to which year you say it was the case that there was congestion?—Yes, it was the case in 1900.

7604. I have next to speak of 1899?—No, certainly not.

7605. Were not ships kept in the same way in 1899, though to a less extent, than in 1900?—No.

7606. Having got to your dock was not there an extra delay in the time of discharging vessels compared with previous years?—Last year was an exceptional year. By figures which I have here it is shown that the amount of tonnage which arrived in our docks in the month of August of last year was double the tonnage which we are accustomed to receive in that month. That caused a state of congestion in the docks from which it was very difficult to recover afterwards. In the months of September, October, and November we still continued to receive larger quantities. This following on the back of the previous unprecedented large arrivals in August continued the congestion, and we did not get rid of it till the month of December. To be added to that there was the fact that there was a strike of lightermen in the river at that time.

7607. What was the reason of this large increased import. Is it a permanent increase or a temporary increase as far as you can see?—The increase in the import arose last year in this way. At the beginning of the season freights were very much higher than the wood importers had been accustomed to. They hoped they would come down, and they delayed their chartering. Instead of that they found that the freights weekly got worse and worse for them, and at last, as is usual in these cases, they came in all of a rush and chartered the steamers all at once, which in an ordinary way they would have chartered over perhaps three months. The whole fleet got loaded in the various timber loading ports at one time, and these arrived in our ports in an overwhelming mass together.

6708. That state of things resulted to your knowledge probably (certainly to the knowledge of your manager) in a very large number of claims for demurrage, which have been fought out in the Law Courts?—I believe there are a certain number of claims for demurrage.

7609. Was not there the same sort of thing in 1899—a number of claims for demurrage coming up, because the dock was very full—not so many, I agree, as in 1900, but still some?—There were a certain number of claims.

7610. And there were some in 1898. For the last three years the Surrey Commercial Dock has been very good to the legal profession, has it not?—I do not know that that is particularly the case.

7611. You said your timber and grain went largely to the London district. You are putting a very wide meaning on the London district, are you not. For instance, large quantities go down to the River Medway and to Kent from your docks?—Some do.

7612. By "London district" you mean a very wide

area—the Home Counties?—I mean the district that London would serve more conveniently than any other large port.

7613. For instance, the Medway District and Kent?—Anything between Ipswich on the one side and Southampton on the other.

7614. It is rather larger than the jurisdiction of the County Council, for whom my friend, Mr. Daldy, appears?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

7615. Which are the busy months for your work?—We generally begin to be busy in July; September and October, as a rule, are our busiest months. Last year, as I pointed out, the congestion began in August, when we received 129,000 tons of wood-laden tonnage as against 60,000 tons in August of the previous year.

7616. How were you able to deal with this glut of traffic, as I might call it?—We did the best we could.

7617. What was that best? Had you quays to land it at to stack the timber?—We spent an enormous amount of money in lighterage. We got all the lighters we possibly could and discharged the deals into them. We had at one time 480 lighters in our employment in the docks.

7618. Have you not had as many as 530 at one time in your own employment in the docks?—That I cannot say. I have no record of the fact.

7619. I am basing my question on an answer that was given by one of your assistant superintendents in the High Court. Do you dispute the fact?—No. We have 45 private lighters of our own, which I did not count in speaking of 480. We had 480 on hire besides our own 45.

7620. All these were in the dock at one time?—They were.

7621. How long would the timber that was placed on those barges be on the barges before it was sorted on the quay?—It would vary in each different case.

7622. May I take it that sometimes the importer had to wait for three months before he got his landing account?—Yes, the importer might have to wait for three months before he got his landing account. But it is not to be inferred from that that deals were three months in the barge. After they are discharged from the barge there is a very long, intricate, and difficult process of sorting and piling the goods to be gone through.

7623. But, at all events, before the importer is able to sell his timber he must get this landing account?—Practically so.

7624. So that for three months a particular merchant—that is, an importer—would have to wait before he was able to sell a particular consignment of the cargo that he had had come into your dock?—That must not be taken as a general rule. In certain special circumstances, and in a year like 1900, that would be the case.

7625. Is it not the fact that that being frequently so, merchants prefer to hire private wharves to which they can take their timber at once?—I do not think that that is the case. I am not aware of its being so.

7626. You may not be aware of it, but is it not probable that a merchant, instead of waiting for three months before he could dispose of his timber, would take it away in lighters to some other wharf that he acquired for the purpose?—I only know this with reference to last year's business, that we had a great many parcels of wood goods forced upon us that we would rather not have had. But people who had intended to take them away, owing to the strike of lightermen, could not get the lighters for them, and so they said to us, "Land them in the docks the best way you can."

7627. But you had great difficulty, had you not, in landing them at all?—They did not take that into consideration.

7628. You do not know that, I think; but you had a great difficulty in landing?—We had a great difficulty in getting many of the goods landed in proper time.

7629. So that that was the case even before this strike? I will put it in another way. Was not the state of affairs similar in 1899?—By no means similar.

7630. Had the dock as much to do as it could possibly manage in the year 1899?—Yes. At certain seasons of the year in the wood trade we always have as much to do as we can manage.

7631. So that it is necessary, as a matter of convenience to you, that the importers should take away large quantities of their timber?—Not at all. We should not object to their taking away large quantities of timber. Every man has a right to do as he pleases; but we do object to their bringing it in by steamers to our docks as part cargo and delaying these steamers by the goods going away overside into the barges which took them away, and we have no compensation for that whatever.

7632. You have suggested that the proportion of goods taken away overside by barges is much greater now than it was some years ago, and is increasing?—Yes.

7633. You admit, I think, that the quantity of timber brought into the Port of London is much greater now than it has ever been, but you do not get so much of it?—I do not think there has been a very marked rise. Last year was a very heavy importation.

7634. Let me refer you to Question 1780, which makes it clear. "(Q.) In the following Appendix 14 you show that the percentage of sawn wood goods landed in your dock compared with the total import into London, is now about 54 per cent., which is a smaller percentage than the 75 per cent. in the previous Appendix? (A.) If you will remark, Appendix 13 represents the tonnage of the wood-laden vessels received into our docks; Appendix 14 represents the percentage of sawn wood goods landed into our docks." Then the next question, 1781, is, "So you may receive more goods into the dock than are landed." Now on that point, is it not a fact that a new trade has sprung up in the Port of London connected with America and Australia?—I do not quite follow your question.

7635. Is not timber of a particular kind brought from Australia and America that is not dealt with in your dock at all, but elsewhere?—Timber is brought from Australia—wood-paving timber, Jarrah wood, which is, as a rule, not dealt with in our docks. We have had vessels with cargoes of that timber on board in our docks, but as a rule it suits better to land it elsewhere.

7636. So that the total timber that is brought in you cannot deal with?—I do not say that we cannot deal with it. I say that it suits the receivers of the timber better to take it elsewhere, and as they are whole cargoes they certainly have the right of ordering their vessel to discharge wherever they please.

7637. Could, for instance, American steamers that bring it across get into your dock?—No. Many large American steamers could not get into our dock at present.

7638. So that all the American trade that I am speaking of cannot be dealt with in your dock?—A considerable part of the American trade, I understand, is in hardwood timber—walnut and various woods of that kind which does not find its way to our docks; but the great bulk of the North American wood which arrives in London does come to our docks.

7639. But, at all events, a large quantity of it cannot arrive in your docks?—That is so.

7640. Does not that somewhat account for the difference in the percentage?—No; our table does not refer to these goods at all. Our table only shows the sawn goods: deals, battens, boards.

7641. And when you speak of the total imports into the Port of London, so far as timber is concerned, are you only speaking of sawn goods?—The table shows the number and tonnage of vessels wood-laden entering the Port of London and the Surrey Commercial Docks from 1880 to 1899, exclusive of vessels from the East and West Indies, showing the proportion of wood tonnage entering the Surrey Commercial Dock.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I do not quite understand. Is the learned Counsel trying to bring home to one's mind that there is undue delay?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I am coming to that. The other point is as to the apparent increase of this particular overside delivery. Mr. Peel asked whether there was any reason for it.

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(*Mr. Peel.*) The witness said he had answered it before, and I see it has been practically answered at Question 1845.

7642. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Now with regard to this question of undue delay, your company is not only a dock company, but a canal company as well?—Yes.

7643. How many wharves would you say are on the canal?—Do you mean wharves connected with the wood trade, or wharves generally?

7644. Generally?—Possibly 50.

7645. Is not that very much below the mark?—I have sailed up the canal several times, but I cannot say I took any particular note of the number of wharves.

7646. I have a plan here which shows that there are at least 79 wharves?—That is quite possible.

7647. And you have the Gas Company up there?—Yes.

7648. How many barges does the Gas Company employ, do you think, in its traffic, taking coal up, and so on?—If you ask the question with reference to figures we have given of barges entering our docks to go up the canal, the coal barges are not included in that number.

7649. So that the exclusion of coal barges refers to a very large number of barges, does it not?—Our total supply of coals in a year, if I recollect rightly, is about 280,000 tons going up the canal.

7650. That would represent a great number of barges?—Yes.

7651. So that the estimate you have given of the number of barges is nothing like the number of barges that actually use your dock?—The statements that we have given were of the number of barges entering our docks. These barges do not enter our docks at all.

7652. So that all that you have taken is the barges that enter your docks?—Yes.

7653. And I suppose those are the barges that actually enter and go away in a short time?—Very often in a short time, but sometimes they are a much longer time than we wish.

7654. But you have barges of your own that might enter once a year that we may say might remain in the dock a whole year?—Our 45 barges.

7655. What about those that you hire for your own goods—the 445. They would remain in for months, would they not?—No. It is generally a matter of a few weeks that we require to hire a large number of barges for.

7656. May I take it that 450 barges in your own employment doing your own work might be lying in these docks for three or four weeks at a time?—Last year that may have been the case, but as a general rule we have nothing like that number.

7657. Now I have another question as to the size of these barges. What is the average size of the barges that go along the canal?—They are small barges. I think that will be found in my previous evidence.

7658. You say 20 tons to 30 tons?—Measurement tonnage.

7659. Is it not a fact that barges much larger than that do go up and down the canal?—A certain number may probably do so. We are limited by the depth of water in the canal.

7660. But have you not seen barges of 100 tons burthen in the canal?—I have not seen them personally. It is possible they may have been there.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

7661. Do you associate yourself with Mr. Scott in the desire to place these charges on goods delivered overside?—We do.

7662. As far as I gather from the examination by Sir Robert Giffen at the previous hearing, when I was not here, you are now paying six per cent. of which one per cent. is attributable to canal, and to rents of property, the rest being revenue earned by your dock undertaking and warehouses?—Our dividend last year was only 5 per cent.

7663. What made the profits go down when the dock was so congested?—As I have explained, we had to incur very heavy expenses indeed in the hiring of barges to endeavour to deal as well as we possibly could with the congestion.

7664. Now just let me go back to the early history. Your company in the original formation of it was a canal company, was it not, with a small dock attached?—That goes beyond my memory.

7665. You have seen the Act of Parliament?—I have reason to believe that there were two docks: the Grand Surrey Canal and Dock and the Commercial Dock.

7666. You have no reason to suppose that the Act of Parliament is incorrect?—No.

7667. Was there any monopoly given by the original Acts to either the Grand Surrey Canal or to the Commercial Dock similar to that given to the East and West India Dock?—There was no monopoly given, but at that time when there was a heavy duty upon timber the privilege which we had of keeping wood goods in bond was a great point in favour of the dock.

7668. And the same with regard to the legal quays?—You cannot land timber at quays.

7669. Before those docks were established how did timber come to London?—It came into London in floats, I presume.

7670. And was delivered overside into barges?—No. At that time the timber which came into London was, as a rule, hewn timber, which had to be cut up here into deals. At one time in my recollection the duty upon sawn timber was double the duty upon hewn timber, and therefore a very much larger proportion came in hewn timber than sawn timber; the hewn timber was discharged into the water.

7671. Do you suggest that you have a monopoly given by Parliament?—I do not suggest that.

7672. Then you originally started your business in competition with outsiders who could take the same class of work?—That is going back to ancient history which I have no knowledge of.

7673. You put in a long statement with regard to these Acts of Parliament, and I want to know what you know about it. Have you considered the Act yourself?—Yes.

7674. There was no 21 years' monopoly as there was in the case of the East and West India Docks?—No.

7675. You started and went on, and I think you have uniformly earned a dividend throughout your career, have you not?—I cannot speak from personal knowledge, but I believe that one of the component parts of our present dock was in very low water indeed at one time.

7676. And I daresay you bought it up at a very low rate?—No, not at all. The companies amalgamated.

7677. But was it not like the lion and the lamb lying down, the lamb lying down in the lion's interior?—No. It was mutual consent.

7678. You have continuously had this exemption clause put upon you as we have heard. Have you since 1864 spent somewhere near half a million of money upon fresh works since that clause was imposed upon you?—Yes, I see we put in a statement showing that we have spent £484,000.

7679. (*Mr. Harper.*) My Lord, I have a little difficulty in following the proceedings. Apparently some statement of revenues and profits was handed in to the Commission which so far as I can find has not been included in the Appendices. It is dealt with at Question 1794 of the Fifth Day.

(*Witness.*) That was nothing more than the balance sheets of our company that we furnished to the Commission.

7680. Would you mind my having one?—I will give you one. (*A copy of the balance sheet was handed to the learned Counsel.*)

(*Chairman.*) The Witness has already given a very full statement of that.

(*Mr. Harper.*) If I may respectfully say so, that is the difficulty we are placed in. While we were not here evidence was taken upon matters which we understood were non-controversial. The witness makes a statement, and because he labels it "non-controversial" we can hardly be expected to be bound by it.

(*Chairman.*) You are now on the balance sheet.

(*Mr. Harper.*) Not on the figures *per se*, but on the explanation of them. They may throw a different light

upon it. The difficulty I feel is this: We shall come hereafter to address you upon matters which we are told are uncontradicted, and we can only put our gloss upon them.

(*Chairman.*) We wish to give you every facility we can.

(*Mr. Harper.*) I am sure you do.

(*Chairman.*) Do you challenge any statement in this particular balance sheet?

(*Mr. Harper.*) I have not seen it until this moment, and I want to ask a further question or two upon matters which have already been partially dealt with.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I think counsel ought to be aware that these documents are in a sense public property. The balance sheets are published in various ways. I think he can hardly plead that he is not acquainted with them.

(*Mr. Harper.*) May I be forgiven for saying that I find tables mentioned in the evidence, and when I turn to the Appendices I find they are not quoted.

(*Chairman.*) It has been already said that the table referred to is nothing more than the balance sheet which you have in your hand at the present moment, and which is public property.

7681. (*Mr. Harper.*) You find no difficulty, as I understand, from this balance sheet, in separating the different branches of your business?—We can separate them roughly.

7682. I mean, this is not a mere separation for the purposes of the Commission, but it is actually your system of keeping your books?—These balance sheets have been made out on the same system as long as I can recollect.

7683. You divide it into "wood," "warehouse," and "dockage." Do you also work ships in your docks?—Grain ships we work, not timber ships.

7684. Is the working of grain ships profitable?—We probably should not continue to work them unless we found we had something out of it; but the profit is very small.

7685. You have pointed out that you are earning something like 5 per cent., or say 4 per cent., as the usual earnings of the dock company?—Yes.

7686. Are you coming here before the Commission with any proposal similar to that which Mr. Scott made for further works in consideration of the extra charges which you are seeking to get the Commission to report you should be entitled to make?—We have had very large new works in hand for some years, which are now drawing towards completion. We hope, when they are finished, that we shall have adequate accommodation for all the work that comes to our docks. If we find it necessary afterwards to still further enlarge them, undoubtedly we shall do so, but we have no plans in view at present.

7687. That capital has been expended on these works and has come into charge against revenue, has it not, already?—You are not speaking of the £484,000, are you?

7688. I am speaking of the heavy works which you say you have had in hand for some years. You, of course, have had to raise capital for them, and pay as you went on?—Yes.

7689. And you have had charges on your revenue for these new works?—Yes.

7690. And in spite of that, last year you still had 4 per cent. as your dock earnings?—We get the advantage of a certain portion of the works. For example, we have one large dock basin quite complete which we use, but a very considerable portion of the money expended is still unremunerative.

7691. Now one question with regard to barge traffic. Have you separated at all as Mr. Scott did the proportion of barges that would be free from charges under your proposal. Coal, I understand, is not to be charged; and your own barges are not to be charged?—We propose to charge only on these goods which are loaded into barges, on which the dock company has received no remuneration.

7692. I understand that, but I want to know what proportion of the total barge traffic of your docks would that charge be leviable upon, including in the total traffic your own traffic and your canal traffic. I do not know whether your engineer is coming, or anybody who can give us these figures?—You want to know the number of barges which would be subject to dues?

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7693. Yes, the total number making use of your docks?—I have taken it out as 10,221.

7694. Those are barges?—Yes, barges taking goods overside and passing into the river.

7695. Passing out into the river?—Yes.

7696. That is out of a total number of about—what?—22,000. It might be convenient if I furnish you with a detailed answer, which I have here in the form of a table.

Statement of the number of Barges which entered the Surrey Commercial Docks in 1899 to take goods overside, to load from the Company's Quays and Warehouses, or to pass up the Canal.

Barges taking goods overside.

	No. of Barges.
Deals, patterns, and boards	5,495
Other wood goods	1,891
Grain	1,187
General	1,648
Total overside	10,221

Barges loading goods in Quay or Warehouse. (Estimated.)

Wood goods	4,350	
Grain	1,708	6,058
		16,279
Entered for canal		5,774
		22,053

7697. Does not the same difficulty occur very often with regard to grain that you have with regard to warehousing accommodation?—No.

7698. Was it not congested last autumn, for instance?—We have never had our granaries full for the last three years.

7699. What proportion of storage had you left?—At least one-third.

7700. One-third of your total granary capacity?—Yes. Of course, I am here to explain the matter to the Commission as well as I possibly can, and I may explain that we may have had occasion to refuse to receive a grain steamer at a certain time into our dock, because the dock in which alone we can conveniently discharge the grain steamers was full at that moment; but we had room in our granaries, and if the steamer would have waited a very short time she could have got into our dock.

7701. You have only a limited berthing accommodation?—While the new works are going on. When our new works are completed we shall have, I may say, accommodation for as much as is very likely to come to us.

7702. And those new works were being carried out while you were going to Parliament to repeal this exemption?—We felt that we must carry out those new works.

7703. It is the fact, is it not?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

7704. I want to ask you a few questions with regard to the system of unloading timber at your docks. First, I will ask you a question with regard to a statement in a Report made by the Board of Trade in the year 1900. It is called "Report on Standard Piece Rates of Wages and Sliding Scales in the United Kingdom." I give you that reference so that you may understand what I am going to read from. It is page 264. Can you tell me whether this statement is true or not: "Timber porters—London.—The work of landing, sorting, and piling timber and delivering it into barges or land carriage in the Surrey Docks is performed by gangs of labourers, consisting of (1) Contractors, who take the work at piece prices." Is that so?—Yes.

7705. "(2) Day labourers (termed 'strappers'), who are employed by the contractors at a time rate of 1s. per hour."—Substantially, that is so.

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7706. "The gangs consist of a varying number of men, according to the size of the vessel, and other conditions."

(*Chairman.*) You must be careful not to touch on any labour question.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Yes, my Lord, I am not going to, but I think this is the shortest way of doing it.

7706A. "The contract piece rates (which are for labour only) are settled every year between the representatives of the men and the Dock Company." Is that the representatives of the contractors and the dock company?—The contractors settle with the dock company, and agree the prices, but certainly they do not do so without the concurrence of the general body of men.

7707. Then it goes on: "The following list of piece rates in force is dated April, 1898. The terms used are for the most part easily understood, and require no detailed explanation." Then the report sets out a series of charges. I am not going into it in detail. I only just want to test the principle on which the charge is based. I will take one illustration. "Scantlings 6in. and under in width." Then there is a charge first of all for "landing, sorting, piling, and placing under cover when required." I daresay you can tell me from memory whether that is a charge of 3s. 3d. Have you ever had this report before you?—No, I have not.

7708. Then I will not take you actually through the amounts, but I will ask you—is this the system of charging. First of all, a charge for landing, sorting, piling, and placing under cover when required?—Yes.

7709. Then there is a charge for "delivering into barges or land carriage"?—I have not been prepared with the information which would enable me to answer the questions you put to me.

7710. I will take it in this way. Do you know what is described in the timber trade at your docks as a "prime rate"?—Yes.

7711. There is a prime rate at the present time, is there not, of 7s. for scantlings 6in. and under in width?

(*Chairman.*) You will be very careful, Mr. Whitehead, please. What I suggest is that you should not ask any question as to the reasonableness of the rate. As to the system or method we are quite with you.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) I am going to confine my question to that.

(*Witness.*) May I say that we can put in our book of charges, which speaks for itself?

7712. Take the prime rate, that is the rate which you pay to the contractors—the 7s.?—That is the rate we charge to the merchant.

7713. What rate do you pay to the contractors?—It is impossible to give an answer to a question like that which would be applicable to all cases. I may say that as the result of our charges, as I have already pointed out to the Commission, we make little or no profit at all upon the handling of goods. Our profit arises almost exclusively from rent.

7714. On the warehouses?—Yes.

7715. With regard to the question of warehousing, you are at the present time building new storage sheds for the timber trade, are you not?—We are not building any at present. We have some recently completed.

7716. Is that to meet the existing trade in timber, or is it to meet an expected increase?—We like to endeavour to keep well ahead of the trade that is to be expected, when we can.

7717. You have not answered my question. Am I to infer from that that it is to meet an expected increase?—My answer to that is that as far as regards accommodation for timber under cover, the proportion which merchants wish to have put under cover seems gradually to increase, and our shed accommodation is scarcely adequate to overtake the increased demand.

7718. Now will you turn to Appendix 6, which shows the quantity of sawn wood goods delivered direct from ship to craft. Take the first column. That shows the sawn wood goods actually landed in your docks?—Yes.

7719. The first figure for the year 1890 is 213,792 standards?—Yes.

7720. Then the figure falls fairly substantially for the next year; then it goes up and then down, following an irregular course—sometimes up and sometimes down?—Yes.

7721. But so far as regards the actual amount of timber landed there is no tendency to a gradual diminution, is there? Take the year 1898. There you have 208,000 standards as compared with the year 1895, where you had 162,000. I have taken the average of those ten years, and I find that the average is about 185,000 standards. If that is correct, in the year 1899 you are very close to the average of the ten years. I understand your argument with regard to the proportion which you set out in the fourth column, but I am dealing now with the actual amount landed. There is no tendency to diminution is there?—No, not at present.

7722. Now with regard to payment for new works out of revenue, you made a statement when you were before the Commission previously, and you put in two Appendices—Nos. 10 and 19 of the 5th Day. In No. 10 you set out sheds for the storage of wood goods?—Yes.

7723. You have there some 22 or 23 different yards and sheds referred to?—Yes.

7724. Have the bulk of those been paid for out of revenue?—Not the bulk; a number have.

7725. I have compared it with Appendix 19, where you give a schedule of works charged to capital account. I see there that 15 out of the 23 are not referred to in the schedule of works charged to capital account?—It would require a very considerable time to pick out those that we have executed out of capital account and those that we have built out of revenue.

7726. I will not ask for it in detail. Can you give any figure to show how much in pounds, shillings, and pence you have spent out of revenue upon sheds for the storage of wood goods, say, during the last ten years?—I could not do that without ticking it all out, which would be a slow process.

7727. Now, passing to the question of the congestion in the docks, you have told the Commission that you have larger steamers coming to the docks to-day than you have had in the past. Are all these steamers able to get to the dock side?—No steamers that we have wanted to take to the quays of our docks have we been unable to take there.

7728. Is it not a fact that some of the steamers are unable to get to the quays of your older docks, and are obliged to discharge into berths?—Not to my knowledge. A number of our large steamers from the Gulf ports, bringing pitch pine timber, discharge their cargo in the basin. They lie in the basin, and do not require to come alongside the quay at all. They discharge into the water.

7729. Is not that for the convenience of the dock company?—Certainly not. Floating timber is never landed on to the quay.

7730. Are not your quays often blocked in consequence of goods not having been removed before fresh cargo comes up to be landed?—Our superintendent strictly forbids that being done. The goods of one steamer are cleared off the quay before the goods of another steamer are put there, but last year we were under desperate circumstances, and we had to adopt desperate remedies.

7731. So that with regard to last year it is true, but you do not regard it as the normal state of things?—It is by no means the normal state of matters.

7732. You told me a moment ago that you regarded the warehousing as an important source of your revenue?—The rent.

7733. With regard to the rent and your warehousing charge, does not that commence, generally speaking, from the moment of breaking bulk?—In a certain class of goods it does—goods to be put under cover; but with regard to the class of goods to be left in the open it will be found, on referring to our dock charges book, that it does not do so.

7734. So that there is no pecuniary interest of the dock company which would urge them to expedite the removal from the barges or from the ship?—Considering that the cost of the barges is probably six times what we gain in rent and goods, we have every object in expediting discharge from the barges as much as possible.

7735. Can you tell me what is the rent you receive, say, per acre, for the piling of the goods?—I have never calculated it out in that way.

7736. Your accounts do not show that?—No; they do not show that.

7737. Have you made any effort to get mechanical appliances, such as those referred to by the Millwall Dock Company, for dealing with timber?—We have considered the question very often, but we stand in quite a different position from the Millwall Dock Company. This piece of ground which they intend to occupy for wood goods lies at a very considerable distance from the place where the vessels discharge, and the mechanical means are adopted for the transport of goods from one part of their dock to the other. After they arrive there, they must still go through the process of piling and sorting, and all those processes which are necessary before a return could be rendered. Our docks do not stand in that position. We have no part of our docks at such a great distance from the vessel to the place where the wood goods are piled requiring these mechanical means. At the same time, we have always had under consideration the idea of using mechanical means as much as could possibly be done, but where we are baffled is this. In a cargo of wood goods there may be a million pieces of a thousand different sizes, which no machinery can deal with, so that it must ultimately come to the handling for picking out the different sizes and piling them away separately.

7738. And at the present moment you rely entirely on hand labour?—We do not rely entirely, but practically we do rely on hand labour.

7739. There is no direct railway communication with your docks, is there?—We do not rely upon railway accommodation for the working of our docks in any way.

7740. Have you endeavoured to secure railway communication?—We have had that under consideration for a long time. The difficulty is that the cost and the value of the ground which the railway communication would require is more than the benefit we should get from it.

7741. Now one general question?—Do you think it desirable that you should have this increased power of charging goods which is proposed by the London and India Dock Company?—Yes.

7742. Do you think that there should be a uniform scheme throughout the Metropolis in that respect; that it should apply to all docks?—I think it would be decidedly preferable if there were.

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7743. Both those that exist to-day and any future docks that are constructed?—That is a question I have not considered.

7744. But if it were not made universal in London, those docks which had the power of charging would obtain a monopoly, so to speak, of that particular power?—I think that those docks which did not charge would be more likely to attract business from the docks which did charge.

(*Mr. Harper.*) My Lord, may I ask one question?

(*Chairman.*) Yes.

Further cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

7745. I understood you to tell me that your dividend last year was 5 per cent. Will you look at the last paragraph of the report you handed to me. "The directors recommend that a dividend of £2 10s. per cent. be declared on the Ordinary Stock, and on Preference Stock A"——

(*Chairman.*) That is the balance-sheet for the year 1899.

(*Mr. Harper.*) "Making with the interim dividend of £2 10s. per cent. paid in October last £5 for the year." That is on both stocks is it not—ordinary and preference?—Ordinary and preference "A."

7746. "And in addition a bonus of £1 per cent. all free of income tax"?—The balance-sheet of which year are you reading from?

7747. From the one you handed to me—1900?—That was put in last year, but our Report for 1900, which came out in March last, shows that the dividend was only 5 per cent., and there was no bonus.

7748. You handed me a document which purports to bear date February, 1900?

(*Chairman.*) As I pointed out just now, that is the balance-sheet for the year 1899.

(*Mr. Harper.*) I beg your pardon.

(*Chairman.*) At Questions 1748-51 you promised a table of the number of vessels that have been detained from entering the Surrey Commercial Docks in consequence of the depth of water in the river. Have you given us that?—I think our engineer, Mr. Gaskell, who gave evidence after me, explained that I had given the answer to Question 1748 under a misapprehension.

7749. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Now, will you turn to Question 1835. You promised a statement of how much of the 907,347 tons consisted of vessels drawing more than 22ft.?—That statement was put in by the engineer at Question 1928.

Sir ALEXANDER RICHARDSON BINNIE recalled and further examined.

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7750. (*Chairman.*) You are, as we know, the chief engineer of the London County Council?—Yes.

7751. We have had some complaints as to the insufficiency and narrowness of the thoroughfares in the neighbourhood of the docks. You have, we understand, prepared a plan in connection with the access to the docks, and showing the present position of the railway communication therewith?—Yes.

See 2271; 5184.

7752. Will you kindly hand in the plan and tell us what you have to say on that subject? (*The witness handed in plan*).—The functions of the London County Council and its predecessors have more to do with through arterial communications, which may be considered of a metropolitan character, than with the widening of smaller streets, which are generally considered to be matters pertaining to the local authorities. An inspection of the map of the docks which lie within the County of London will show that on the north side of the river all the principal docks are situated to the southwards of Commercial Road East, East India Dock Road, and the West India Dock Road, which form a system of communication of the very best description. The Council and its predecessors, the Metropolitan Board of Works, have from time to time carried out, or are carrying out, street improvements, bridges, tunnels, etc. In the lists which I give will be found fifteen works which the Council has carried out or for which it has power to construct, and which works are proceeding. The total actual and estimated cost of these works is £4,965,237. There is attached to the plan a table and also numbers of each of the works. The improvements already completed or in course of execution are as follows:—

No. on Map.		£
1.	Sandys Row, Bishopsgate	53,426
4.	Old Gravel Lane Bridge widening	14,000
5.	Preston Road bridge, widening	68,774
6.	Limehouse entrance bridge, widening	
7.	City Arms bridge, widening	
8.	Manchester Road bridge, widening	
9.	Evelyn Street, Deptford	66,900
32.	Barking Road bridge	44,680
35.	Blackwall Tunnel street improvements and approaches	1,380,532
36.	Woolwich Free Ferry	182,775
		1,811,087

Then I give a table of the works proposed to be carried out. These are works for which we have obtained powers, and some of them are actually in course of construction.

Works proposed to be carried out.		£
2.	New street, Tower Hill to Whitechapel	216,500
3.	New street, Tower Bridge to Old Kent Road	394,000
10.	Long Lane, widening	190,400
33.	Rotherhithe Tunnel and street improvements	2,198,250
34.	Greenwich Tunnel	155,000
		3,154,15

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Besides the above, the Council has contributed to works executed by the City of London the following amounts:

	£
11. Widegate Street, Bishopsgate	29,875
12. Upper Thames Street, widening	12,500
13. Lower Thames Street, widening	50,000
14. Mansell and Middlesex Streets, widening	52,750
	145,125

It will thus be seen that the Council have constructed works, or contributed towards those constructed by the City, £1,956,212; and have obtained Acts for, and are carrying out or about to carry out, works to the value of £3,154,150. Then I have a list of works carried out by the predecessors of the County Council—the Metropolitan Board of Works:—

Street improvements carried out by Metropolitan Board of Works.

	£
15. Southwark Street improvement	366,070
16. Burdett Road improvement	38,204
17. Commercial Road extension	202,225
18. Wapping High Street, widening	216,533
19. Shoreditch High Street, widening	121,816
20. Bethnal Green Road, widening	196,509
21. Great Eastern Street, widening	276,012
22. Tooley Street, widening	376,089
23. Jamaica Road and Union Road, widening	71,173
24. Tower Hill, widening	80,435
25. Great Tower Street, widening	500,000
26. Canterbury Road Bridge, Greenwich	5,670
	2,450,736

Then the Metropolitan Board of Works also contributed towards works carried out by the City. The following is a list of the street improvements to which the Metropolitan Board of Works contributed:—

	£
27. Aldgate High Street	10,497
28. Lower Thames Street	916
29. Upper Thames Street	15,975
30. Leadenhall Street	9,884
31. Fenchurch Street	60,340
	£97,612

We thus have works already executed by the London County Council or its predecessors to the value of £4,504,560, and works proposed, partly constructed, or about to be constructed, £3,154,150. These together make a total of £7,658,710. It should be noticed that beyond the county boundary (coloured green upon the map), the London County Council have no jurisdiction. The map also shows by black lines the railway communications and depots of the different large companies situated near the various docks.

7753. Are we to understand that the whole of this amount of 7½ millions is to be or has been expended on the improvement of public thoroughfares leading to the docks?—Directly or indirectly leading to the docks.

7754. Is that so?—It is all in that eastern part of London.

7755. It all gives benefit to the docks?—Yes. In fact, during the last eleven years all the improvements with which I have been connected that are shown upon that map, have been brought before the County Council primarily by the local authorities on the plea that they would give the required accommodation.

7756. Do you mean to tell us that the whole of this expenditure will benefit the docks?—Undoubtedly, it has benefited, and will benefit them.

7757. Not indirectly, but directly?—Yes.

7758. You told us just now that you had powers for such and such works. What do you mean by that?—Parliamentary powers. There are no works here for which we have not obtained Parliamentary powers.

7759. As far as the financial part of the question is concerned, you have not as yet, I suppose, borrowed the money?—Part of it must have been expended. I have mentioned among the works proposed to be carried out a new street, Tower Hill to Whitechapel, and a new street, Tower Bridge to Old Kent Road. That is partly expended. I know part of the works are already carried out, and a great deal of the land is already bought; and in the same way with Rotherhithe Tunnel. A large amount of the land, I know, is purchased. Greenwich Tunnel is nearly finished.

7760. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Will Rotherhithe Tunnel be of much benefit to the docks?—Yes, a very great benefit, because connected with it are street improvements at both ends. Perhaps you will allow me to point it out to you on the map? (*The witness explained on the map to the Commission.*) Starting from London Bridge along the red line the Metropolitan Board of Works widened Tooley Street. Another widening took place, and in continuation of the Tooley Street widening there are several other widenings, making a direct communication between London Bridge and the Surrey Commercial Docks. The Rotherhithe Tunnel improvements on the Surrey side of the river near the docks not only involve the construction of a tunnel, but the widening of the streets leading to the Surrey Commercial Docks. In the same way on the north side of the river, besides the tunnel, there are large works of improvement of the streets in the neighbourhood of the Regent's Canal Dock and of the Borough Fish Market at Rotherhithe. For instance, works 6, 7, 8, and 9 have been constructed within the last few years. No. 6 embraces the street improvement and a bridge over the entrance to the West India Docks; 7, and in the same way, 8 and 9 were all very important improvements not only as giving facilities for the passage to the docks, but the streets were widened in the vicinity of the docks to facilitate traffic for the whole of the Isle of Dogs.

7761. (*Mr. Peel.*) When you say "proposed," I suppose you mean sanctioned by the County Council?—Yes, sanctioned by the County Council and sanctioned by Parliament, and part of the money expended. I have not brought into the account anything for which Parliamentary powers have not been obtained.

7762. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I think we have it clearly from you that this has arisen out of the docks?—This has arisen out of the docks and the accommodation necessary to connect the docks with London.

7763. In other words, if the docks had not been there most of it would not have been required?—I do not think it would have been required.

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

7764. The City contributes about one-eighth of the rate substantially?—Yes, about that. It is one-eighth of the valuation, at all events.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

7765. Do you suggest that these improvements were improvements carried out with reference to the docks alone?—Not with reference to the docks alone, because you cannot dissociate the docks from the population who live in the neighbourhood of the docks.

7766. You would not suggest that works done at Leadenhall Street were for the accommodation of the docks, would you?—It accommodates traffic going to the docks.

7767. That is cartage traffic going to the docks and also the cartage traffic going to the East End of London?—Of course, you cannot accommodate one without the other.

7768. You have not attempted to separate the dock cartage traffic from the other traffic, have you?—That would be impossible. It would only be a matter of statistics at the best.

Mr. G. L. Gomme.

Mr. George Laurence Gomme recalled and further examined.

7769. You are, as we know, Clerk to the London County Council?—Yes.

7770. You now appear before us to give evidence with reference to certain foreign ports?—Yes.

7771. It is evidence which was asked for at Question 3362?—Yes, and again at Questions 3385 to 3394 it was referred to.

7772. Will you kindly give us that evidence?—In accordance with the request made by the Commission in the course of my evidence on the 13th December last, I have prepared a memorandum relating to the chief Continental ports on the North Sea and English Channel. These ports are eleven in number, as follows (in order from north to south):—Hamburg, Bremen-Bremerhaven, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Ant-

werp, Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, Havre, Rouen, and Cherbourg. The information is, as far as possible, summarised from the reports of the British Consuls at the ports. For this purpose the reports relating to each of these ports have been examined since 1863, when they were first published in their present form. In that year reports were published relating to several of these ports, the first reports being either for the year 1861 or 1862; all the eleven ports were covered by the reports in the years soon after 1863. The extracts from these reports, upon which the memorandum is founded, I will hand in. These extracts have appeared to me so valuable and instructive, as indicating the circumstances of each port from time to time, the considerations which led to the effecting of port improvements, and, in fact, as so well serving to illustrate the question of port accommodation as a whole, that I have thought it best to have them printed at length. The history outlined by these extracts leads up to the present position of the ports in all respects, and this is dealt with in the valuable special report, "Commercial, No. 5 (1900)." To complete the history I have also included extracts from that report, converting the figures where given in foreign measure into English measure, so that the information may be more readily useful. In order to place before the Commission such a memorandum on the subject as they desire I endeavoured to supplement the information on various points in the reports of the Consuls by particulars from other sources. I accordingly applied to the Consuls at these ports for information on particular points, and I wish to acknowledge their invariable courtesy and the readiness with which they supplied me with information as far as they could do so. On the question of the proportion in which the cost of port improvements has been borne by the State and by the port authorities, and the proportion in which the cost of maintenance is met by port dues and charges, general municipal rates, or contributions from other sources, I have not been able to obtain anything like complete information. It appears, in fact, that such particulars are not always readily available to the authorities themselves. On this part of the subject I can only present such particulars as can be gleaned from the Consular reports. The question of dues and charges at the ports I deal with separately, with the object of getting, as far as possible, a comparative statement for these ports and for the Port of London. I will now hand in the memorandum and the extracts from the Reports of the British Consuls.

(*The witness handed in a memorandum on the principal points of information obtained from the British Consular reports relating to the chief Continental ports on the North Sea and English Channel. See Appendix, 21st Day, No. 8.*)

(*The witness also handed in extracts from the reports of the British Consuls at the chief Continental ports on the North Sea and English Channel relating to port administration, improvements, and accommodation. See Appendix, 21st Day, No. 9.*)

7773. If there is anything in your memorandum to which you particularly desire to call our attention will you please do so with regard to each port?—First, with regard to Hamburg. The whole of the port and port arrangements, with the exception of certain warehouses, which belong to a company or companies, and one quay let to the Hamburg-American Packet Navigation Company, are (according to the Commercial Report, No. 5, 1900) the property of, and controlled by, the Hamburg State. The quay administration provides equipment and labour for the loading and unloading of goods. Then, on the question of port improvements and accommodation. The history of the present condition of this port begins on the 1st October, 1888, the date of the incorporation of Hamburg with the German Customs Union, or, more correctly, with the completion of the arrangements for that incorporation, commenced some six or seven years earlier. In the years from 1880 to 1888, the Port of Hamburg was transformed by one vast scheme of improvement, carried out in connection with the incorporation. Then, I give the main points of that scheme, which included the clearing of a great part of the old town, involving "upwards of 1,500 houses and buildings, tenanted by 15,000 persons," providing a building area for warehouses of 10⅝ acres, and for a canal 27⅓ yards wide to be cut through it, and the cutting of a canal 2½ miles in length, 49 yards wide, and 49 feet in depth, from the upper port to the inner one, and the construction of the necessary warehouses and sheds along the quays. The cost of the whole scheme was (according to the report for 1887) "not less than some £6,000,000." In the report for 1882 it is stated that towards the estimated cost of £5,000,000, the Imperial Government would contribute £2,000,000, while the annual payment of £250,000 then made by the State of Hamburg to the Imperial Treasury for exemption from the Zollverein would cease.

7774. And was the original estimate found insufficient, in fact?—It was found insufficient in fact, but I am not able to state whether the Government contribution was increased in consequence. The next important point, I think, is that referred to in the 1897 report, which states that two public warehouses, costing £300,000, were then being erected, and the last available portion of ground for building warehouses had also been acquired by the Hamburg Government, at a cost of about £500,000, whilst, according to the report for 1899, scarcely any space remains for providing more harbour accommodation, and "the question is being at present considered of modifying the existing arrangements which have been made for river craft, so as to gain more room for sea-going ships." The accommodation as it now stands (according to the special report of 1900) is about 957 acres. Then, in the report for 1900, there is a very valuable summary of the conditions of Hamburg, which says that "the quays are under the administration of a Board, are well furnished with sheds for receiving the goods, suitable steam cranes, and railway facilities, and lighted with electric light. The quays and receiving sheds are models of practicability. Strongly built, roomy, and accessible in every way, they afford the best possible means for the rapid loading and discharging of vessels. These operations are usually carried on by means of cranes, which on the quays are both movable and stationary. Generally for each hatchway one crane, with the necessary workmen, is provided by the Quay Administration. There are railway tracks on all the quays and behind all the sheds, upon which merchandise and coal can be transported to the vessels' sides. Behind each row of sheds runs a well-paved street for the transport of goods by vehicles. The loading and discharging of river vessels is performed under the same conditions. Goods arriving and being dispatched by rail are discharged and loaded by the Quay Administration. Vessels having to load or discharge heavy goods weighing more than 2 tons can do so at special cranes, and have only to pay for the usual crane dues for hoisting and lowering such heavy goods, but no space dues." Then the deepening of the Elbe is a very important part of the condition of Hamburg. A paragraph in the report for 1870 says that thirty years ago "All vessels drawing more than 17 or 18 feet of water are compelled to discharge a part of their cargo into lighters at Stade, about 20 miles below Hamburg, the expense of which falls upon the ship, and gives rise to frequent disputes." Then in various reports, between that date and 1898, improvements in the Elbe are noted until, in the report for 1898 it says that large sums had been spent by Hamburg and Prussia in deepening the river between Hamburg and the sea, but "the rapid growth in the dimensions and draught of sea-going ships has at times outrun the efforts of the engineers employed in providing a sufficient depth of water for the same. During the past two years, however, extensive works for regulating and correcting the course of the Lower Elbe, and thereby deepening the navigable channel, have been actively carried on, and will be brought to an end in the year 1900; the costs contributed by Hamburg alone towards these works being £350,000." Then I give a summary of the cost of these various improvements, as they are quoted in the Consular reports, amounting to £8,790,000; but this is evidently incomplete, and does not contain the whole cost, as is proved by Question 5497 by Mr. Pogson, who stated that the total cost was something like £15,000,000, so that the whole of the items are not included in the Consular reports. Then I would direct the attention of the Commission to the table relating to shipping entered at the Port of Hamburg, where I have given the total shipping entered, and opposite each year I have put the various improvements as they have occurred. It will be noted that, where improvements occur, very considerable improvement in the tonnage also occurs. I have treated each port in the same manner as I have treated Hamburg. With regard to Bremen-Bremerhaven, the deepening of the Weser is an important part, showing what a large pro-

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ject had to be carried out for the purpose of improving this port. That was first dealt with in the report of 1880, where it was stated that it has been proved that if the scheme of deepening suggested were carried out more than one-half of the imports of the Weser could go direct to Bremen. The scheme involved a deepening of the river to provide for a draught at Bremen of 16·4ft. at high water and 13·1ft. at low water, and was estimated to cost a total of £1,468,750. It appears that Bremen contributed the whole cost of the deepening. At first it looked to the other states interested taking a part in the work, but in 1884 it had "become more and more evident that the deepening of the whole channel of the river Weser from Bremen to the mouth, a project of vital importance to this city will have to be carried out by the Bremen State alone," and that was so carried out. Then there were various improvements at Bremen amounting to £4,287,000. I have no doubt that those are not really the complete figures.

7775. (*Mr. Ellis.*) When you say these figures are incomplete, in what respect are they incomplete?—They are only the figures that are actually quoted in the various consular reports, and I cannot help thinking that there are other figures to be added to those if enquiry were made.

7776. They are not inaccurate; they are only incomplete?—Yes.

7777. You will be very careful about accuracy, of course?—Yes. I suggest that they may be incomplete, but they are not inaccurate as far as they go.

7778. You will be careful about that, because this is not first-hand evidence?—Yes. Then I give the same kind of table for Bremen-Bremerhaven that I give for Hamburg. I give the shipping entered at Bremen-Bremerhaven, and I draw attention to the fact that there again, after the big schemes are completed, the increase of shipping goes on. Then the next port is Amsterdam. The State is the proprietor of the North Sea and North Holland canals and one dock, the Railway Dock. It formerly owned another dock, the Entrepôt Dock, but this has been acquired by the municipality. The municipality owns the harbor and docks (with the exception of the Railway Dock), having purchased the Petroleum Harbour from a private company and the Entrepôt Dock from the State. Various improvements in accommodation have taken place at Amsterdam. This quotation from the report of 1899 is perhaps the most important: "Amsterdam has done its best to keep pace with the other northern ports of Europe in providing accommodation for shipping visiting the port, and as the whole of the docks are in the hands of the municipality, which has always of late years made cheap and ample accommodation its chief aim, the port has become one of the cheapest in Europe . . . Dock and quay accommodation are sufficient for a very large trade. . . . A new entrepôt dock will now shortly be completed, which will bear comparison with the best installation yet known." Then there was the construction of the North Sea Canal, which was a very important event in the commercial history of Amsterdam.

7779. When you say "quotation from the report," what do you mean?—I am referring in every case to the Consular reports on which this memorandum is based.

7780. The British Consular reports?—Yes. Then the table of shipping entered at the port of Amsterdam is constructed in the same way to show how the improvements affected the trade.

7781. (*Chairman.*) Then you refer to Rotterdam?—Yes, the next port I mention is Rotterdam. There, with the exception of private warehouses, the whole of the arrangements of the Port of Rotterdam appear to be in the hands of the municipality. The port improvements and accommodation perhaps may be summed up in the words of the report for 1894, where it is stated that "the increasing demand for shipping berths has resulted in the Town Council voting £50,000 towards making a second harbour at Katendrecht," and "in addition to these works, it is contemplated building a larger dock lower down the river, and the necessary funds for this purpose, amounting to £750,000, were recently voted by the Town Council." I saw that harbour myself when I was at Rotterdam. The total sum mentioned in the reports, in connection with the Port of Rotterdam, amounts to £3,666,000. Then the table showing the shipping entered at Rotterdam shows considerable increase following on the improvements that are set out there. Then as to Antwerp. The municipality is the port authority at Antwerp, and the whole arrangements, with the exception of the private warehouses, are in its hands. In consequence of the Government having contributed part of the funds for the construction of the quays along the river, it receives through the hands of the municipality a certain proportion of the dues. Very considerable improvement in accommodation has been made at Antwerp, but, in spite of that, in 1895 it was stated that "the crowding of the port constitutes a serious question." That is the port where the great quay system is adopted, and information is given as to that. Then there is a corresponding table given showing the great increase of shipping following on the improvements.

7782. Then as to Dunkirk?—At Dunkirk, as at all other French ports, the docks are the property of the Government, the administration of all port matters being in the hands of the Chamber of Commerce. Then I give an account of the improvements which have taken place, and the depth at which vessels could come into that port; and there is a similar table showing the shipping entered at Dunkirk at various dates, with the dates of the improvements affixed. Then as to Calais the same information is given. The port is in the hands of the Government of France. Very considerable port improvements have taken place, and it is very important there to notice that in the report of 1897, after reciting the accommodation and facilities of the port, which make it "a port of which the Municipality and Chamber of Commerce have good reason to be proud," it is stated that "a very different and long-past state of things" still placed the port at a disadvantage, as the old prejudice, created by the lack of accommodation, had not been removed. Then a table showing the increase of tonnage is given, and it is a considerable increase for Calais, which is not a very important port. Then the same information is given for Boulogne. There is nothing to distinguish this port from other French ports with regard to administration. The improvements are given in detail, and the total amounts to £1,154,950. Then the shipping is given in a special table, showing the improvements alongside. Then Havre is the next port to deal with.

7783. Do I take it that at Havre the docks are not the property of the Government?—Yes, they are the property of the Government under the Chamber of Commerce.

7784. So the same administration applies to Havre?—Yes, the same administration applies. There the question of the depth of the entrance of the port was a matter of considerable moment. That has been dealt with by constant dredging. It was originally 20ft. 2in. at neap tides, and now it is 25ft. 4in. They have established hydraulic lifts and sheds for the protection of goods on the quays, and carried out a very great deal of improvement at a cost of nearly £3,000,000, as set out in the table that I give in detail. The shipping there has grown very considerably, following the improvements which have taken place. At Rouen the administration follows the same course. Very considerable improvements have taken place there, which I have given in detail. Certain difficulties arose between the Government and the Municipality as to the lighting of the quays. The difficulties were ultimately settled, the State doing something and the Chamber of Commerce and the Municipality doing the rest. Dredging is an important part of the improvement of this port, and that has been done at considerable expense. It is important to note a paragraph in the report for 1895, which states that "this work, together with the others I have mentioned, are all details of a general plan, the governing idea of which is the removal of every hindrance to the free inflow of the flood tides." The total cost that I have been able to ascertain from the reports comes to £2,068,000. The shipping entered at the port is given, as far as I am able to give it, comparing it with the improvements. Then the next port is Cherbourg. There is nothing particular that I wish to draw the attention of the Commission to in regard to that port. Now if your Lordship will allow me it may be convenient to summarise the most important points revealed by the consular reports dealt with in regard to the administration and improvement of these ports. These points appear to be the following:—(1) That with few

exceptions the accommodation for shipping has been provided within the last 40 years, and for the most part within the last 30 years. Bremerhaven, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam are the chief exceptions, the rule applying to all the others, and, of course, to these ports in great measure as well. (2) That great natural difficulties have had in all cases to be overcome, and that a large part of the energies of the responsible authorities has been devoted to the carrying out of extensive and costly works for the removal of these natural difficulties. It is only necessary to mention the following: The shallow state of the Elbe to Hamburg, necessitating a large scheme of dredging; the shallow state of the Weser to Bremen, necessitating a large scheme of dredging; the long and shallow approach to Amsterdam by either the Zuyder Zee or the North Holland Canal, necessitating the cutting of the North Sea Canal; the difficult and tedious approach by the Brielle to Rotterdam, necessitating the cutting of the Hook of Holland Canal; the accumulation of sand banks in the Scheldt, necessitating extensive rectification of the river banks to facilitate the approach to Antwerp; the depth of the harbour and approaches at Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, and Cherbourg, necessitating extensive dredging; the condition of the Seine, necessitating continuous dredging and extensive dyking in the interests of the ports of Havre and Rouen. (3) That when many of these extensive schemes of improvement were undertaken the shipping was of comparatively small dimensions in view of the cost of the improvements proposed. (4) That accommodation has been provided to a great extent with a view of inviting fresh trade rather than of accommodating existing trade. (5) That the anticipations as to increase of shipping with which improvements have been undertaken have on the whole been fulfilled. (6) That the principle of providing for ships of the greatest draught from time to time appears to have been kept steadily in view.

7785. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Before you pass from this summary, I wish to ask one question. In the first place, have you been out to these places?—Not to all of them. I have been to four of them, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp.

7786. Can you tell me if, with regard to Germany, Holland, and Belgium, or France, or any of them, the naval aspect of the matter has entered into the expenditure of this money?—I think not, except perhaps, as far as Cherbourg is concerned; certainly, in all the ports I visited the commercial element was the only element in the consideration of which this expenditure was made.

7787. Then you think we may take it for granted that the money was spent *qua* commerce and not war?—I think so.

7788. (*Chairman.*) Now will you hand in your memorandum on the subject of port charges?—I only put these figures before the Commission with the idea that they constitute a proper comparison, although I can understand that in one or two cases they may not be quite complete.

(*The witness handed in memorandum on the subject of Port Charges. See Appendix, 21st Day, No. 10.*)

7789. Do these figures also come from the British Consular reports?—Yes, checked by any other information that I have been able to get; I do not rely only on the printed reports. I am satisfied that they are really good figures to put before the Commission. I first of all give a few details as to the system of charging in each port, which I think perhaps I need not trouble the Commission with, as it is all in detail in the memorandum, but I will come rather to the question of the comparison in the table of "Total port dues per ton net register paid by the shipowner." In that table the whole of the port dues are set out, the ports being arranged in order of amount of dues per ton net register from the lowest to the highest. And I have added at the end the corresponding figures for London, showing for all these different purposes the charge at the several ports. Of the broad results shown by these figures there can, I think, be little doubt. These results divide the ports into three groups:—(1) The ports of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp, where the charges are exceedingly low, partly owing to the fact that the Imperial Government in each case has largely contributed to the cost of improvements, and has foregone all Imperial dues, and to the fact that the municipality, acting as the port authority, has made it its object to keep the charges on shipping at the lowest point. (2) The ports of Hamburg and Bremen-Bremerhaven, where the Imperial Government has not come to any great extent to the aid of the municipality in meeting the cost of the extensive improvements that have been carried out. The port of Hamburg levies a considerable tax on the shipowner in the shape of a quay due to meet the cost of the improvements, whereas the State of Bremen levies a tax on the goods, which accounts for the difference in the charges on the shipowner at the two ports. (3) The French ports, where both the Imperial Government and the local authorities levy very considerable dues on the shipowner to meet the cost of the extensive improvements that have been carried out. This comparison, so far as it goes, can be made with almost absolute certainty. It must, however, be borne in mind that the figures are in nearly every case subject to modifications according to a variety of circumstances, such as the port of sailing or destination of the vessel, the number of voyages made in a year, the nature of the cargo carried, the proportion of cargo discharged, the fact as to whether the ship cleared with cargo or in ballast, and others. The charges in this table are the higher limit for each port, and may generally be taken as applying to an oversea steamer discharging a full cargo (but not taking into account dues in respect of deck cargo in London) and leaving in ballast. To pursue the comparison through these modifications would be difficult and uncertain, so that I keep to the one standard. The table does not include the dues on a steamer discharging at London in the stream, for the reason that the class of vessel to which this table is applicable would not discharge to any considerable extent in the stream, but would in nearly all cases have to go into the docks at London. Applying these dues to a vessel of 2,000 tons net register the charge would be as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Antwerp (quays)	26	5	0
Amsterdam	30	0	0
Rotterdam	31	5	0
Hamburg (stream)	33	6	8
Antwerp (docks)	43	15	0
Bremerhaven	47	3	4
Cherbourg	114	15	0
Havre	126	11	8
Calais	131	6	8
Boulogne	141	13	4
Dunkirk	159	1	8
Rouen	167	18	4
Hamburg (Government quay)	217	13	4
London (docks)	129	3	4

7790. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Are you quite satisfied that you are comparing like with like all through?—I am absolutely certain, as far as I am able to judge, and I challenge any question on that. I have been very careful on that point. The second division of the port expenses borne by the shipowners, namely, that of charges, may be conveniently considered under two heads:—(*a*) Charges in connection with the navigation of the vessel, namely, pilotage and towage. (*b*) Charges in connection with the cargo, namely, loading and unloading, tallying, agency, brokerage, and minor expenses. The brokerage at French ports is a special item, which I describe. The pilotage is also a matter which is different with regard to each port. I have taken care to set out in the table the part that is compulsory, and the part that is optional.

7791. (*Chairman.*) You give us a comparison with London?—Yes. The estimate for London pilotage would be: In (Dungeness to Albert Dock), £16 10s.; out, £8 10s.; making £25; equal to 3d. per ton.

7792. You have been careful again to compare like with like?—Yes. Then, with reference to the discharging of vessels. The last of the main heads of the expenses borne by the shipowner is the cost of discharging the cargo, which consists in passing it from the vessel to the consignees' men, or those receiving it on his behalf on the quay, or in the lighter or at the ship's rail. Then I give some facts from the 1900 report on that on the different ports, showing the wages of the dockers for those purposes. I give a table showing the cost of discharging cargo per ton on different selected items. Then putting all these charges together, I give a summary of shipowners' expenses under the chief heads per ton net register at the various ports, showing London to be the dearest. Converting that into a charge for a steamer of 2,000 tons net register, it shows the charge

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at Amsterdam to be £119 18s. 4d., and the other ports ranging higher until we come to London, where the charge would be £354 3s. 4d. I have not been able to give figures for some of the ports, because the information is not available.

7793. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you any doubt as to the accuracy of these figures?—I have no doubt.

7794. It would be a serious thing if we were to wade through all these figures and then their author throws any doubt on them?—I have no doubt, in my own mind, that they are correct; but, of course, when you are examining a large number of printed documents, which are not prepared for this special purpose, it may happen that in one year the information is not given on exactly the same basis, or in exactly the same way, as in another year, and in that way some small error might have crept in. I do not think it has, because I have compared it with the comprehensive report of 1900, which summarises this for the Government, and in that way I have been able to check it, I think, sufficiently to satisfy myself in my own mind that the figures are correct.

7795. You place them before us with a sense of responsibility?—Quite so.

7796. (*Mr. Peel.*) You have compared these ports in respect of the charges on the shipowner only?—Yes, that is so.

7797. You have no comparison as regards the different expenses on the goods?—No. That is so extremely difficult to get. It differs in each port. Some part of the charges which are thrown upon the shipowner in one port may be thrown upon the consignees in another port, and so on.

7798. I quite understand that. Of course, as regards the consumer, the important thing really is to know the whole of the charges?—No doubt that is so.

7799. Whether they are paid on goods or paid by the shipowner as shipping dues?—I think that is so undoubtedly.

7800. To make a satisfactory comparison from that point of view it would be necessary to take all those charges into account?—I think it would be necessary to take the whole of the charges until the goods are in the consumer's warehouse.

7801. As you say, in one case certain charges might be paid by the shipowner, and in another case they might be paid by the consignee or paid, as we say, on the goods?—That is so.

7802. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) With reference to the figures you have given as to the cost of discharging, I see that in London the cost of discharging is given in the form of a tariff of the London and India Docks Company?—Yes; I have taken the tariff of the London and India Docks Company.

7803. But that would not apply to goods that are delivered overside, which the dock company have nothing to do with?—That is so. It would only be goods delivered on the quay.

7804. And that is a small part of the merchant trade of London; it is not the largest part?—No, it is not the largest part, but it is the only available information that I had for the purposes of comparison. The other charges would be a charge for lighterage and wharfage.

7805. In this case the expense borne has not much to do with an official charge in the shape of dock dues. A merchant receiving goods pays a competitive price for doing something, and it is not an official charge; it is a matter of regulation?—Yes, that would be so, no doubt; it is a charge for services rendered.

7806. And not an official charge in the shape of a tax?—No, it would be a charge strictly for services rendered.

7807. If you separate that item from the others, you can hardly say that London is the dearest port by any means. Take the dues, for instance. You find Hamburg, and Boulogne, and Rouen, and Dunkirk, and Calais are all as high as or higher than London?—That is so, taking the port dues as taxation. But that is only one part of the question.

7808. I am merely wishing to separate the element of taxation, which is the more particular one that we have to deal with, from the other elements?—Yes, that is so.

7809. I should like to ask a question with reference to those statistics of shipping entering at the different ports (I think I mentioned this to you when you were here before), namely, whether you can separate the shipping entered in the foreign trade at these different ports from the shipping entered in the coasting trade. Before you answer I should like to mention the reason of my putting the question. If you give us the figure as to the shipping entered in the foreign trade, we have a figure which is strictly comparable as between the ports of this country, including London, and ports in foreign countries. It is all a question of the foreign trade. But if you give a figure of the coasting trade, we do not know that the mode of entering the vessels is precisely the same at all the different ports. I mention this particularly because in London two years ago the figure was taken one way, and last year the figure was taken another way, because a certain part of what used not to be the Port of London has now been included in the port. And these entries of shipping which used to be entered in the coasting trade are no longer entered. If these foreign figures are subject to qualifications of a similar nature one would like to know about them, and I ask whether you have any information to give upon the subject?—I am quite aware of the distinction which you make in the London ports. I have not been able to separate the foreign trade from the coast trade in all these ports. It could be done; in fact, I have material for one or two ports, but only for a few years, not for a series of years. With reference to whether there has been any change in the figures in the foreign ports, I do not think that is so, because all these figures are compiled in the first instance not by me, but by His Majesty's Consuls, and I take it they would not compare unlike quantities without giving a note to that effect.

7810. I do not like to question the value of the information given by His Majesty's Consuls, but I should like to know whether any of them have drawn attention to points of that kind?—No, they did not do so; I have been careful to note any change that has taken place.

7811. Apart from changes from time to time it would be very important to know that when a certain foreign port gives so many ships entering in the coasting trade, the mode of entering and the way in which the ports in the coasting trade are treated is much the same as it is in this country. It might be quite possible, for instance, that a particular port would put down a vessel as coming in in the coasting trade which in London would not be entered because we consider it to be practically in the same port?—I am aware of that possible difficulty. My only answer to it is that there is no indication in any report that any change of system has taken place.

7812. Apart from tonnage I am very anxious to know what the system is—whether we get precisely the same figure or not?—I am unable to give that information, but I should like to point out that occasionally in the Consular Reports where there is a change of any kind which makes a distinction between the figures of one year and another year it is indicated. I have in one or two places noted that there is a different system of reckoning which is duly noted.

7813. Yes, I noted that?—So that as it has been noted in some instances, I have assumed that it is noted wherever a different system is introduced.

7814. That would not cover the case of a custom in our country being to omit entering a vessel which comes from the same port, no matter from how distant a place in that port, so long as it was legally from the same port, although the practice in another country might be quite different. That might make a serious difference, might it not?—Yes; I quite follow that it might.

7815. You cannot give us any idea, therefore, taking for instance the large case of shipping entered at Hamburg, what particular parts of the world that shipping has come from?—No, I cannot. In some of the reports there is information given as to particular increases or decreases in certain shipping, and it is a very important thing to know that in 1892, for instance, the plague was at Hamburg, and there was a decrease in the shipping there; and the same applies to Antwerp, too. There was a very considerable decrease. That decrease is due principally to the South American trade leaving Hamburg at that particular time, and it was followed immediately by a very considerable increase in the London shipping. That rather confirms the point that I put before the Commission in my evidence-in-chief, that if there is a difficulty in a port, the shipping of

that port will go elsewhere, just the same as an improvement in the port will attract shipping to it. That seems to me to be one of those concrete cases that I have been anxious to quote.

7816. Is it not the case that the chief trade of these ports of Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France, which you have been giving, is trade with the United Kingdom, so that if they had been increasing so much, the trade of the United Kingdom must also have been increasing?—It is no doubt to a considerable extent trade with the United Kingdom, and to that extent of course you get corresponding increases. But in the instance that I have just now given, where there is a very large falling off of a particular trade, the South American trade, because of a difficulty at the port, I come across, I think, one of the most telling examples of where a difficulty at the port (in this case the plague) takes away the foreign trade and that foreign trade has to seek its outlet somewhere else.

7817. The entries of shipping at Hamburg from South America at any time would not be very large, and would not account for very much of that eight millions of entries which you have given?—No, it would not account for very much. I am only giving you that as a sample of what occurs.

7818. I find looking at our own navigation returns, that there is a comparative table for five years. The clearances of shipping to Germany in 1895 were just under four million tons; in 1896 they were 4,118,000 tons. Then in 1899 they were 4,489,000 tons. That would be a very large part of the shipping that was afterwards entered in Germany, would it not?—Yes, I think so.

7819. Then turning to the other side, entries of shipping in this country from Germany, I find that they increased from 4,206,000 tons in 1895 to 5,188,000 tons in 1899?—Yes.

7820. A very large increase, and showing a very large proportion, I should imagine, of the whole of the shipping trade of Germany?—Yes, that would be so.

7821. So that practically in these figures of shipping at the Continental ports, and then at our own ports, we are practically dealing very much with the same figures?—To some extent no doubt that is so; to the extent that the trade of Germany is coming to Britain, and the trade of Britain is going to Germany, no doubt that would be so.

7822. I really wished to bring out the point that it was a rather important hiatus in the information, that we have no view of where that shipping entered at Hamburg and the other places comes from, or where the clearances of shipping go to?—No.

7823. It would have been a very important addition to the information?—It would.

7824. And it is rather a pity that we have not got it. Whether we shall get it before the close of the inquiry I am not sure, but it would be an important matter?—Yes, very important. I might perhaps say that although the shipping from Germany to Britain would be as you have reminded me, it is not only the question of the shipping from Germany to Britain, but it is the question of the shipping from Germany to London that I am now concerned with before this Commission. In comparing that we find that London is not receiving so much per cent. of the total as other ports in the kingdom are, and that is the point that I lay stress on, rather than the fact that a good deal of this shipping is a matter of commerce between Germany and Britain.

7825. A large part of that also would be a part of the short sea voyage trade, a good deal of which would not go into the docks?—No doubt that would be so. I am not speaking of the docks—I am speaking of London as a whole. My previous answer did not relate to the shipping that went into the docks, but rather shipping that came into the Port of London.

7826. Still, as that trade is of a kind that does not go into the docks very much, it would not affect the prosperity of the docks very much?—Not of the docks, but of the port, yes.

7827. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you any maps with regard to this?—I have put in all the maps that I had on my previous examination.

7828. (*Mr. Daldy.*) Have you put in the table that you have prepared showing the comparative increase in the tonnage of the shipping. You have a separate table for that, I believe?—I was referring to that just now. Shall I put in the table?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I think the Commissioners would like to have it. I should like to have it put in.

(*Chairman.*) We should like to have it.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the comparative increase in the tonnage of the shipping entered at the ports of London, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp in the years* 1889 *to* 1899. *See Appendix,* 21*st Day, No.* 11.)

7829. (*Mr. Daldy.*) With reference to the evidence given by Mr. Scott, I think it was examined in your department and you had a memorandum prepared upon it. Of course, I am not asking you to comment on it in any way, but if there are any matters of fact in it which you think it is important to dispute, it might be well to mention them if you have the memorandum before you. I do not know whether that may be so, but if you will just look at it I think it is convenient now, before you are cross-examined, if there is anything you want to say about that?—I should only like, perhaps to put it in this way, that I have read very carefully through Mr. Scott's evidence, and although some of that evidence appears to me to be suggested by my own, yet after consideration of that evidence I have not seen occasion to alter either any of my figures or any of the deductions which I drew from those figures. I do not know that I need go into it further than that, unless, of course, the Commission wish me to.

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

7830. In your evidence, is there anywhere any reference to the effect on the figures you give of shipping, of the large subsidies that Governments have been giving to foreign shipping?—No; the only things I have given are subsidies which the Governments have given towards these port improvements.

7831. For instance, the large subsidies that the German Government have given to the North German Lloyd, the Hamburg and South American, and other lines, and its effect of increasing German trade. There is no reference to that?—No.

7832. The fact that the Government are subsidising steamship lines to a large extent will, I suppose, probably account for some of the increase at the various ports?—It would account for something. I suggest that even subsidies cannot direct commerce.

7833. Subsidies may run ships, though they may not put the goods in them. I think I am right in saying that, in the table you have given of shipping entered at the port of Rotterdam, Rotterdam shows a very remarkable increase?—Yes.

7834. I think in the last five years Rotterdam has added 50 per cent. to its tonnage of shipping?—Yes, it has.

7835. Is the impression that you got from your researches that Rotterdam is one of the most dangerous competitors for foreign trade?—I think it is recognised as such.

7836. A large amount of transhipment trade which used to come from the east and other parts to the Continent through London, left London at the time of the great dock strike?—Yes; I think that is so.

7837. And apparently has not come back. Apparently that trade has gone directly to the Continental ports instead of coming to London as it used to?—I think that is so.

7838. I want to ask you about some evidence given when counsel were not present. At Question 3171, you said, "Whatever the authority under which the City Corporation exercised jurisdiction over the river prior to this stage, there would seem to be no doubt in the first place that that jurisdiction was not definitely theirs by statutory right." I do not want to anticipate the evidence of the Corporation, but you had not found, when you said that (perhaps you have not found yet) that there are four statutes conferring jurisdiction on the Corporation?—I know that, but I think before the statutes there was a prescriptive right, and it is rather that that I referred to.

7839. Four statutes long before the period of which you are speaking—in the year 1605?—Yes.

7840. I do not quite understand why you said it was not definitely theirs by statutory right if there were

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four statutes. It does not, of course, matter very much. It looks as if you were not aware of those statutes at the time that evidence was given?—I think I am aware of all the statutes that confer powers on the Corporation.

7841. Then I do not understand how that statement came to be made?—Just at the moment I am afraid I do not; it is some time since I looked at this particular question.

7842. Now, another question which is possibly more germane to the inquiry of the Commission. This is at Question 3215. You put in a table at Question 3213, showing the ports at which large ships were registered?—Yes.

7843. In your answer to Question 3215 you said, "It cannot but be regarded as of some significance that even as a port of registry London, with its great trade, holds such an inferior position in respect of the larger class of vessels." You obviously at that time did not know the explanation. Have you found it out since?—I knew it was a very small point.

7844. Do you know the explanation now of the small number of vessels registered at London?—Simply because their owners do not live in London.

7845. That is the only reason yet that occurs to you that you know of?—I really have not concerned myself very much about that.

7846. The table was put in, I suppose, that the Commission might draw some inferences from it, from the small number of vessels registered in London?—The table was put in in this way—

(*Mr. Ellis.*) It turns on compulsory pilotage.

7847. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) It turns on compulsory pilotage; I do not know whether you knew it?—Yes, I know that.

7848. Ships that are registered in London are exempt from compulsory pilotage, and therefore liable to pay the full amount of any damage they do by collision?—Yes.

7849. Ships that are not registered in London have compulsory pilotage and are therefore exempt from any damage done by collision?—Yes.

7850. I do not think you knew that at the time you put in this?—No, I did not.

7851. It rather shows the danger, does it not, of drawing inferences when you do not know the facts?—I did not attach much importance to this particular question.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

7852. You have made a statement in your evidence that the wages of dockers in London are 6d. per hour?—Yes.

7853. Then you say the London and India Docks Company hire out labourers to work under the direction of the officer of the ship at 9d. per hour?—Yes.

7854. That is a profit of 50 per cent. on that labour?—The information is obtained from "Turnbull's Port and Dock Charges," which is a very well-known authority, based on the dock companies' tariffs.

7855. I wanted to know if you knew it yourself. We have had statements here that the discharging of ships is not a profitable occupation in London?—I only got it from the tariff of the company myself.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

7856. Is not the barge traffic both at Antwerp and Hamburg very great?—I believe it is.

7857. Especially at Hamburg, where there are thousands of barges in port lightering the goods from the ships to quays?—Yes.

7858. I understand the system there is the open-quay system?—Yes.

7859. Is the system of cranes there a highly efficient system? Is it not the overhead system?—I am not an expert on cranes.

7860. But you have been at two of the places?—Yes, I have been to Hamburg.

7861. Do you know how they are placed?—No; I cannot say I do.

7862. Can you tell me whether the size of the cranes is such that goods can be discharged into barges on one side of the ship, while goods are being placed on the quay on the other side of the ship?—I do not know that as a matter of detail; I only know this: that the Hamburg authorities have the best system of cranes and are perfectly satisfied with that system.

7863. What is called the luffing crane?—I am not an authority on cranes.

7864. But you know what I mean—a crane with a jib which moves up and down?—Yes.

7865. Have you seen that system at work there?—I cannot say that I have. I did not notice that particular detail among all the details that I noticed.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

7866. You would, I am sure, be the first to confess that you are not a shipping expert yourself?—No, I am not.

7867. And those suggestions of cranes that reached from the shore right over the deck of a ship to the far side and put things into barges are things you have never seen, in point of fact, and you will not offer an opinion with regard to them?—I do not know that I have never seen them.

7868. Have you. I should be much surprised if you had seen them?—I have seen so much in this way that I would not like to charge my memory to say that I have not seen them.

7869. You would not like to say that you have seen a crane on a quay which had an arm which would stretch right up in the air and put goods over the ship to a barge on the other side?—Well, I have seen some wonderful things in the way of cranes.

7870. I understand you now stand to your figures and your inferences in your former evidence?—Yes.

7871. Which Mr. McKinnon Wood told us had been seen and approved by the County Council?—Yes.

7872. You have been asked about Mr. Scott's evidence; may I direct your attention to the evidence of Mr. Jones at Question 4831. Have you read Mr. Jones's evidence since?—Yes; not so closely as I have Mr. Scott's, but I have read it.

7873. At Question 4831 Mr. Jones put in some tables showing the port charges. These are shown in Appendices 4 and 5 of the 14th day. He referred to it afterwards at Question 4836. He said that he had prepared tables showing the cost of handling modern cargo vessels, speaking from his experience as a shipowner. I want to ask one question only with regard to that, because I am sure the Commission would not like me to go through too many.

(*Chairman.*) I think the witness has been already asked a question as to this particular point.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) No, my Lord; I do not think that what Sir Robert Giffen put was upon this particular matter that I am going to put to the witness.

7874. Bremerhaven is not a port of which you have any personal knowledge whatever?—No.

7875. You have prepared a table in your evidence showing the dues at Bremerhaven on a steamer of 2,000 tons net to be £47 3s. 4d.?—Yes.

7876. 5,000 tons would pay just about two and a-half times as much?—Yes.

7877. Say about £125?—Yes.

7878. Now, will you kindly turn to Appendix 5 of the 14th day, and see what he says. He says Bremerhaven dock and quay dues £310?—Yes.

7879. That is against, on your own showing, roughly £125?—Yes.

7880. Have you any explanation to offer of that?—No, I cannot be responsible for Mr. Jones's figures. I may just mention that I did notice that difference, and in order to see that I had not made some stupid mistake I went over the figures again.

7881. But you did not call the attention of the Commission to it just now?—It did not occur to me. It is just possible that there may be some exceptional charges.

7882. Did you not, in answer to Mr. Ellis, say that your figures were all correct?—Yes; I say it now.

7883. You have not been to Bremerhaven?—No, I have not.

7884. You have only got a piece of information from somebody?—Forgive me, I have not only got a piece of information from somebody; I have got information from a Government return, and I have converted the information from that Government return to this particular ship.

7885. Have you an explanation now?—No, but I am reminded of a fact in connection with Bremerhaven. Not having visited it, and feeling that one might make a mistake in this case, I wrote specially to Bremerhaven giving them my figures, and I had them confirmed from Bremerhaven.

7886. May I ask who confirmed them?—I can show you the letter if we have it here.

7887. You do not pit yourself against Mr. Jones, do you?—Certainly not.

7888. Mr. Jones is a shipowner who sends ships to this port?—But Mr. Jones may be putting into his £310 charges for services that I put in another part of mine; I cannot tell.

7889. Will you kindly tell me, because you have put your whole figure there?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) Will my friend forgive me for interposing? Are not you comparing an average charge in Mr. Gomme's statement with a charge for a particular cargo which is specified in Mr. Jones's?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) No, I am not; it is comparative port charges. I do not want to pursue the matter any further. Of course, we have only just had this table handed to us, and it occurs to one at first blush; there may be other matters afterwards.

(*Chairman.*) We accept Mr. Gomme's statement that he has had the figures confirmed.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I accept Mr. Gomme's statement as to *bonâ fides* absolutely.

(*Chairman.*) And that he has had the figures confirmed?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Certainly. I do not suggest that Mr. Gomme has made a mistake willingly for one instant. I merely say it is a mistake, and it makes the figures unreliable.

7890. Were you here when Mr. McKinnon Wood was giving evidence?—Yes.

7891. I referred him at Question 7387 to Question 3360 of your former evidence, and I quoted it, I think, accurately, and I think to-day you have also said that your point is that London's increase in trade is very great, but that it is not increasing relatively in proportion to the rest of the kingdom?—That is so.

7892. The inference which you seek to draw from that fact is that it is a want of development and attention to the docks?—To the docks and port.

7893. Then I went on to ask Mr. Wood if a table had been taken out for the trade of the docks of London?—Yes.

7894. Have you taken out a table showing that the trade in the docks of London and the India Docks Company has increased relatively to that of the rest of the United Kingdom?—No, I have not, because my business before this Commission has not to do with the London and India Docks Company so much as with the Port of London. I have been treating the Port of London as a whole, and not going into any one of its small details.

7895. That it is a want of attention and development of the docks?—And of the port.

7896. Can you show at all that the trade of the docks has decreased even in your relative proportion theory?—I have not gone into the trade of the docks, because I have not the information to do so.

7897. I beg your pardon. I am going to show you where you have it. Will you kindly turn to Appendix No. 14 of the 9th day?—Yes.

7898. I am going to show you that you have been dealing with this matter—at least, I think I can. Will you kindly also turn to Appendix No. 8 on the 2nd day. That is a table handed in by Mr. Scott?—Yes

7899. Will you turn to the figures in Mr. Scott's table—that is the first one there, for 1871?—Yes.

7900. I may say the reason that year is taken is this—because there was a different system with the East and West India Dock previous to that date. There is no distinction about foreign trade in the East and West India Docks' figures before that date, but will you take these figures from me and check them. The total foreign tonnage entering the London Docks in 1871 was 1,683,093 tons?—Yes.

7901. Will you turn to 1899 and take same figures. There it is, 4,281,389 tons?—Yes.

7902. That is correct?—That is so.

7903. Now will you turn to your own table?—Yes.

7904. Go to the foreign tonnage entering London. Go to 1871 again. It is 4,181,059 tons?—Yes.

7905. Now for 1899 it is 9,244,593 tons?—Yes.

7906. The London and India Docks percentage of the London foreign trade there would be 40 per cent. in 1871, and 46 in 1899. Would that be about right?—I will take it from you that that is right.

7907. Now will you take another figure in your same table—the foreign tonnage of the whole of the United Kingdom for 1871?—Yes.

7908. That, of course, has to be got by adding the London and the rest together?—Yes.

7909. For 1871 it is 16,455,342 tons?—Yes, I agree.

7910. For 1899 it is 36,225,876 tons?—Yes.

7911. Now may I put these figures to you—at the London and India Docks the percentage of the foreign tonnage of the United Kingdom in 1871 was 10·2?—Yes, I agree with that.

7912. That the London and India Docks' percentage of the foreign tonnage of the United Kingdom for 1899 was 11·8?—Yes, I agree with that.

7913. So that over that time, so far from its being in want of development and attention to the docks, the docks of my company have actually increased relatively to the rest of the United Kingdom?—It is so on these figures, certainly.

7914. They are your own figures?—No, they are not my figures indeed.

7915. And you have accepted Mr. Scott's?—I should like to point out that although that is so, the amount of shipping now in the river and not accommodated at the docks at all, is far in excess of the total shipping at the time when the docks were first instituted, and the fact that one particular dock company has retained this amount of shipping is not so much to the point as that there is a very large amount of shipping still outside the docks, which they could have obtained if there had been accommodation for it.

(Adjourned to Tuesday, 4th June, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

Tuesday, 4th June, 1901.

PRESENT

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES CATER SCOTT re-called and further examined.

Mr. C. J. C. Scott. 4 June 1901.

7916. (*Chairman.*) I believe you desire to put in a statement showing the details of expenditure of the London and India Dock Company on maintenance for the year 1899?—Yes. Referring to Questions 6068 and 6666 I promised to put in certain details of expenditure on maintenance. These are the details I promised, and I think that completes all the tables I promised to put in. The items are:—General repairs, £10,718 13s. 6d.; machinery, £15,190 10s. 10d.; gear, tackle, vans, wagons, trucks, etc., £7,376 4s. 9d.; gas and water mains, etc., £1,997 0s. 2d.; roads, scavenging, etc., walls, fences, and gates, £8,674 7s. 7d.; maintenance of railways, etc., £7,461 8s. 1d.; bridges and lock gates, £2,348 7s. 10d.; quays, pier-heads, jetties, moorings, and dry locks, £4,171 5s. 8d.; tugs, £2,320 15s. 3d.; derricks, barges, dummies, boats, etc., £1,390 12s. 8d.; oils and other stores used at engine houses, £3,119 17s. 2d.; engineers' foremen's supervision and office expenditure, £4,876 15s.; sundry small works, £2,422 16s. 1d.; special maintenance, all the items of which are separately ordered by Works Committee, £31,704 6s. 5d.; proportion of "new works" to be charged to maintenance, £5,451 17s. 1d.; amount of maintenance as shown in the accounts, £109, 225 3s. 1d.

Alderman Sir MARCUS SAMUEL called and examined.

Alderman Sir M. Samuel.

7917. (*Chairman.*) You are chairman of the Special Committee of the Corporation of the City of London which was appointed to consider the subject of the inquiry by this Commission?—Yes.

7918. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—Before I commence with my evidence may I at once say on behalf of the Corporation that we entirely disclaim any hostility whatever either to the Thames Conservancy, the dock companies, the London County Council, or any of the bodies that have appeared before you. We are actuated entirely and solely by the hope and wish that we may assist the Royal Commissioners to the best of our ability in forming a scheme which will conduce to the good government of the port. We have no other object whatever, and certainly we have no hostility to any other body.

7919. With regard to the report of the Common Council, what will be convenient to you? Will you hand it in?—Yes, I will put it in, and then afterwards if the Commissioners wish me to refer to it paragraph by paragraph I will do so.

The witness handed in the following Report.

"Green, Mayor.

"A Common Council holden in the Chamber of the Guildhall of the City of London, on Thursday, the 28th day of March, 1901.

"Resolved and ordered, that the Special Committee on the subject of the Royal Commission on the Port of London be authorised to print, when prepared, their report on the reference to them from this Court.—(Signed) Monckton.

"To the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons of the City of London, in Common Council assembled:—We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, of your Committee specially appointed by your Honourable Court on the fourteenth day of March, 1901, to consider the whole question of the Royal Commission on the Port of London, and the City's action in relation thereto, do certify that we have duly proceeded therein. From time immemorial the Corporation of the City of London has been associated with the management of the Thames and of the Port of London; indeed, until the passing of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1857, it had been the sole authority for the conservation of the Thames. The Corporation still remains the Port Sanitary Authority, whilst markets for the whole Metropolis, including Billings-

gate Fish Market and the Cattle Market at Deptford, both on the Thames, are administered by that body. So recently as 1894, Parliament, in the Thames Conservancy Act passed in that year, continued to the Corporation its present representation of six members on that Board. The Board of Trade appointed a Commission, in accordance with the provisions of that Act, to report what dredging and other operations, if any, were practicable and expedient to improve the navigation of the Thames, and the Commissioners reported in 1896. The Conservancy Board considered this Report, and appears to have decided that, under the circumstances then prevailing, the maximum dredging recommended by the Commissioners was not immediately practicable; the chief reason apparently being insufficiency of funds. From the evidence which has been available to the Committee, it has become manifest that two main causes have operated for the lack of progress of London as a port: (1) Diversity of administration; (2) Inadequacy of funds. It has been forcibly borne to the minds of your Committee that there has been no one body which could take the initiative, or which had the powers of bringing the port up to the requirements of the age; and this will certainly be recognised, when it is remembered that the whole amount available to any public body for administering and improving the river and the approaches thereto has been a sum under £90,000 per annum. Recognising, therefore, that one body, possessing a complete power for river, port, navigation, shipping and other services, is absolutely necessary, we have arrived at the conclusion that such a body should be constituted. We are of opinion that the Board so created should be entirely independent of the control of any other public body, but that, inasmuch as very considerable powers will have to be entrusted to it, the leavening of a municipal element is desirable. Owing to the circumstances governing the custom of the Port of London, and contrary to the custom prevailing in every other principal port in the United Kingdom, no charge has ever been levied either on shipping (except to the small extent of ½d. and ¾d. a ton respectively now taken by the Thames Conservancy) or on goods, for the general improvement of the port. The great progress which has been made in Liverpool is largely attributable to the fact that the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board possesses powers of levying dues on shipping and goods for the improvement of the port and docks; and your Committee recommend that similar powers should be conferred upon the proposed new authority, when constituted, and that those powers should be ample to secure such a revenue as would provide a guarantee sufficient to justify Parliament in constituting the capital which would have to be created by this authority a trustees' stock. The question of finance is one of such importance that this must necessarily be of primary consideration in constituting the new authority. As a sum of about two millions sterling will apparently be required for dredging the river, and the whole of the dock property will be benefited by such expenditure, and having in view the enormous outlay admittedly necessary to bring the docks entirely up to modern requirements, your Committee are of opinion that the new authority should have power conferred upon it to purchase the property of the dock companies, in so far as Parliament may decide. As the dock companies have no power to charge any dues upon barges using the docks, or upon goods except when landed or warehoused there, any successful improvement of the docks by private authorities under such circumstances is impossible; and your Committee cannot recommend that the powers of taxation, which should be applied for the benefit of the Port, should be given to any private company. Your Committee have not felt themselves called upon at the present stage to make detailed recommendations as to general matters, but it does appear essential for the successful development of the Port that the railway communications between the docks and the various lines trading to London should be greatly improved; and your Committee would recommend that all railways within the docks area should be owned by the new authority, which should have power to treat and conclude agreements with the various railways for the better serving of the Port and of the Kingdom. Your Committee suggest that no further sufferance or bonded warehouse should be created or sanctioned by the Customs, and that powers should be taken (but not necessarily exercised) for the purchase of the bonded wharves and warehouses by the new authority, with a view to ultimately constituting the storage of all bonded goods a privilege for the benefit of the public. Your Committee are of opinion that no other but bonded wharves should be acquired, but that the warehouses taken over from the dock companies should be administered for the storage of public goods, with a view to reducing the charges now prevailing at the Port of London. Your Committee recommend the abolition of all private moorings in the Thames below London Bridge, and the fixing of such a fair rental to users of these moorings as may be considered necessary by the new authority. The provision of further accommodation in the Port of London is indisputably necessary. Your Committee recommend, among other improvements, that extensions should be made by way of stages on the principle of that already existing at the Gallions entrance to the Albert Dock, built upon piles on the borders of the deep water of the river, communicating with the land and with ample railway connection. Such construction would be effectual and cheap, and dispense with the necessity of quay walls, while providing (without cost of emptying locks) ample accommodation for the quick loading and unloading of vessels and barges. It follows, from the recommendations of your Committee, that the new authority should have the appointment of pilots, and the superintendence of pilotage, the fixing of their charges, the regulation of watermen and lightermen, and, in fact, the whole of the powers at present exercised on the Thames by the Thames Conservancy below Richmond, the Trinity House, and the Watermen's Company, and also those of the dock companies, and any other bodies having control over the river or docks, except the Port sanitary authority. Experience has shown that boards controlled by practical men using the Port are those which are most successful, and your Committee have borne this strongly in mind in suggesting the composition of the new authority. Your Committee are of opinion that the Corporation of London should remain the Port sanitary authority, it being very desirable in the opinion of your Committee that these powers should remain in the hands of an entirely independent body, with full authority to visit the docks, and all other places under the new authority with the view of enforcing precautions for sanitation. In view of the fact that by far the larger proportion of shipping using the docks is owned in the City of London, that the administration of the dock companies is conducted within the City area, and that the Corporation exercises a greater jurisdiction over the river and Port than that possessed by any other public body (the Thames Conservancy excepted), your Committee have come to the conclusion that the Corporation should be the municipal representative of the public interests on the new authority. In view of the numerous committees which it will be necessary to form, your Committee are of opinion that the new authority should consist of 40 members, appointed or elected as follows: Appointed—One-fourth (10) by the Corporation of the City of London, two by the Admiralty, two by the Board of Trade, two by the Trinity House. Elected—Two by the railway companies, two by the underwriters of Lloyds; and the remainder (20) by shipowners, merchants and others contributing dues to the new authority. There should be a tribunal of appeal constituted, with powers such as those possessed by the Railway Commissioners, to whom any such question affecting charges or preferences should be submitted, and by whom they should be decided, as between persons using the port and the new authority. Your Committee recommend that the Committee be authorised to arrange for evidence to be given before the Royal Commission on the Port of London in accordance with the following recommendations:—(*a*) That a public body with parliamentary powers should be formed to manage the river, harbour, and docks. (*b*) That the jurisdiction of such authority should extend from the tidal limit of the Thames at Richmond, on the west, to an imaginary line drawn from the Naze to the North Foreland on the east. (*c*) That such authority should be called the Thames River, Dock and Harbour Board. (*d*) That powers should be conferred on such Board to purchase the property of the dock companies, and such bonded wharves and warehouses as they may see fit, and to raise the capital necessary for that purpose; for the deepening of the channel of the river, and for the general improvement of the port and docks. (*e*) That full power should be given to such Board to impose such taxes upon all goods entering or leaving the port, and upon shipping, lighters, and barges using the river, as may be necessary or desirable to procure the income required to enable the necessary capital to be raised. (*f*) That such Board should be constituted on the general

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principle of the recommendations in this report, and that it should be entirely independent of and free from the control of any other public body. (*g*) That Parliament should constitute the stock of the Board a trustees' investment. (*h*) That the Lord Mayor, for the time being, shall be the returning officer for the election of members. All which we submit to the judgment of this honourable Court. Dated this 1st day of April, 1901.—Marcus Samuel. A. H. Barber. T. Hastings Miller. J. S. E. Cotman. T. G. Beatley. *Wm. H. Pannell. *Edward Lee. R. Hanson. *Fredk. P. Alliston. Alfred Brookman. C. Wallington. W. R. Pryke. J. W. Domoney. * Except as regards the question of representation."

I will now proceed with my own evidence. I am an Alderman of the City of London, and was elected in the year 1891, and served the office of Sheriff in 1894. I am senior partner in the firm of M. Samuel and Co., of London, Samuel Samuel and Co., of Japan, and Chairman of the Shell Transport and Trading Co., Limited, of which my firm are the managers, owning 36 steamers with a registered tonnage of 90,000 tons, and am also director of the Alliance Marine Assurance Co., and I represented the shipowners on the Thames Conservancy from 1895 to 1898, when I resigned on account of pressure of other work. I am consequently intimately acquainted with the Port of London and many other ports, my company having piers and wharves of their own at almost every port in the East from Suez to Japan, including India. A Special Committee was appointed by the Corporation to consider and report to the Royal Commission as to the views of the Corporation for improvement and working of the port, and of this Committee I was elected Chairman. The report of this Committee, which was agreed to by the Court of Common Council on Tuesday the 16th April last, is the one I have handed in. The Corporation had the benefit, before arriving at its conclusion, of being able to study the large amount of evidence which has been placed before the Commission, and seeing that evidence is open to the Commission to draw their own conclusions and base their own calculations upon, the Corporation has not deemed it necessary to go at any great length into details, but it feels obliged to offer a few comments upon the evidence of certain individuals representing public bodies, and upon the detailed schemes put forward on behalf of other public bodies. I wish to call attention to the evidence of Mr. George Laurence Gomme, the Clerk of the London County Council, in giving his view historically of the control of the Thames by the City. Mr. Gomme falls into a mistake regarding the ancient authority of the City over the Thames. He says, "Whatever the authority under which the City Corporation exercised jurisdiction over the river prior to this stage (A.D. 1605), there would seem to be no doubt in the first place that that jurisdiction was not definitely theirs by statutory right." The incorrectness of this statement is manifest, since by the old Statute 17 Richard II., cap. 9 (A.D. 1393), the conservation of the Thames and the Medway is given to the Lord Mayor, whose jurisdiction is confirmed and extended by Statute 4 Henry VII., cap. 15 (A.D. 1487), and Statute 27 Henry VIII. (A.D. 1536). The legislative authority of the Lord Mayor over the river was further referred to, and expressly recognised by Proclamation of King Henry VIII., in the 34th year of his reign (A.D. 1543). Mr. Gomme falls into some very curious errors in seeking to prove from his figures that the whole of the charges levied in the port fall upon consumers of goods. He shows in the figures which he quotes that no less than £793,562 is levied as tonnage dues and other charges upon shipping entering the Port or Docks of London. Now, there is not a practical man who does not know that these charges come out of freight, and are a matter of contract between the shipowner and the shipper, and have not in the slightest degree any influence upon the price paid by consumers for their goods.

See 3171

7920. Surely it is the consumer of the goods who pays in the end?—Surely not, my Lord. Let me put this to you. A shipper at Bombay ships wheat to London. He is guided not by the charges that prevail there, but by the competition of other wheat shipped, say, from Australia or from Russia, as the case may be, and I as a shipowner know, unfortunately only too well, that the buyer does not care a rap what charges I have to pay. I pay those charges out of my freight, and it does seem to me altogether wrong to say that that falls on the consumer. It is a market price in competition. Therefore these prices are governed solely by the law of supply and demand, and I only consider it necessary to refer to this at all to show the danger of being guided by a statistician in framing a practical scheme. I must apologise to Sir Robert Giffen.

7921. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Will you let me put a question to you. Are you quite aware of the reputation of Mr. Gomme both as a statistician and as an economist?—But not as a trader. I have the highest admiration for Mr. Gomme's ability as a statistician, and so long as he keeps to that province he is quite an example, but the moment he attempts to apply his statistics in a practical way he fails utterly. The Corporation of the City of London has never once been justly accused of being in any sense or shape a political body. Its members, in connection with the discharge of their corporate duties, have kept their hands perfectly clean in this respect, and, so far as I am aware, no political issue is ever raised either at the election of the members, or at their business meetings; and the great importance of this will become manifest when the Commission consider the evidence given on behalf of the Bristol Corporation, the Witness, Mr. F. B. Girdlestone, clearly showing the mischief which had arisen from the fact of sometimes one and sometimes the other political body being in power. The London County Council, which is essentially a political body, in the scheme they have drafted base their plans, firstly, upon a committee of 30 only, of whom ten should be members of the London County Council, and only ten should represent the new ratepayers provided for by their scheme. We disagree with those conclusions, firstly, in the number of members proposed, because, seeing the number of dock directors superseded, the new works to be undertaken, and the numerous committees to be formed, we are of opinion that numerically a larger body is needed. We disagree totally with their conclusions as to the relative composition of the committee, and do not consider that one-third of the representatives of those paying dues, or, in other words, providing the funds for the scheme, is sufficient, and we consider that at least half the committee should be composed of practical shipowners and merchants. The next feature in their scheme provides that the Council shall retain the control of capital expenditure. This appears to the Corporation preposterous, as for the proper working of the committee they must clearly be independent from the control of any other body. We also dissent very strongly indeed from the London County Council's proposal to make the scheme dependent in any sense upon the rates. This would, in the opinion of the Corporation, remove one of the principal reasons for economy in the administration of funds, because if it were felt that the shipowners and merchants could, in case of a deficit, fall back upon the rates, one of the principal reasons for careful administration would be removed. There is another scheme put forward on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce. The objection of the Corporation to this scheme is firstly, to its constitution. The number proposed is too numerous, and far too diverse to be a useful body; but it also appears to the Corporation impossible to separate the water area from all the other appurtenances of the docks, and I have already set forth the objection of the Corporation to any financial aid being rendered by any public bodies, because it is abundantly clear that it would be outrageous to burden the ratepayers of the City or the County of London only, seeing that the shipping and goods entering the Port of London supply an area enormously beyond these geographical limits.

7922. (*Chairman.*) Does this objection to any financial aid include any grant from the Government, as suggested by some witnesses?—I will come to that later. We only suggest that the Government should contribute simply as guarantors, to enable the money to be raised on the best terms. We do not suggest any direct grant by the Government. Up to the present, the only other scheme put before the Royal Commission is that of the dock companies, which is, of course, a matter of special pleading. It appears to us so improbable that either the Royal Commission would recommend or Parliament ever sanction the taxing of either craft or goods for the benefit of private companies, that I do not propose to treat this scheme very seriously. The London and India Docks Company suggest that they should be allowed to tax barges to the extent of £56,250 a year, and to levy dues on

goods estimated to produce the sum of £177,833, but it is quite clear that if such a power were given to these particular docks, it would not only have to be given to all the other dock companies existing, but such as might yet be created, and if this were followed to a logical conclusion it would also have to be given to any body or bodies constructing jetties or quays. Nothing is more manifest than that the power of taxation should only be given to a single body, and then only upon conditions that the funds are carefully administrated to the benefit of the port as a whole, any savings effected going ultimately to the reduction of charges on shipping and goods. We have only to make a brief remark to similar proposals put forward on behalf of the Thames Conservancy. The same arguments exactly apply against these, viz., that you cannot have a multiplication of taxing authorities, and that as it seems desirable that considerable addition to the jetty and quay space on the borders of the river should be provided, the authority controlling the docks can best judge what is necessary, and should have the power of providing it. I now come to the Corporation scheme, and in putting it forward it is most necessary to remember, as the report itself recites, the unique position occupied by the Corporation of the City of London. It is composed of 232 members, who are the elected representatives of the City area, in which practically the whole of the business of the port is conducted. Not only the dock companies themselves, but the leading shipping companies, almost without exception, are situated in the area of the City of London, as well as the head offices of the leading banks and insurance companies, and the City represents in value about one-eighth of the whole of the rateable value of the County of London, so that from whatever point of view it is looked at, they have an almost overwhelming interest on behalf of those whom they represent in the welfare of the port.

7923. Will you explain how the members of the Corporation can be said to represent the great business houses in the City?—The members of the Corporation are elected by the ratepayers.

7924. You tell us here that they represent the big houses in the City?—So they do. The big houses all have votes if they choose to exercise them, and the members of the Common Council are elected every year. They are distinctly representative of the merchants. It is almost needless to say that that interest has been the only one which has influenced them in drafting their scheme. And it must be borne in mind that the Corporation is the Port Sanitary Authority, and also the Market Authority for the Metropolis. As there appears to be absolute unanimity among every section of those who have given evidence before the Royal Commission, that lack of progress of London as a port has been from diversity of administration, the conclusion appears irresistible that a single body should control the future of the river, in so far as improving it for the purposes of navigation go, and of the docks and their extensions, as well as the construction of such further accommodation, either by way of jetties, quays or docks, as the new authority may deem desirable; and it is from the very fact that no single authority could be fairly held liable in the past for want of initiative that the Corporation has been largely guided in the determination it has come to as to the composition of the committee which it recommends. We dissent entirely from the view of the London County Council that the authority, when created—which will be one of the most important in the kingdom—should be subject to the tutelage of any other public body, but especially of a body elected on political lines and deeply tainted on the Labour question, which is one of vital importance to the prosperity of the port. The great success which Liverpool has obtained is largely attributable to its having been managed by experts who have had to bear the brunt of the taxation, benefiting if it is well administered, suffering if mal-administered. Such a body has every possible incentive to attract commerce to a port, because it is quite evident that the larger the ratio of goods and tonnage entering, the smaller will be the percentage of expenses; but London is differently placed from Liverpool, in that the latter port practically was left in the hands of its harbour board to form, whereas the new authority for London will have to take over much they were not responsible for creating, and it is almost inevitable that if, as I shall proceed to show, under the scheme of the Corporation, a very large revenue indeed will be applicable to the diminution of rates on shipping and on goods, a body administered solely by the contributors to its rates might find internal dissensions among its members of such a character as would impair its utility, had it not a leavening of an element supplied by a non-political body contributed by a public authority. I hope that the financial proposals of the Corporation in suggesting that the Government should make the stock of the new authority a trustees' stock, will commend itself to the Royal Commission. As it appears impossible in equity to place any charge upon the London rates, either of the city or of the county exclusively, it is clear the power of taxation on goods and shipping to be given to the new authority should be unlimited, and with this, and the consideration that for every shilling expended good value will be obtained, the assets of the new authority, which the Corporation suggest should be called the Thames River, Dock, and Harbour Board, will be of such a substantial character that no exception could be taken to this proposal. But, inasmuch as the Corporation recommend that Government should be invited to contribute to the success of the port, and they are largely interested in having the approaches to their arsenal at Woolwich made of such a character that the deepest ship can get up there at any state of the tide, it would not seem unfair to suggest to the Government, seeing that they will have ample representation under the Corporation scheme on the new authority, that they should guarantee the payment of interest to bondholders, rather than by making a direct contribution in cash to the cost of dredging the river. The Corporation has been much impressed by the evidence given on behalf of the Customs, and it would seem that considerable economy could be exercised by classifying bonded goods and warehousing them according to certain schedules, and in specified areas. In the figures which the Corporation put forward to the Commission as helping them to form an estimate of what the actually constituted authority will receive as income, the capital expenditure involved in the acquisition of the bonded wharves and warehouses is expressly omitted, because it is evident that such property would only be acquired if it returned a fair income, and leaving this element, therefore, out of the calculation, the comparison of probable outlay for London as compared with Liverpool will show at a glance how much cheaper a port under proper administration London can be made, since it appears that, whilst Liverpool has only eight million tons, London has fourteen millions. Liverpool has spent twenty-four millions in making its port, whilst, excluding bonded wharves and warehouses, it does not appear probable that London will have to spend more than twenty-five millions to provide ample accommodation for the very much larger trade, and this twenty-five millions is made up by an approximate figure of about eighteen millions for the purchase of the docks, three millions for their improvement and extension, two millions for dredging, and a further two millions for the provision of jetty and quay space accommodation. The Corporation recommend that they should remain the port sanitary authority, and there is really no reason to change this. They efficiently perform the duties at their own expense, and command the confidence of the whole of London. I think you have it in evidence that the charges for the port and sanitary authority do not come out of the rates?

7925. Yes; we have had that already?—The question of taxing barges, or of how to tax them, is one that must be settled by the new authority itself. Now it becomes necessary to give the principal reasons which have actuated the Corporation in coming to the decision as to the composition of the Committee. The scheme put forward by the London County Council does not commend itself in vital respects to the Corporation nor to those who are engaged in the business of the port. In the first place, the members are (as has been previously stated by me) indisputably elected on a political basis, and in the second place, their scheme shows a determination to subject the new authority to their control, whereas it is absolutely essential that it should be entirely independent. The Corporation cannot help feeling that they would contribute an element which could not possibly be of any service, and which might well become dangerous, since certain members of their body were responsible for creating the labour difficulties under which the Port of London still suffers.

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7926. "They" being the London County Council?—Yes; I am speaking now of the London County Council. The Corporation, representing the mercantile community, must consider the opinions of its constituents, and these have been so freely expressed on the question of the labour policy of the London County Council that it cannot ignore them; but, unless we are to perpetuate the very troubles which have led to the non-progress of the Port, it appears inevitable that one body, and one body only, should be held liable if the future should not show a great improvement on the past. The Thames Conservancy have representatives of not only the Corporation and the London County Council but of the Riparian Counties, as well as many other constituents, and the result has been that no one authority could be held at fault because no one had supreme power. Although under the Corporation scheme the representatives of the Corporation will not have the supreme power of directing the business portion of the new board, yet through them public pressure might be brought to bear upon the board if they do not do their duty to the Port, and they only would be responsible—a very great incentive to keep them up to the mark; but apart from these very cogent reasons, it is a fact that upon no harbour board throughout the Kingdom is any county authority represented, and although the London County Council argue that they occupy a unique position as a county authority, this is not, in fact, so at all, since the creation of municipalities throughout the Metropolitan area. If the scheme of the Corporation is to be carried out, and half the representation of the new Board be given to the new ratepayers contributing its revenue, the municipal element must be very limited, and the arguments which I have recited will show that a compact quota contributed by the Corporation of the City of London, and by them alone offers the best solution to the problem of the constitution of the Committee. Fragments contributed by many would only weaken the new authority, and most undoubtedly, if the London County Council are granted any representation, some would also have to be given to the counties of Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Middlesex, and you would then swamp the elected commercial element by the co-opted municipal portion, a principle to which the Corporation is absolutely opposed. The unique position of the Corporation already managing the markets situated on the river, namely, the Cattle Markets and the Fish Markets, for the benefit of the whole of London, renders it quite natural that they should represent London on the larger body. It would appear that the only reason that the London County Council had representation accorded them on the Thames Conservancy was that they are the body charged with the purification of the river, and as the question of water is one which concerns the entire population of London directly, there is every reason why the County Councils should be represented upon the body constituting the authority for the upper river, and as the Corporation recommend that the Conservancy should be preserved, but reconstituted if necessary, for the management of the river above Richmond, its members would certainly not oppose the appointment of representatives of the London County Council on that part of the river management. But for the reasons set out at length in the evidence I have already put forward, the Corporation adheres to the recommendation that there should only be one public body represented on the new authority, and that in view of the immense interest centred in the City, and the fact that they are entirely free from political bias, that authority should be composed of representatives of the Corporation.

7927. Do those comprise all the reasons you have to give us why the London County Council should not be represented on the new Board?—I think so. I have another statement to make, and there may be a few additional reasons in that. I should like particularly to call the attention of the Commission to the specific recommendations of the Corporation: (*a*) That a public body with parliamentary powers should be formed to manage the river, harbour, and docks; (*b*) that the jurisdiction of such authority should extend from the tidal limit of the Thames at Richmond, on the west, to an imaginary line drawn from the Naze to the North Foreland on the east; (*c*) that such authority should be called the Thames River, Dock and Harbour Board; (*d*) that powers should be conferred on such Board to purchase the property of the dock companies, and such bonded wharves and warehouses as they may see fit, and to raise the capital necessary for that purpose; for the deepening of the channel of the river, and for the general improvement of the Port and docks; (*e*) that full power should be given to such Board to impose such taxes upon all goods entering or leaving the Port, and upon shipping, lighters, and barges using the river, as may be necessary or desirable to procure the income required to enable the necessary capital to be raised; (*f*) that such Board should be constituted on the general principle of the recommendations in this Report, and that it should be entirely independent of and free from the control of any other public body; (*g*) that Parliament should constitute the Stock of the Board a trustees' investment; (*h*) that the Lord Mayor, for the time being, shall be the returning officer for the election of members.

Now we will deal with the scheme. The scheme of the Corporation being based upon the assumption that the revenue to be derived from the impost upon goods, on the same scale as in Liverpool, would render the Thames River, Dock and Harbour Board independent of rate aid, it has been found necessary to compile figures to bear out this contention, and I now put these figures before the Royal Commission. The figures are comprised in certain tables, which I will hand in.

The Witness handed in the following tables:

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on foreign and colonial imports to the Port of London for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 1.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on foreign and colonial exports from the Port of London for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 2.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on exports of home manufactures from the Port of London for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 3.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on transhipment of goods at the Port of London for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 4.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on coastwise goods inwards and outwards, to and from the Port of London. See Appendix, No.* 5.)

(*Résumé of the five previous tables. See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 6.)

(*Table showing the market value of the London Docks on the 23rd April,* 1901. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 7.)

(*Table showing the revenue and expenses of the London Docks for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 8.)

(*Table showing computation of revenue and expenses of a port trust taking over the dock property and the river administration. See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 9.)

(*Table showing composition of the trust debt; annual payment in respect thereof; and surplus revenue available for payment. See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 10.)

(*A statistical table of the City of London coal dues* 1880 *to* 1888. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 11.)

(*Table showing the apportionment between docks and river of the tonnage to London. See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 12.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on foreign and colonial imports to the Port of Liverpool for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 13.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on foreign and colonial exports from the Port of Liverpool for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 14.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on exports of home manufactures from the Port of Liverpool for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 15.)

(*Table showing calculation of charges according to the Liverpool tariff on transhipment goods at the Port of Liverpool for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 16.)

(*Résumé of Appendices Nos.* 13, 14, 15, 16, *including reference to coastwise cargo. See Appendix, 22nd day, No.* 17.)

I wish to say that we have dealt with this very broadly indeed. The position we have taken is that your lordship and your colleagues are a body of such knowledge and experience that beyond giving you as much assistance as we can, we must absolutely leave you to draw your own deductions; we do not presume to say what they should be.

7928. Still, those conclusions, although broad, are deliberate ones on the part of the Corporation?—Yes, absolutely; and those tables which we have got out at great trouble, and on the very best basis we could, are put forward as being correct. In the first place I would refer to Appendix No. 9, which shows that the income derived by the new authority, based upon those dues, would leave a surplus available for payment of interest on funded debt, for improvements, and ultimately for abatement of dues of £1,513,055. In Appendix No. 5 it will be observed that a charge of one penny per ton on coal coming coastwise to the Port of London would realise £31,397; but this being a purely nominal tax, I refer to Appendix No. 11, from which it will be seen that, in the year 1888, a duty was levied on this one article of consumption amounting to £607,063. It appears necessary to point out to the Commissioners—as in fact the figures themselves explain—that the dues which it is suggested should be levied upon goods would be applied for port and harbour purposes only, and would be levied—as in Liverpool—irrespective of any labour performed by the authority in respect of them. And, for the rest, I have taken the charges as actually levied by the dock companies at the present time; because, although similar charges are not shown as dock rates in Liverpool, as applied to ships, they are, nevertheless, paid by the receivers of goods. Assuming, for one moment, that the new rating powers sought by the London and India Docks Company were granted, a very large proportion of the goods coming into the port would escape taxation entirely; I refer notably to petroleum, which does not go into the docks at all, but which would yet produce an income of £25,108; to coal, which would produce £31,397; and to rice, which would produce £6,505. I mention rice particularly, because it is abundantly clear that steamers bringing full cargoes of rice would discharge entirely in the river, if, by so doing, they would escape any impost on their cargo, which the receivers would be subject to if the vessel entered dock. And this danger would also undoubtedly apply to many other cargoes when the river is deepened to 30 feet, and steamers can lie there safely at all states of the tide. And although there are very many reasons which point to the absolute necessity of the river and dock authority being one, this appears to me an overwhelming one; because, if many steamers elected to discharge at buoys in the river, the stream would become so congested that movement would be impossible; and it should, therefore, be a question for the supreme authority to decide which steamers should be allowed to discharge in the river, and which should enter the docks. In my opinion, it would not be practicable to allow shipowners to, themselves, elect which course should be followed. I should be very glad to give further explanation under that heading; I think it will transpire as I go along why I say this. It also appears to me that if the predictions of those who know the port and the trade best are fulfilled, the only possible solution of the difficulty of discharging more ships in a given time would be that all goods should be peremptorily discharged on to the quays, in order to turn the ships round.

7929. You would say, I suppose, that the accommodation at the quays and sheds at the present time is inadequate for this?—I think they are not adequate; I think they are quite inadequate. But the cost of doing that, seeing that it would be for the general good of the port, should not fall upon the shipowners, but should be charged upon the rates on goods, as already specified, and in diminution of existing charges to shipowners. It will be observed that the rates on tonnage in the Table placed before the Commissioners are exactly those that now prevail; but if shipowners are to be relieved of the burden of the cost of placing and sorting goods upon the quays, and have other facilities provided for them in order to give their ships dispatch, there would be no complaint from them if the rate on tonnage were made 1s. 4d. per ton, in place of the 1s. now charged by the dock companies, and which would, in the case of the London and India Docks alone, give £70,000. It would, also, be quite possible, and even desirable, to impose some extra charge on the 7,913,998 tons (*See Appendix No.* 12) using the river only, and which at present pay only ½d. and ¾d. per ton. An extra penny per ton on this class of vessel would give £32,974. No charge on barges is included in any of these figures. I should like to say that we have not seen our way clear to recommend that any specific charge should be made on barges, although their regulation appears very necessary, and consequently, in view of everything, in the opinion of the Corporation, contributing in some sort to the revenue of the port, a licence charge might very well be levied on barges, which would place them under much better control than they appear to be at present. In support of the contention that it is absolutely necessary to deepen the river now, I could cite the case of our own steamer, the "Bulysses." She was in London in April last, and is a vessel of 6,069 tons register, 410ft. long by 52ft. beam, and having a moulded depth of 32ft. As she had to discharge a cargo of oil in bulk she did not go into the docks at all, but was dry-docked at the Thames Ironworks Company, Limited. She had to bunker in the river, and it was with the very greatest difficulty that a berth was found for her at the buoys, where she coaled from barges alongside, but only to a depth of 22ft., which points to the necessity which exists for providing far better bunkering facilities than now exist in the Port of London. This steamer was three days taking in 1,200 tons of coal from barges. There are no public staiths at all either in the docks or on the river, whilst, unquestionably, if there were, coaling could be more expeditiously and more cheaply performed in many instances than is now the case. In my opinion, it would be ridiculous to allow each of the dock companies to have power to tax goods, as similar powers would also have to be conferred upon the Thames Conservancy for their purposes, and I presume on every dock company yet to be created. Otherwise, if vessels were to be allowed to go into any such new docks without paying similar dues the business of the existing dock companies would inevitably suffer. The same observations would apply to the building of quays or sheds, either by shipowners or private individuals. It amounts, in fact, to giving a monopoly, and it certainly appears to me that this power could and should only be given to a public body, which would apply the revenues accruing from the exercise of such monopoly in improving the port and reducing the charges. An alteration of the custom of the port is imperatively necessary. Under existing circumstances a steamer chartered, for instance, with a full cargo of rice might take from three to four weeks to unload. I put in, for the guidance of the Commissioners, a form of the Burmah rice charter, which is universally accepted, and which provides for the discharge to be according to the custom of the port.

(*The witness handed in a form of the Burmah Rice Charter. See Appendix* 22nd *day, No.* 18.)

In London this is held to be not more than 300 tons per day for rice, and a steamer, therefore, arriving with a cargo of, say, 6,000 tons of this commodity, could be detained by the consignees for twenty weather-working days, which, under modern conditions, is quite absurd. So that a shipowner is compelled to keep his ship a period of twenty days blocking the river or the dock, as the case may be, or to go to the expense of placing the whole cargo on the quay, causing hopeless congestion, and subsequently loading it into barges.

7930. At present you are giving your evidence on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London?—My Lord, I feel the difficulty of that. I am giving it on behalf of the Corporation of London, but, of course, these are instances that have come very prominently before me as a merchant and shipowner.

7931. At the present moment you are representing the Corporation?—Entirely; I should like to separate it if it were possible.

7932. We will take the evidence of the Corporation,

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if you please?—By all means, but it is very pertinent to the issue. This is really Corporation evidence.

7933. I think the question of the Rice Charter is not, because if so we should like to ask you, as a member of the firm of Samuel Samuel and Co., whether, as a matter of fact, any ship of yours with 6,000 tons of rice on board has been detained 24 days?—I should have to reply No, my Lord; but a steamer of 4,000 tons has been detained 16 days. I might state that is the case. The receiver is only obliged to take away 300 tons a day, and he can block the whole quay.

7934. We will limit ourselves to the evidence of the Corporation at present?—If, as has been recommended by many witnesses, the custom of the port compelled receivers to take their goods away within a reasonable time, a great deal of the congestion which now occurs from the prevalence of the custom referred to would be obviated. I do submit on behalf of the Corporation that that custom of the port should be altered. It does not now prevail in any other ports, and it is obsolete and quite unfit for to-day. In the answers to Questions 5,801 to 5,808, it was elicited from Mr. Scott that the jetty accommodation existing at the entrance to the Albert Dock and the Tilbury Dock had not been used by shipowners, and Mr. Scott suggested that this went to prove that such accommodation was not needed. I say that the existence of these berths was not known to shipowners generally, and had the Dock Company suggested that such berths could be used, and that shipowners would get quicker despatch by going there, they certainly would have been used. As a matter of fact, it is the Dock Companies themselves who practically allot the berths that ships shall occupy. The Corporation do not propose that any reckless competition should be entered into by the proposed authority with outside wharves and warehouses. The proposed rates would be levied on all goods, whether warehoused by the public authority or by private wharfingers, and would be in addition to the charges made for warehousing goods in the dock warehouses, just as much as in the case of those goods that went to the wharves. There is certainly room for a reduction in *general* charges on many classes of goods, and to this extent competition might prevail; but I do not suggest that anything like a monopoly of warehousing should be created for the proposed authority except for dutiable goods, if the new authority when appointed deem that desirable, and it is not contemplated by the Corporation to add to the existing warehouses already owned by the Dock Companies. These would, of course, be taken over by the new authority, leaving ample scope to the outside wharfingers to warehouse goods, for which many have created facilities in regard to handling and sampling which would not fail to secure to them the advantages they already possess in competition with the docks.

See 8125-28.

7935. Have you any evidence to give us on the subject of the adequacy of the street accommodation in the neighbourhood of the docks. Would you mind telling us whether the City Corporation have any control in that matter?—They have none, except at the St. Katharine's Dock.

7936. The London County Council, I believe, have the control?—As representing the general rates. The police, of course, control the traffic.

7937. But the street accommodation I mean—the facilities for approach to the docks?—Those are recommended from time to time by the local authorities, and then undertaken by the County Council. Within the area of the city, for instance, we have done very much in widening the streets; we have improved the approach to the docks; the London County Council have contributed their quota, but they have never originated it. The Corporation themselves have always done that, and I think that is the procedure throughout the Metropolis. The local authority recommend; the County Council provide the funds.

7938. Have you any opinion to give us with regard to the adequacy of the roads and the approaches to the docks?—I cannot help thinking that the docks immediately within the metropolitan area have very fair road approaches, and those that are farther away are covered in the recommendation that the railway accommodation should be improved. No road approaches would better Tilbury or the Albert and Victoria Docks; there are very good roads to those docks now.

7939. You have read the evidence of Sir Alexander Binnie as to the works that are being undertaken?—Yes; I have read it with some amusement, too, because the idea that the widening of Leadenhall Street, for instance, was done for the express purpose of improving the approach to the docks I look upon as quite special pleading, made with an object. We all want to see the communications in London improved, but I think it would be very wide indeed to say that the widening of Southampton Row, for instance, would improve the docks.

7940. That was not the only street he mentioned?—No. But if you ask me on the other way, the negative point, I say that a great deal that ought to have been done and might have been done has not been done. For instance, take Tooley Street; the approaches to the wharves on the other side of the river are disgraceful. But with reference to the docks, I really do not think the roads are bad at all. May I say the Corporation have done a work in that respect which has directly and immensely helped, namely, the construction of the Tower Bridge. That, of course, has not been done out of the rates, but out of the Bridge House Estates funds. That they did directly.

7941. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I think you mentioned an estimate of £18,000,000 for the cost of the docks?—Yes; that is in Appendix 7.

7942. Is that estimate based upon the market price of the day?—The market price, plus 10 per cent. for compulsory purchase on the ordinary stocks of the company. That was the market price on the 23rd April.

7943. I see that it includes all the docks?—That includes the London and India, the Millwall, and the Surrey Commercial Docks.

7944. I suppose you take that as a somewhat approximate figure?—Yes, necessarily.

7945. Merely for the sake of discussing some figure?—That is all.

7946. I want to understand what you mean by Government creating this a trustees' investment. Do you mean by that that the Government are to guarantee any deficiency on income that might arise?—I suggest they should guarantee the interest, but I think it is quite immaterial whether they do or not. You have had in evidence that the Thames Conservancy (of which I was a member at the time) had a very much smaller guaranteed income, and not a trustees' stock at all, and they were enabled to get 107 for their 3 per cent. stock.

7947. That is a very different sum to £18,000,000?—Very different value. Here we seem to have an immense revenue to fall back upon.

7948. One would like to understand really what is the proposal of the Corporation with regard to guaranteeing stock so as to make it a perfectly safe investment. The County Council on their side propose that it should be guaranteed by the rates, which gives it a most distinct backbone, and naturally nothing can be said against that as a security?—Quite true.

7949. Do the Corporation propose anything as an alternative to such a guarantee as that?—Yes, they suggest that the Government should guarantee the stock. The improvement of London is a national matter. I think any business man having these figures before him would say that the Government would run no risk whatever. There is not the slightest fear of any extraneous help being required, but if it were, we put it very broadly indeed that the Government might very well do that.

7950. Is that the proposal of the Corporation?—Yes.

7951. I wanted clearly to understand what the proposal of the Corporation is when they say it is to be made a trustees' investment?—That is it.

7952. You mean that the Government is to be behind, or, as I have said, is to be the backbone to the finance of the whole thing?—If absolutely necessary.

7953. But do you think it is absolutely necessary?—I think as a matter of practice it would not be necessary at all. I do not think there is the most remote chance of the Government being called upon. We place it very plainly indeed—we do not mince the matter—that the power of taxation of goods should be unlimited.

7954. But that is a very different thing, is it not, to a guarantee by Government, because the taxation of

goods might be so excessive as to drive away trade?—I quite admit that. It is possible that it might, but it is most improbable. You have 15,000,000 tons to deal with. Of course, I am only speaking on this personally, because the Corporation have decided that the Government should be invited to contribute. Personally, I do not see the slightest need for it.

7955. Is there not a great difference between a Government guarantee and any financial scheme based upon the exercise of taxation by any such body as proposed?—In the one case it would not be at all an improper thing that the whole kingdom should contribute to the cost of London. It would be a most unfair and a most improper thing that the taxpayers of London only should contribute; that is what we are finding fault with. I put it very broadly indeed; so far as the London County Council are concerned it is one of the grossest betrayals of trusts by gentlemen representing the ratepayers that I have ever seen, to suggest that for the sake of getting power into the hands of that body the ratepayers in London only should be asked to guarantee this. Our position is this: We contribute one-eighth, and we say it is a most distinct wrong that we should be asked to pay. You have had it from several witnesses that the Port of London should stretch from Ipswich on the one side to Southampton on the other. You have had my friend, Mr. Douglas Owen, who suggested that Eastbourne and Brighton should be taxed; I say quite rightly. This Port of London serves the kingdom practically, and not London only.

7956. I hope you will not think that I am criticising the scheme in an adverse way. I only want to know what the proposal of the Corporation is?—That is the proposal of the Corporation. If, indeed, any guarantee is necessary, it is quite fair that it should be a national one; it would be most unfair that it should be a local one only. I put it as broadly as I can. Although we pay one-eighth of the rates, we have only two representatives on the London County Council scheme.

7957. I want to press you a little further on the point whether you do or do not propose that the Government should guarantee or not?—I say, yes, I do. It would be a matter of very great value indeed to Government that they should be enabled to get their large ships up to Woolwich. It would be an immense monetary saving, too.

7958. I suppose you would admit that it would make an enormous difference indeed in the amount to be paid for stock whether the Government stood behind it or not?—I think *primâ facie* it might, but with such immense powers as this new body would have, for instance the raising of money on coal, which pays nothing at all at present, I cannot think there would be any difficulty in raising the funds.

7959. I think we gather that you propose to increase the rates on vessels in the river from their present position?—Yes. The thing is practically ridiculous; I have given you, if you will excuse me referring again to our own case, the steamer "Bulysses," of 6,069 tons, not paying sixpence.

7960. Whereas they now are free, you would subject them to a charge?—Yes.

7961. I also gather that you would increase the power of charging upon the ships in docks?—We are very careful in this to fulfil what we want to—that is, really to offer advice. We do not assume the position which must necessarily be left to the Commission.

7962. I think this is quite clear upon your evidence. You say, whereas they pay now one shilling you propose that should be 1s. 4d.?—I think, if I may put it broadly, it is this, that whereas a certain very large amount of goods and shipping escaped contribution at all, the proposals of the Corporation go really to the redistribution of the burdens.

7963. But you do not propose that there should be any modification of the terms under which the barge traffic is conducted?—Only to the extent of licences—that they should be licensed and brought under very much greater control. I think the state of things which exists, according to the evidence of the Dock Companies, now, that no one has control over those barges, should be remedied. That is absolutely necessary. But when you consider (and, of course, one has to look at this very broadly) that the carts going to the docks for goods pay nothing, and the exit of goods by water is only another cartage, it is a question which bristles with difficulties, and we have rather avoided dealing with that matter, because I think it is one which would be better dealt with by the authority when it is constituted.

7964. We may take it, therefore, that you say that full power should be given to such Board to impose such taxes upon all goods entering or leaving port, and that upon shipping, lighters, and barges using the river?—As may be necessary or desirable.

7965. Do you draw a distinction there between using the river and using the docks?—There you see is the crux of our whole proposals. We say it must be one. I can see no other issue.

7966. Do you think there should be any charge made upon barges, even for the services which are rendered?—Not specifically in the docks; on the whole I think not, because you must get your goods away. If you adopt this scheme at all you are going to compel everybody to put their goods on the quay. You must enable them to get them away and everything will be paying; the goods will be paying, indirectly the barges will be taxed. I wish to say most distinctly that that is a question which with the immense mass of evidence you have before you it is better for you to deal with than for us to make suggestions about.

7967. You have said that no charge on barges is included in the figures you have given. Therefore, I thought you meant that the view of the Corporation was that no charge should be put upon barges in the docks?—I must say that is our view.

7968. You said, I believe, that you thought there could be no possible separation between the docks and the quays on the one side, and the warehousing business of the dock companies on the other?—Yes.

7969. Would you tell us why there could be no separation?—I do not see how you could separate them. There are certain goods that should be warehoused with the docks; it is natural. For instance in this new timber trade where the ship discharges in the docks, the sheds are specially adapted for that. The timber is only removed when it is required. Then take the case of ships bringing sugar to the docks especially now that import duties are levied. It is very desirable for the merchant to store these goods where they are landed.

7970. Is not that a question of physical fitness rather than a question of whether the two businesses as commercial undertakings could not be separated?—I am not prepared to say they could not. I am only speaking now of the desirability. You know this difficulty. Your Commission ruled, and I am not going to question the wisdom of it at all, that we should not go into the question of charges at all. That being so it closes a very important line of argument, at all events, that we could have used. We cannot get away from this—that the charges in London are far higher than they ought to be.

7971. I do not think that really touches the question that I was on?—It does, I think; it touches it very closely.

7972. Then will you please go on?—I am not proposing to give evidence, of course, in the face of the decision of the Commission.

7973. I rather wanted to get clear in my mind what is the difficulty that presses upon the Corporation in the possible separation of the business of warehousing and the ownership of the docks?—If I may say so, I would rather put it the other way—the reason that induces us to keep them. We say distinctly that a fair competition to a limited extent will be a most desirable element. Now the dock companies are in this position. I am not here in any sense or spirit of hostility to the dock companies, and I think the corporation think that as far as they can, trammelled as they are by great difficulties, they have done their best, but by their very necessities they have been obliged to make rates for warehousing which are grossly excessive, and that would do more to cripple the commerce of the port than anything in the state of things prevailing has done, and if in the hands of a public authority basing their rates on an equitable basis.

7974. I am afraid you are not quite grasping my question, which was, what is the difficulty of the separation of the two businesses?—The dock companies themselves have given you that. If you were to go

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into the separate valuation of the waterway and the warehouse, I think you would be led very far.

7975. It may be a difficult question?—Very difficult.

7976. I really wanted to gather your views, because appearing as the Corporation of London, you urge that they could not be separated?—We do.

7977. And other people have urged that they should be separated?—If you ask whether there is any insuperable difficulty, I say that anything can be done. There are difficulties certainly, but these are technical questions, and I would rather you had this from another witness.

7978. I do not want at all to press for an answer if you have not made up your mind on the subject?—Quay space and wharves are, and should naturally be, worked together.

7979. What has been put before this Commission is that if there is a large public body created with practically inexhaustible powers, and they are competing for warehousing business with private individuals who own wharves on the river, that might be a competition which might be very disastrous to those who own private wharves on the river?—My answer to that is, that is only in appearance, because if the Commission see their way to recommend the course that the Corporation advised, namely, that they should be a public body, I am quite satisfied that there would be no attempt made to kill private wharves at all. We come on to the question of rates again here.

7980. Are you acquainted with Glasgow?—Yes.

7981. Do you not know the extreme jealousy that the Clyde Trustees have of any private effort at all?—The case is totally different. The Clyde Trustees profess to provide warehouses. We do not, and we say most distinctly that we do not intend to add to the existing warehouses. The private wharves are badly needed; they should be conserved and, perhaps, added to. We go so far as to say that we do not propose to add to the public existing warehouses.

7982. Your proposal then is that the new public body should take over the dock warehouses, which practically could do half the business of the port?—No; you have the dock company's own dictum for it that they do not do more than 25 per cent. of the goods that actually enter their docks.

7983. Forgive me, they say they do not do it on account of the sharp competition which now exists, but they could do a great deal more?—The wharves will always hold their own. Take an article like camphor. There are special facilities provided at special wharves, and merchants will send their goods there, no matter what the dock companies may do to get them. The same principle applies to a great variety of articles. Take the fresh fruit trade. The wharves serve very useful purposes, and they are absolutely necessary; they will always hold their own.

7984. Your view, therefore, is that the private wharves need not fear competition of that kind from a public body?—They need not fear a ruinous competition. I think their rates would be reduced, but as a public authority and advising for the good of the whole port, we also think that is very necessary.

7985. Supposing this public authority to impose a rate on traffic transported in barges, somewhat to the extent which has been suggested, do you think that they should have the power to do so, limited only by what they might consider as reasonable conditions necessary for the development of the port?—Yes.

7986. Would not that be a charge which would handicap the private wharfinger?—Not at all, because it should be a condition of this trust that they should, so far as possible, assign a certain amount of capitalisation to the warehouses that they take over. They should then add to their charges all such charges as would have to be paid by the merchants sending their goods away. That seems to me positively necessary. You could not, of course, allow goods to be landed at these public docks and escape the charges that they would have had to pay if they went to the wharves; that would not do at all. You would have to adopt it in your working account. For instance, assuming you did charge barges 3d. I say this, of course, without prejudice to the question of whether it should be charged or not—if you did in your working account you should show as part of your charge for warehousing goods the 3d. a ton paid by barges. In making up the charge that would be debited just the same as your 1s. a ton or any other article—an indiscriminate charge. But I do not suggest for one moment that the Corporation's view is that there should be a reckless and pitiless competition with the wharves; not at all. It should be based on a proper and fair working charge, but necessarily that would be less than the dock companies' charge, because they get no revenue from anywhere else, and they are compelled to base their charges on a tariff which is very disastrous.

7987. At any rate, you see there would be competition?—Certainly.

7988. Do you rely on public spirit that it should not be an unfair competition?—Absolutely, and I venture to say again that if the Corporation are the public body I am quite certain that would be the spirit which would govern them.

7989. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to press you a little further about this question of national guarantee. You understand it is not by way of criticism, but I want to get at what is in your mind. Will you give me the reasons which make you think that the Port of London should be dealt with in this way differently from Liverpool or, say, Glasgow?—For these two specific ports the answer is immediate—Yes. Because the Government themselves have very large works on the river—Woolwich Arsenal.

7990. That is one reason?—That is one reason.

7991. That there are national works on the Thames, but there are not such in existence either on the Mersey or the Clyde?—Yes, and furthermore that those establishments could be most advantageously added to if large ships were able to go there.

7992. Then your first reason is one which enters upon what I may call the national defence sphere, is that it?—Yes, fairly.

7993. You do not think that national defence enters into the matter on the Clyde or the Mersey to the same extent?—I cannot say it does not enter into it, but I am taking things as they are. There is a very large and important arsenal in London; there is not at present any either on the Clyde or the Mersey.

7994. Passing from national defence, what is your next reason?—That London serves a very much larger area of the Kingdom than either Liverpool or Glasgow. But there is another point.

7995. Let us take that point first. That is one of magnitude?—That is one of magnitude, and you have also this, that Liverpool is not rate aided at all, and we do not suggest that London should be rate aided. The difficulties of aiding London by rates, I think you will see. You have either to swamp your body by county representatives, which is very undesirable——

7996. Now you are passing to another point. Let us take one point at a time. Your first point is national defence; your second point is magnitude?—Yes.

7997. Then if Liverpool or any other place in the Kingdom were in future to increase, from that point of view you would allow the Government to come in?—In the shape of guarantors?

7998. Yes?—Decidedly.

7999. Your second ground is one of magnitude?—Yes, the area served.

8000. Can you suggest why the population living on the Clyde or the Mersey should be treated differently because it is smaller in number than that on the Thames?—No, I make no suggestions.

8001. This is a most vital point. The question will be raised in Parliament over and over again. If any proposition is made that the National Exchequer should come to the aid of London it will evoke the strongest criticism, and I want to get from you as an authorised witness on behalf of the Corporation the whole of the reasons in your mind. Now we pass from the second, which is magnitude. Have you any other?—No.

8002. Then the whole of your reasons why London should be treated in this matter differently from any other place in the United Kingdom fall under the two heads of national defence and magnitude of area and population?—And having direct representation on the new authority, that is to say, that the Government will have direct representation.

8003. But that follows the guarantee, of course?—Yes.

8004. That is not the cause of the guarantee; that is

the consequence. You strike that out, I understand. That was suggested to you by somebody else?—Yes. This is one of the cases where I am differentiating between the Corporation's view and my own; that is my difficulty. The Corporation desire that that should be put forward, and I am obliged to put it forward; it must not be taken as my own suggestion at all; I am acting here merely as the mouthpiece of the Corporation; the Corporation put it forward that the Government should be invited to contribute; they do not go beyond that. Like everything else it is a matter for the Royal Commission to decide for themselves.

8005. For the reasons which you have given to Sir John Wolfe Barry?—I apprehend those are the reasons; it is not my own suggestion.

8006. But you, the representative of the Corporation, put it forward as part of their scheme?—Yes, it is my duty to do so.

8007. Now, passing from that, I notice you commit yourself to saying, as a practical man, that shipping charges have not in the slightest degree any influence on the price paid by consumers for their goods?—Absolutely; but I have given you the reasons.

8008. I should like to have the reason?—I say in the broadest terms possible that the price of a given commodity follows the law of supply and demand. The question of taxes or charges has nothing whatever to do with it. Unfortunately the receiver in London does not ask what rate of freight a shipowner receives, or what he pays out of it. If he can purchase Australian wheat at something below the cost of Bombay wheat, or if he can buy Argentine wheat below the cost of either, he will buy it, and it is a matter of supreme indifference to him, as many merchants know to their cost, what they have to pay.

8009. May I take it from you, then, as a gentleman of great practical experience, that in your judgment, whatever charges were laid upon shipping, they would not in any way find their way to the commodity?—I cannot say that because, of course, there must be a limit. I think I can make that very clear to you. If you were to put such charges in London (almost inconceivable) as would render it cheaper for a merchant to land his goods at the nearest port to London and bring them round, to that extent, and to that extent only, you would cripple London; but the consumer would not pay any more; that would not affect the consumer, but only the carrier or the merchant. Suppose, for instance, under these charges (I have not gone into them in any great detail) you take petroleum; you charge 1s 4d. a ton; petroleum at present pays nothing, not a single farthing. I do not think there is any near port to London where you could bring it round for 1s. 4d. a ton. If you were to make it 2s. 6d. per ton, I think there would be. We come back to this: we are only in exactly the same advisory position as this Commission. It will be a question of the most serious moment when these detailed charges have to be framed, as to what can be and what cannot be legitimately borne by the different classes of goods. No doubt adjustments will be needed.

8010. As I understand, the basis of your evidence before us is really this report of the Committee of which you were chairman?—Certainly.

8011. I notice in the signatories to it that there are three reservations with regard to representation?—That is so.

8012. What was the difference of opinion?—That difference of opinion was as to giving any representation at all to the London County Council. But in a division in a full court, the report of the committee was carried by a majority of 28.

8013. There was a division on the subject, was there?—Yes.

8014. Can you give the figures?—The majority in favour of that was 28; I could give you the numbers, I think, if you wish.

ee 8322 8015. I think we had better have that; can you give me the minority?—I find I am unable to give you that offhand, but it can easily be ascertained if the Commission desire.

8016. At a meeting on April the 16th this report was adopted by the Corporation?—Yes.

8017. Practically in its entirety?—Yes. They added a recommendation that the Government should be invited to contribute.

8018. That falls under the head that Sir John Wolfe Barry was examining you about; that falls under the head (*g*) "That Parliament should constitute the stock of the board a trustees' investment"?—Yes, I am obliged to say that that recommendation that it should be made a trustees' stock was adopted before the recommendation that the Government should be invited to contribute. It is open to Parliament, of course, to constitute anything trustees' stock.

8019. Then the scheme put before us by the City Corporation through your evidence to-day is to be found under the heads (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*), (*f*), (*g*), (*h*)?—Coupled with the part as to the composition of the authority. And you will see that there are other recommendations which necessarily would come before you, although they have not been gone into by me. For instance, there is an important recommendation that there should be a tribunal of appeal constituted. We consider that very necessary indeed. I will go so far as to say that if the wharfingers themselves felt that they were aggrieved by the charges, it would be open to them to appeal.

8020. We may take it that this is the real scheme of the City Corporation with all the authority that attaches to that body?—Yes, absolutely. Every item in that was discussed.

8021. There can be no question raised hereafter as to what the attitude of the Corporation is now?—None whatever; it is very clear indeed.

8022. Then, on this, does the Corporation contemplate the introduction of a Bill by the Government?—Yes, they do. They certainly hope that the labours of this Commission, which have been so exhaustive, will not be wasted, but that the Government will legislate.

8023. My point is that it should be a Government matter in the opinion of the Corporation?—Clearly. It is impossible, I think, for any private individual. I may say, perhaps, that the Corporation has been grossly misrepresented here. To my knowledge the Corporation have had this matter before them for many years, but they have never been able to deal with the matter, because of the interests which must be assailed, and, therefore, it must be a Government matter.

8024. The Corporation petitioned against the London and India Joint Docks Bill last session, I think?—Yes, we did, in order to have a *locus standi*.

8025. And concurred in the steps taken by the House of Commons for the rejection of the Bill in order that a Commission should be appointed?—Yes.

8026. I presume we may take it that you have been careful in your evidence not to go outside your authority as representative of the City Corporation?—I hope so.

8027. Speaking broadly?—I have certainly tried to keep well within that line.

8028. It is of vital importance that when we refer to the evidence hereafter it should not be questioned—I quite agree.

8029. You have felt that in giving evidence?—I have, and I have tried, as far as I could, to keep very strictly to the lines laid down.

8030. (*Mr. Peel.*) What was the amount of the representation which the minority suggested should be given to the County Council?—It never came to that. In Committee it was proposed that two members should be given.

8031. You knew, of course, that the London County Council had a scheme of their own?—Yes.

8032. And that that scheme was practically passed unanimously in the London County Council?—I have no record of that at all. I have ventured to criticise the scheme very freely. It is that, I think, that really led the Corporation to say they ought not to have any representation at all, because they failed to grasp the thing, and the idea of putting this great body that is to be created under tutelage seemed to us so preposterous that we at once said, if that is the idea of the London County Council, we had very much better not have them on at all. That is really what led to our exclusion of them.

8033. You have representatives on the London County Council?—We have four only out of a body of 103, although we pay one-eighth of the rates.

8034. No objection was made by your representatives to that scheme, I believe?—I am unable to say.

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8035. Do you think that this new body that you suggest would be able to raise this money as cheaply as it could if there was a rate guarantee?—Yes, I do most decidedly, and I will give you the reasons for that. Take the case of the Thames Conservancy, with a very much smaller income. You have that on record.

8036. Supposing it were shown that with the guarantee of the rates you could raise the money much more cheaply (and of course, that is the opinion of many people), would you then suggest advantage should be taken of that guarantee?—No, I say that any advantage that would arise from that would be more than neutralised by the idea that the merchants forming this Trust would have that in case of need they might fall back upon the rates. That would do away with one of the greatest incentives to economy.

8037. If there was such a guarantee you could not, of course, have that without representation of the body representing the ratepayers?—I think you would have to have that representation. But where are you going to draw the line? What about Kent and Essex and Middlesex and Surrey?

8038. You state that as regards the consumers. Of course London has got a great interest in the consumers in the management of the docks?—Yes and no. As I have said before, it is a question of supply and demand purely.

8039. Apart from that point of political economy—because they would have an interest in it, and because the ports outside London would also have an interest, and ought therefore to have representation, you would not give representation to the people within the London County Council area unless the others also had representation?—We may be very infatuated with ourselves, but the position we take is that we are representatives of the ratepayers; if not, what are we? In what possible way does the Corporation, elected annually, differ from the London County Council as representative of the ratepayers?

8040. But all over London?—It is quite immaterial. Because, although I am a ratepayer in the City, it happens that I have a domicile in another part of London, and so have all the members of the Corporation. I really think that if we want to get at the practical representation, an element contributed by the Corporation would fulfil every possible ideal that the County Council can. We represent one-eighth of the ratepayers of the whole county really.

8041. That is your contention?—Yes, that is our contention.

8042. Let me put one more question about the representation. The Corporation are to appoint ten members?—Yes.

8043. Are you going to give them free power to appoint whom they like?—They would be necessarily elected from a body of 232, and that is a great advantage that the Corporation have. It would be ten of their own members. The City Solicitor reminds me that in all probability there would be four aldermen and six commoners. I wish to put in to the Commission a week's work of the London County Council.

(*Chairman.*) I think we can hardly have that.

8044. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You say you wish one-fourth to be appointed by the Corporation of the City of London?—Yes. May I say that the Corporation have pointed out very deliberately they are a very large body; they are 232, and consequently the 10 who would be representatives would be elected from a very large and by a very large number. The London County Council are a very small body, numerically, about 103, I think.

8045. (*Mr. Peel.*) I think there are 120?—Yes. I have had some experience of them; I was on the Thames Conservancy at the same time.

8046. Now a question about railways. You suggested the new authority should purchase the railways. What do you confine that to?—The railways within their bounds, and forming the intercommunications.

8047. For instance, railways between Tilbury and the City; do you propose that these should be purchased?—No; but there are certain lines which belong to the dock companies now, although they are operated by the Great Eastern Railway.

8048. Then you confine it solely to those portions of the railways within the area of the dock companies' property?—And the proper communications. I will tell you what was in the mind of the Committee—that they might do what is done so very largely and to such great advantage on the Continent; namely, issue through bills of lading from certain points by all the railways and through all the railways both for import and export goods, if they had proper railway communications. That is why we have suggested two representatives of the railway companies.

8049. That would be a matter for arrangement between the dock authority and the railway?—Certainly.

8050. But I mean as to the actual position and working of the railways?—The actual position and working of the railways should be confined, as I think we have made clear, to the lines within the area of the dock in so far as the construction of communications might be necessary.

8051. With regard to warehouses, would you give the new authority powers to construct, if necessary, new warehouses?—I think you would have to do that, certainly.

8052. It is not very likely that private enterprise would construct new warehouses in view of the competition of the new authority?—I think it is improbable that they would—not in view of the competition, but in view of the very great tendency of merchants to have their own wharves, and to take their goods away direct. The tendency is for merchants to take their goods away from the side of the ship as much as they can, and to take them to their own wharves straight away.

8053. So that if extra warehouse accommodation were required it would practically be the new authority that would do it?—Unless, of course, the wharfingers found it desirable to.

8054. They would hardly be likely to do that?—I am not able to say.

8055. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) When the Corporation considered the question of asking the Government to guarantee interest on the money, did they consider that they had some difficulty in paying it from the fact that the docks in London had to be taken over in their present state, and that at Liverpool and Glasgow it was not so?—No, that was not so.

8056. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to ask you if you are quite satisfied that the docks would be obtained as a matter of fact for the price that you mention?—No, I have no data whatever as to that; I cannot say that at all.

8057. The dock companies and other people interested might make a great fight before Parliament?—Clearly.

8058. And possibly some other price might be determined?—Yes.

8059. And if it happened to be a higher price your calculations would be to some extent affected?—Only to this extent—that it might be necessary to make the dues higher. It would not affect the principles. There is an enormous margin.

8060. Now about the dues. Are you quite satisfied that the trade in London can bear an additional charge of about £900,000. I think that is what it comes to?—Yes, I hope I have made it clear that what we have suggested in effect is not an augmentation, but a readjustment of charges. I tried to make that clear. There are a great many goods which escape now which ought to pay; coal for instance. It is rather absurd that coal pays nothing. Petroleum pays nothing. There is not another port in the world where that state of things obtains.

8061. But in effect the trade as a whole is going to be charged £900,000 more than it is now charged?—No, because although you are adding charges in one way you are taking them off in another. This is one of the difficulties that we are faced with. In regard to the question of rates; it is constantly cropping up.

8062. If you get £900,000 more out of it somebody must pay that?—As far as is necessary; you will find it is not at all necessary.

8063. You think that £900,000 may not in effect be levied?—I think in effect it may not be necessary. You will get a readjustment of charges.

8064. With reference to the point—I suggested just now that you might have to pay more for the docks than what you have been calculating. It might be necessary to levy it?—It might certainly be necessary.

8065. So that that is a point upon which the Commission must somehow or other form a judgment of some kind—as to whether the docks can be obtained for that money or not?—Certainly. I do not wish to fence with you at all, I hope you will understand that, but I say this: we have not taken into consideration in any way the normal growth of the trade. I firmly believe, and I think everyone interested in the trade believes equally, that there will be a very great growth, and that growth will go far to meet any extra charges for improvements. All this is a statistician's question. It is a rule of three. If Liverpool with 8,000,000 tons has spent £24,000,000, what might London spend on 14,000,000 tons, and yet be a very much cheaper port? The conclusion that one draws is quite irresistible, namely, that there is gross mismanagement somewhere in London.

8066. In the estimates contained in Appendix 1 of the goods carried to and from London coastwise as regards coal I quite understand what you suggest. I suppose there are statements as to the amount of coal which comes into London?—These figures have been got out with great care.

8067. Can you give us any idea of the basis of the other figure—that there are 3,405,000 tons of other goods than coal which come into London coastwise?—That has been arrived at in this way. We are very much indebted to Mr. Douglas Owen, who has taken these figures out for us on the lines we have indicated, and he tells me this. We know that certain goods have been brought to London of which coal forms, say, 500,000 tons, and the rest is estimated. It is not very important.

8068. It is not important for your purpose as part of the total charge?—No.

8069. But you have no statistical data as to the actual goods coming into London?—Only by deduction of coal. There are coastwise 10,940,000 tons; coal is 7,535,000, other produce 3,405,000, being the balance.

8070. That itself is based upon the weight of cargo?—Yes.

8071. And you have nothing better than that?—There is nothing better obtainable; the Board of Trade do not publish coastwise figures except in that form.

8072. Do you think the Customs have any figures of that kind?—No, it does not go through the Customs at all. It does not affect the Customs. Perhaps under this new system of coal dues there may be some records kept of movements of coals, but at present there is none, because they are not dutiable.

8073. I should like to ask you about the election of members to the Corporation of London. Can you tell us how many electors there are of these 232 members?—I regret I cannot answer that personally. We could get it for you. See 9374.

8074. I think it would be rather interesting that you should state it so that we can see what the number of persons directly interested is?—Yes. But you will certainly not lose from sight that they represent one-eighth of the ratepayers, whatever their number may be. That is the pertinent point.

8075. As a matter of fact, do the great houses, the insurance companies, the bankers, and other people take much interest in the elections?—Yes, and not only in the elections, but in membership. If I might mention some of the names that immediately occur to me there are Sir Joseph Dimsdale, who is a banker; Sir James Ritchie, who is one of the leading merchants; and Sir George Faudell Phillips. I know of my own knowledge that there are very many directors of the leading banks and insurance companies who are members of the Corporation. There is a very great difference in the position of the Corporation to-day and what it was, and I cannot help thinking that if they are entrusted with such important functions as these many of the gentlemen who take a wider interest still will enter it—not that I complain of its position as it is; I think it is fairly representative of the business of London as a whole.

8076. And you affirm, as a matter of fact, that politics do not enter into the question of the elections?—I affirm that as a most absolute fact. I can say that in the whole course of my career I have never been asked a single question as to what my politics were, and I think I may go further and say that when I entered the Corporation I had no pronounced views at all.

8077. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) There is one question I omitted to ask you. The whole of your Committee are unanimously in favour of the concentration of the work?—Yes.

8078. Will you enlarge a little upon the reasons why you think that the sanitary authority should not be included in that concentration?—Yes, with pleasure. We think that the sanitary authority should be apart altogether from the trading body. This will be a trading body, and as a matter of fact the sanitary authority is constantly in conflict with, for instance, the steamers that throw their ashes into the Thames, but still more important, masters of vessels in dock that allow pollution. The sanitary authority ought to have free access to our docks and to everywhere, and they are constantly seizing goods, in fact, that do not comply with the sanitary regulations. I think that should be left in the hands of a public body.

8079. Those actions are rather *vis-à-vis* of the offender than of the dock authority?—The dock authority themselves might offend.

8080. At any rate, you think that the sanitary authority had better be left as an independent body?—I do.

8081. And the Corporation are quite prepared to continue their good offices in that direction?—Yes, and they have done magnificent work. If we have had no affliction of epidemics in London, I think it has been largely due to the Port Sanitary Authority and their medical officers.

8082. And without any charge on the rates?—Yes, it is done out of their corporate funds, and they are thoroughly willing to continue that.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I think, my Lord, it might save time in cross-examination if I asked a question or two as to the basis on which this evidence has been prepared.

Examined by Mr. Scrutton.

8083. I just want to ask a question or two as to the lines of which these schedules and figures have been prepared. In Appendices 1 to 5 you have worked out the yield which would be obtained from goods coming into London, if they were charged at the rate which goods coming into Liverpool are charged at present?—That is so.

8084. And the summary of what would be obtained from that tax is found in Appendix 6?—That is so.

8085. Imports and exports?—Yes, on the basis of 1899 figures.

8086. Showing roughly a revenue from that source, if that taxation were adopted, of about £900,000?—Yes.

8087. Now, turning to Appendix 9 you take first the gross revenue of the present docks as £2,313,000?—Yes.

8088. You add to that the £900,000 that you have obtained by the Liverpool tax on goods, and get the gross revenue of £3,212,000?—That is so.

8089. In that revenue you have not included any extra tax on ships?—No.

8090. Or any tax on barges?—No.

8091. Those are outside sources of revenue?—Quite.

8092. You take as the expenses against that the present expenses of the docks, £1,611,000, and then expenses for conservancy and police, and show a surplus available of roughly one and a-half millions?—That is correct.

8093. Turning to how that one and a-half millions is to be spent, will that be found in Appendix 10?—Yes.

8094. You assume that you can buy the dock property for its market value plus 10 per cent. on the ordinary stock?—Yes.

8095. Which would show an expenditure of £18,213,000; and you assume that £7,000,000 additional outlay is to be spent, allocated, as you point out, to dredging, extension of jetties, extension of docks, and so on?—Yes, and let me add that we have taken no increased revenue from that increased expenditure. For instance, a very large income would, I think, be expected from the use of the river when ships drawing

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30 feet could lie there. I think the chairman of the Thames Conservancy gave that figure as £10,000. My own estimate would be very much larger than that. I wish to point out that we have taken no credit for any increased revenue whatever.

8096. That shows a funded debt of £25,000,000, interest and sinking fund on which would be about £900,000?—Yes. Of course, that is a very liberal calculation for interest.

8097. Showing a large surplus for interest, which it would not be necessary to levy?—Yes, we think so.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) My Lord, I have very few questions to ask, because a good deal of this, as your Lordship knows, is argumentative matter rather than matter of fact.

Cross-examined by Mr. Balfour Browne.

8098. Let me ask you one question about that sum of £900,000. Do I understand that those are the charges which are made at Liverpool upon the goods coming into London?—No.

8099. Is it not so?—Perhaps I do not apprehend your question. These are charges which would be made in London on the parallel line.

8100. Quite so; so that these would be additional charges to the charges that are levied to-day?—Substituted, we think.

8101. Am I right in supposing (I have not gone over these tables very minutely) that some of those charges would be upon goods that were carried from the docks in barges?—Yes, clearly—all goods indiscriminately.

8102. Really adopting the Liverpool cost in London?—Yes.

8103. You said you do not propose to treat the dock company's scheme seriously. Perhaps I may be forgiven if I return the compliment?—Quite.

8104. You do say one thing which I want a little further explanation about. You say, if it were felt that the shipowners and merchants could, in case of a deficit, fall back upon the rates, one of the principal reasons for careful administration would be removed?—Yes.

8105. Would not exactly the same thing take place if it were guaranteed by Government?—No, certainly not.

8106. Why not?—Because the Government only guarantee the payment of interest.

8107. And that would be exactly what the County Council would be doing?—I think there is a broad difference between the two.

8108. If the guarantee is in the one case the rates, and in the other case the taxes, where is the difference?—In the one case the Government have large representation, and if they found the members of the Trust squandering the rates they would very quickly clear them up.

8109. I suppose the London County Council would do the same?—They have not the same weight. There is no comparison between the Government and the London County Council.

8110. Now, with regard to the purchase of the docks, have you any experience with regard to the purchase of public undertakings at all?—We have put it very broadly; that must be left to the Commissioners.

8111. Did you ever hear of an undertaking being purchased upon the market value of its stocks?—With a sum for compulsory purchase.

8112. Did you ever hear of it?—Certainly.

8113. Where?—It has been done over and over again under Act of Parliament.

8114. Will you mention one case. It has not been done anywhere, I think you will find?—I will accept the correction.

8115. Do you know what is the ordinary principle? There is an arbitration going on downstairs to-day to transfer a waterworks to a public company. The ordinary principle is, altogether apart from the market value, to ascertain the maintainable revenue, to find out how that is secured, to capitalise by a certain number of years' purchase, and then on the back of that to put 10 per cent.?—Why should I discuss this with you? We are not inimical.. You ought to have the full value of your undertaking, whatever it is; I say that at once.

8116. Let me understand what it is to be, because I am not quite sure what you are going to purchase, and I should like to have an answer on that?—There, again, forgive me. We are not going to do anything. It is for the Commission to recommend.

8117. Will you look at your report? You say: "The new authority should have power conferred upon it to purchase the property of the Dock Companies in so far as Parliament may decide"?—Absolutely. See 7919

8118. What do you mean by that?—Absolutely what it says.

8119. Do you mean to say it should be allowed to purchase one dock?—Exactly as Parliament may decide.

8120. What is the proposal?—We have made none. We have enumerated that the London and India Docks, the Surrey Commercial, and the Millwall should be purchased, but we do not take the onus.

8121. You do not even suggest what should be purchased?—We do suggest that these particular docks should. But pray understand the position of the Corporation in this matter. In so far as we can be of help to the Royal Commission we desire to be, but we do not want to usurp for one moment their powers.

8122. Then one of the recommendations of your Committee is: "That powers should be conferred on such Board to purchase the property of the Dock Companies and such bonded wharves and warehouses as they may see fit." That is not "as Parliament may see fit"?—No; this body when constituted. See 7919

8123. As the authority may see fit?—Yes.

8124. Really, would you give the authority power to purchase what they chose of bonded warehouses?—They will have to get Parliamentary powers first.

8125. Further than that, in another part of your evidence you give them a monopoly on dutiable goods. You say: "The Corporation do not propose that any reckless competition"—I hope that will satisfy the wharfingers; it is to be gentle competition—"should be entered into by the proposed authority with outside wharves and warehouses. The proposed rates would be levied on all goods, whether warehoused by the public authority or by private wharfingers, and would be in addition to the charges made for warehousing goods in the dock warehouses, just as much as in the case of those goods that went to the wharves. There is certainly room for a reduction in *general* charges on many classes of goods, and to this extent competition might prevail"?—That is so. See 7934.

8126. Then you went on to say: "But I do not suggest that anything like a monopoly of warehousing should be created for the proposed authority except for dutiable goods." So that you want to have a monopoly for dutiable goods?—We suggest that it would be a very great saving if that were done. In several bonded warehouses there is a very large Customs staff maintained.

8127. I do not think you follow me. You are seeking to have a monopoly of that trade in dutiable goods, and yet you are only to purchase such bonded warehouses as you see fit?—Those are suggestions only.

8128. But the suggestions ought to cohere and hang together, ought they not?—We are not charged with that.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) My Lord, as I said before, it is mostly argument, and I do not propose to take up your time by cross-examining further.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) I have no questions to ask.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

8129. With regard to the meeting of the Court of Common Council on the 16th April, you introduced the report of the Committee and moved that it should be agreed to?—Yes.

8130. Then Mr. Morton moved an amendment: "Except that the London County Council should, in the opinion of this Court, be represented on the proposed new authority"?—He did. That is Mr. Alpheus Cleophas Morton.

8131. Was there a division, and was the result of the

division 53 for and 81 against?—Yes, I think those figures are correct.

8132. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Those are the figures I asked about?—Yes, that is right.

8133. (*Mr. Daldy.*) You were speaking a good deal of the time of this meeting, were you not?—I am afraid that is so.

8134. Shortly before the vote was taken did Mr. Morton say: "In moving this Amendment No. 1 I do not desire to commit the Court to any numbers whatever. That will come on in No. 2. We are on the principle only"?—If you are reading from a verbatim report, I quite accept that.

8135. And did you say afterwards: "If there would be one thing more dangerous than another it would be to accept Mr. Morton's suggestion to leave the numbers till afterwards. I hope this Court will not agree"?—I did.

8136. Why was it dangerous to leave the numbers till afterwards?—Because the Committee had never suggested more than two. This is what was in our minds. If the London County Council were to have representation at all, we would much rather we defined what that representation was to be, than leave it open to any other body to indicate our views.

8137. It would be dangerous to indicate such a principle?—No—to leave the question as to the numbers open.

8138. You told us you served on the Thames Conservancy at the same time as the London County Council members were there?—I did. My Lord, this is as an individual matter again, because I represented the shipowners on the Board, and not the corporation. Therefore I must submit to you the question whether I must answer this?

(*Chairman.*) We must ask you, Mr. Daldy, to limit yourself to questions of fact. A question with regard to the constitution of this body is a question on policy, I think.

(*Witness.*) My difficulty is that I did not represent the corporation on the Thames Conservancy at all I was elected by the shipowners.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I think your Lordship puts me in rather a difficulty. A great many things have been said about the London County Council. For instance, it has been said that their motive was to get power into their hands, and it has been said that they are not suitable persons for it, and that kind of thing. If I am not to question those I wanted to show that the witness has made a different statement on another occasion.

(*Chairman.*) We do not want to limit you more than we are obliged, but we wish you to be careful.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I will be careful, my Lord.

8139. Were those members who served on the Thames Conservancy, as far as your observation went, good business men, taking broad views with regard to the questions submitted to them?—Must not that be quite a matter of opinion? Shall I give the names of the gentlemen who did represent the County Council?

8140. I ask you if that is so, as a fact?—I really must decline to give an answer to that question.

8141. Did you in the course of your address in the Court of Common Council, and again shortly before the division say this: "Therefore I do desire to say for myself that having served some years on that body"—that is the Thames Conservancy—"I do not know a finer body of business men in the views they take—the broad views that they take of the questions submitted to them—than the Thames Conservancy"?—I say that certainly, but the unfortunate part of it is that out of 38 the London County Council were almost invariably in a minority of five.

8142. Then, although you gave this general statement to the meeting, you excepted those five members all the time?—I am afraid that is the construction it would bear.

8143. Now there is one question I should like to push a little further, if I may. It was objected that your proposed increase on the goods would fall on the consumer?—Yes. I say it would not.

8144. You said this: "There is no greater fallacy than the argument which has been put forward that any increase on the goods will fall on the consumer. I wish to be polite, but I can only characterise that as 'rot'"?—That is so, and I have given you the reason. You do not care what you pay for your loaf of bread or what the importer gets for it.

8145. You stopped me just as I was going on with the reading: "Several honourable councillors laugh"?—It is forcible, but perhaps not polite.

8146. You put down £900,000 a year as a possible charge?—Yes.

8147. I want to know on whom will that fall if it does not fall on the consumer?—On the shipowner and the merchant. I have not minced the matter. I have taken 1s. 4d. per ton on petroleum, which means 1-25th of a penny per gallon. On whom does it fall?

8148. Of course, a large quantity of goods coming into the docks are for consumption in the metropolitan area?—What are you going to call the metropolitan area?

8149. The Administrative County of London?—No. I do not want to use the same word that I used before, but I say, No, certainly not.

8150. May I take it that a small proportion of the goods coming into the docks are consumed in that area?—A considerable proportion.

8151. Of course, those are goods which to some extent must come there. They are required by the consumers?—Yes.

8152. They would not be so liable to be driven away to another port, and that kind of thing, if the charges on goods were increased in the port?—If the charges on goods were increased in the port to such an extent that it would be cheaper to bring them, say, *viâ* Dover, they would come *viâ* Dover; but, as I have pointed out, if the Royal Commission adopt the course which we have suggested of making this a trust, administered by those who pay the rates, they have every possible incentive to induce more goods to come, and no incentive whatever to drive them away.

8153. Will you concede me this—I expect you will—that if the increased charges have the effect of driving the goods away from the port, these goods which are required in the locality would be the last to go?—Yes, I think that is so, but I say under no circumstances does the consumer pay the extra rate. It is the merchant and the shipowner.

8154. So that the persons who receive these goods, the consumers, are the persons who would be the hardest hit by an undue increase in the charges?—No, I think not; the importer would have to take so much less for his goods, that is all.

8155. I was going on to suggest to you that it is extremely important that those consumers should be represented on the new body?—With all due deference, I say no.

8156. The total capital sum which you have mentioned, I think, comes to something like 25 millions?—Yes.

8157. But in that sum I think you have not included at least three of the matters which you propose in your report. You have included nothing in that sum for the acquisition of the railways within the docks?—I have not, but very largely they are comprised in the figures for the purchase of the dock, because the lines within the areas of the dock companies belong to the dock companies now, unless I am misinformed. They are only operated by the railway companies.

8158. Then you put nothing down for the purchase of the bonded wharves?—No; because, as I have said, they pay for themselves, if it is decided to buy them.

8159. Can you put in any figure for the money which would be required to purchase those?—I have not gone into that at all.

8160. Then, again, there is a figure for the private moorings. You have not put any figure for them?—I think it would be absolutely impossible. If in their wisdom Parliament separate the river from the docks, and you have a river-way of 30ft. with buoys available, the income from those moorings, if the Thames Conservancy continue to exist, and are not too tender, will be a large matter indeed.

8161. There was a reference to the financial estimate which you had made. It was referred to at the meeting?—Under what heading.

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8162. I will read you the passage, if I may. You said: "As a matter of fact, the step recommended by the Committee will have the effect of cheapening the port very materially, and will not add to its burdens, because what we find is this, that the charges on a very large proportion of goods coming to London are far too heavy and exhaustive, and there are a very great number indeed which entirely escape taxation to even a single farthing, so far as the benefit of the port goes"?—That is so.

8163. "It is that that we want to change. The financial estimate we have made we have had to make somewhat on the lines of the conduct of the business in Liverpool, and I should like the Court to realise for a moment how London compares with Liverpool," and so on?—We have now put that in in detail.

8164. Is that financial estimate that you referred to the paper that you put in?—No; only general deductions which we anticipated would work out, as in fact it has worked out.

8165. Then, if the Corporation proceeded upon that financial estimate, they were proceeding upon something which is not now before the Commission?—A rule of three sum.

8166. I want to get the fact from you. If the Corporation proceeded upon that financial estimate, they were proceeding upon a set of figures which is not before the Commission?—A set of figures which is before the Commission as I say, 8 to 24; 14 to 25.

8167. Can you give me the date when this idea of asking the Government to guarantee the stock, or bringing that proposal forward was born, so to say. We know it was not in the original report?—It came out in the general consideration of the subject.

8168. You are rather telling me how it came out. What I want to get is the date when it came into existence?—When the subject was considered as a whole. We have, as I have told the Commission, the advantage of having many of the leading bankers in the Corporation. We consulted them, and they told us there would be no difficulty in Parliament doing anything.

8169. It was not mentioned at this meeting on the 16th April, was it?

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) The Committee reported on the 1st April.

(*Witness.*) It was discussed very exhaustively in Committee for days between the 14th March and the 1st April.

8170. (*Mr. Daldy.*) The report of the special Committee which was confirmed by the Common Council did not at that time contain the recommendation of the Government guarantee?—You are drawing a distinction. It contained a suggestion from the first that it should be made a trustees' stock. It did not contain the suggestion, which arose from Mr. Morton, that the Government should be invited to contribute. I cannot see any harm in inviting the Government to contribute.

8171. Can you tell me when there was first a definite suggestion that there should be this Government guarantee?—In the Court itself.

8172. On the 16th April?—Yes.

8173. It took shape shortly after that, did it?—It took shape simply in that it was agreed to. There can be no possible harm in inviting the Government to contribute.

8174. Was there a resolution?—Yes; and it was accepted unanimously.

8175. I want to know the date when the Common Council resolved on this addition of the Government guarantee?—On the 16th April.

8176. On the same day they resolved in terms upon that?—Yes.

8177. I want you to be quite sure about it. I understand you to say definitely that the resolution of the 16th April was in express terms a resolution that there should be a Government guarantee of the stock?—It was not a resolution. The City Solicitor tells me it was an amendment that that should be added as part of the report.

8178. You mean there was a formal resolution, and upon that it was added to the report?—Yes.

8179. I want you to give me the date of the resolution of the Common Council, saying in express terms that there should be this Government guarantee?—It would take the form of a resolution. As a matter of fact it was a suggestion of Mr. Morton which I accepted, and the Court adopted.

8180. It was expressly mentioned by Mr. Morton and accepted by you?—Yes.

8181. I cannot find it in the shorthand notes of the meeting, but I will take it from you that it was so. In speaking of the County Council you said that under their proposals the body would be under the tutelage of the County Council. That is the expression you used?—Yes. I call it tutelage. This great body could not raise a sixpence without the consent of the London County Council.

8182. That is all you mean is it?—Yes.

8183. You have strongly insisted in your report upon the unlimited power of charging ships and goods?—Yes.

8184. And you rely upon that fact as making your stock practically a trustees' stock?—That is so.

8185. You do not rely upon the Government guarantee at all?—No.

8186. But is "power" the right expression to use there. Must there not be a duty on the trustees, or the Port of London trust, or whatever you call them?—Of course, we come always to that same point. We are recommendatory. It is for the Royal Commission in the first place to advise, and for Parliament to frame the scheme. If they give power, I daresay they will impose duties. That is how we put it. If Parliament define the right to levy the charges they will also define the duties of administration.

8187. Then you would not give an unlimited power?—Always subject to Parliament.

8188. What is Parliament to say when it constitutes the administration. Is it to say that they are to have an unlimited power of charging?—I should say they will follow the recommendation of the Royal Commission.

8189. You do not give me any answer?—We are not really drafting the report. It is not my province to do that.

8190. You have made it a most important part, indeed a crucial part, of your recommendation that the power to charge on the rates of the Port should be unlimited?—Clearly. We do not wish to shirk that for a moment. We do, on account of the financial security.

8191. Without that the whole thing falls to pieces, does it not?—No, I should not say that.

8192. Well, it is somewhat crippled?—I have not the articles of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board before me, but I think they possess exactly the same power. But the safeguard is, as I have told you, that the gentlemen who under our scheme administer this will have to bear the burden, and also it says there should be a tribunal of appeal constituted.

8193. Is the tribunal of appeal to control the charges of the port?—Supposing anyone interested was unduly or unfairly charged, they would certainly have a right of appeal.

8194. Would not that be rather like putting them under the tutelage of the Corporation?—It would be a judicial court of appeal, exactly like the Railway Commissioners.

8195. In your evidence to-day you have spoken two or three times of the funds being carefully administered for the benefit of the port as a whole. Do you mean by that the benefit of the persons trading in the port, or do you mean the benefit of the mercantile interest, and the benefit of the customers as well?—I mean the benefit of the traders of the port, because they constitute the vital element in the success of the port. If you get no ships here, the consumers would not get anything at all.

8196. I quite accept your view. The mercantile interest ought to be considered?—They are inseparably combined.

8197. So long as you concede that, that is all I want to ask you upon that point?—That is quite so.

8198. I do not quite follow you when you say that the Corporation is the market authority of the Metro-

polis?—I think that is so, especially so far as riparian authority goes. I refer particularly to the fish and the foreign cattle markets, which are exclusively under the administration of the Corporation.

8199. There is a matter which I should have asked you about the market. The shorthand notes of your meeting have been handed to me, and I see there is a note at the end. There was a proposal "that the Government should be empowered to contribute"?—"Invited," it should be. Of course, they would be empowered.

8200. "That the Government should be invited to contribute towards the cost of improving the river and Port, having regard to the national interests involved. (*Lord Mayor.*) Is that seconded? (*Sir Marcus Samuel.*) I will second that. (*Town Clerk.*) The Court will take that at once." Then the question is that Mr. Morton's motion, No. 4, be agreed to. That comes at the very end of the report of the proceedings?—Yes.

8201. I want to know how long after that it was that you had this resolution that you have told us about?—You have read the whole of it. Nothing else occurred.

8202. I put it to you as distinctly as I could. The resolution I was asking you about was a resolution that the Government should guarantee. That is a very different thing from this. This is, "Should be invited to contribute towards the cost"?—It is recommendatory. It is for the Royal Commission, again, to say in what form the Government should contribute.

8203. What I want to find out is when, if ever, did the Corporation pass any resolution to the effect that the Government should be asked to guarantee?—That is what I mean. You have the shorthand notes of the meeting, and you have read absolutely what covers the whole. Have you any question to ask on the labour question?

8204. (*Chairman.*) I think the danger would be if you put so much responsibility upon us, the Corporation are likely to lose some of the weight of the evidence which you give?—It has certainly not been my wish to minimise the recommendations which the Corporation have formulated, which are very clear.

8205. You take the responsibility of what you have said?—Yes, absolutely unreservedly.

8206. (*Mr. Ellis.*) On this question as to what took place at the meeting of the Common Council, it would be much simpler if the witness would hand in the authorised minutes for that day?—The City Solicitor shall do that. You shall have the minutes.

See 8322–4.

8207. Then we shall have them in an official shape. He will hand in a copy of the minutes?—Yes, he shall do so.

8208. (*Mr. Daldy.*) There is one answer which you gave which rather puzzled me. You said that this sum of £900,000 would be readjustment, and not augmentation?—Yes.

8209. Do you mean that if you were to take the present dock dues and charges and distribute them differently you would get an increase of £900,000?—I have endeavoured to enumerate some articles which at present pay nothing—coal and petroleum, for two. If those articles would bear some taxation, as Parliament may decide with regard to amount, it will enable the authority to reduce charges on other goods.

8210. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You do not readjust a charge if you create one?—You might readjust the existing charges on other goods.

8211. It would create one for petroleum and coal?—Yes, but what appears to us so very clear is that the port in one sense is too cheap a port—that is to say, that there is a very large amount of work done for nothing.

8212. (*Mr. Daldy.*) I think really we have got this, but I want to get it clear on the notes. I think you compare the Thames Conservancy stock, which was raised at £107 in June, 1895, and the County Council stock, which was raised in July, 1895, at £102?—Pardon me; I do not think I mentioned that.

8213. You had not that in your mind?—No. They are both excellent securities.

8214. You put the loan at £107 as being an example of the way in which the Conservancy could raise money?—The way in which money could be raised on the security of the port revenue.

8215. In June, 1895, on a three per cent. stock?—Yes.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) My Lord, we should like, if we may, to have an opportunity of considering these appendices that have been handed in in case we should want to ask anything upon them. We certainly do not want to trouble the Commission unless we think it worth while. Possibly if we find, after considering, that there is anything we want to ask we might communicate with the Commission.

(*Chairman.*) I am afraid we cannot promise the attendance of Sir Marcus Samuel again.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I am in your lordship's hands, but to cross-examine on these appendices after five minutes' consideration would be really an impertinence to the Commission. If there is any important point upon which we wish to ask questions we will communicate with the Commission.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8216. You are proposing to this Commission, as I understand, that it should make recommendations to Parliament, based upon the report you present to it?—Yes.

8217. And you are suggesting that "powers should be conferred on such board to purchase the property of the dock companies, and such bonded wharves and warehouses as they may see fit, and to raise the capital necessary for that purpose; for the deepening of the channel of the river, and for the general improvement of the port and docks"?—Yes.

8218. You told the Commission a short time since that you saw difficulties in the way of separating the quays and waterways from the warehouses. Do you know that Mr. Malcolm told us that in the Surrey Commercial Dock they do it, and have done it for years in their accounts?—No.

8219. Are you aware of the extent to which the wharves take bonded goods?—Yes, very well.

8220. The figures are given in the table put in by Mr. Ryder on the third day of the proceedings. (See Appendix 3rd day, No. 1.) You may take it from me that the seven dock bodies show a total duty of £3,509,163; that the wharves show a total of £3,210,182; and that the total duties paid in London, including warehouses, are £9,068,887; so that the wharves do about one-third of the total business of the port in dutiable goods?—Yes.

8221. You have indicated, as far as I can make out, that you would only propose to take a wharf taking dutiable goods if you were sure that it would be a profit-earning concern?—Yes.

8222. How would you propose to ascertain that before you gave notice to purchase?—We only meant in the hands of the authority itself. On its merits it might or might not be. But what we have to consider here is the economical working of the port, and anybody who knows the way in which dutiable goods are handled knows that there could scarcely be a more wasteful process than maintaining Customs staffs at all the wharves.

8223. That would be an economy in the Customs Department?—It would be an economy in the administration, because each of the wharves or dock companies have to pay those charges themselves.

8224. Then you suggest the abolition of some of them?—Yes, or concentration.

8225. Abolition of some wharves and concentration of others?—Yes.

8226. And a destructive competition with those which you did not propose to buy?—No, not a destructive competition.

8227. Let us see. You are proposing to take power to enter into agreements to cheapen the cost of goods to the consumer, and to enter into agreements with the railway companies?—Yes.

8228. That would have a tendency, would it not, to divert traffic from the river?—Not necessarily.

8229. Not if you have land carriage?—No; I cannot follow that.

8230. Is not the great point of water carriage its cheapness?—I think you will find that we have carefully guarded that. We have made no suggestion that lighters should be taxed. We quite recognise that.

8231. You are suggesting, are you not, a body which consists solely, as far as the practical element is

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concerned, directly elected, of representatives of shipowners and merchants?—Yes.

8232. Do you consider that there are no other classes interested in the port?—I consider that there are a great many, but our recommendations go on the principle that representation should go with taxation; those who pay the dues.

8233. Do you not consider that the indirect effect of some of your proposals would be to tax the wharfingers?—No, I do not. Your clients can certainly tell you that in a great many cases the wharfingers pay the dues for their customers, and would consequently be eligible for election on this Board. They are not excluded. I mean to say that they pay the dues on behalf of their customers. It is the most common practice in the world that the wharfinger sends his cheque both for the freight and any charges. Consequently he would be eligible for election, and as an elector.

8234. I am putting it rather as a class. Do you not think they are entitled to representation?—They do not pay anything.

8235. On the other hand, you are proposing, as I understand it, to take the dock warehouses?—With the docks.

8236. And to work those commercially?—Yes.

8237. With a Government guarantee at your back?—Forgive me; I have tried to define very clearly what the position should be in regard to that, that those warehouses should pay such charges as properly accrue by reason of the rates and by reason of the value of the warehouses, and that they should further pay such dues as would fall on the wharfingers to pay.

8238. Who is to decide what dues the wharfingers could afford to pay?—Only that they would have to pay to the public authority in common with the public authority itself.

8239. You are proposing in addition to that a kind of roving power to tax lighters?—No; we have not done anything of the kind. We say the new authority must settle if they should be taxed or not. Do you seriously suggest that if we had that in view we could enforce it?

8240. I suggest that you have no representative of the interests that would be most affected by that on your proposed Trust?—No; and I think there is an excellent reason for that. I think it is abundantly clear from all we have said—I wish to make it so—that in the opinion of the Corporation for what it is worth barges should not be taxed.

8241. You suggest that goods should be taxed?—Yes.

8242. That is generally for the improvement of the waterways and everything?—Yes.

8243. And that power to tax goods, of course, would fall on goods going away by lighters to the wharf?—And entering the docks.

8244. And I would suggest also upon such goods as came into the river?—Everything—absolutely.

8245. That would enable any such trust to get a revenue which it might utilise in reducing warehouse charges, might it not?—Certainly it might.

8246. And again the observation occurs that there are no representatives of the interests affected by that change?—That is so. They do not pay anything.

8247. Have you ever considered the question as to how far it would be possible to separate the wharves which take dutiable and non-dutiable goods, so as to enable you to take the proportion as appropriated to bonded warehouses, and leave the rest as appropriated to non-dutiable goods?—Yes, in the same way as you might buy licensed houses and leave out unlicensed houses.

8248. Take the case of a wharf which takes both dutiable and non-dutiable goods. If you take the wharf you take the quay space with it?—Yes.

8249. How is the owner of the part of the warehouse which is not bonded to get his goods?—If the new authority required it they must take that too.

8250. Then your suggestion goes further than you have already stated, because you are proposing to take over quays upon which there is a bonded wharf where any portion of the wharf is bonded?—Yes, they would be compensated.

8251. If you take Mr. Ryder's figures again you will find that there is a considerable number of wharves. There are 36 paying something over £3,000,000 in dues?—Yes.

8252. And not taking that upon which the heaviest duty is levied—not taking tobacco?—Yes.

8253. Tobacco is £2,000,000?—Yes.

8254. So that out of nine millions, two millions went for tobacco in the docks, and the docks were only left with about one and a half millions of other dutiable goods?—That is so.

8255. And you are dismissing all that industry without representation?—Yes, unless they pay dues.

8256. Do you suggest that the intermediate agent paying dues for the principal should go upon the dock trust?—If he figures among the persons paying dues.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

8257. (*Mr. Harper.*) Would you see any difficulty in allocating the funds, to be raised from the charge upon goods, to the improvement of the waterways independently of any other part of the business?—I have tried to explain the difficulty of that, and it does seem to me absolutely incontrovertible.

8258. I am not talking now of what has been done in the past; I am talking now of what a new authority, starting with a clean sheet, could do?—This is the difficulty which confronts one. How are you going to say which ship shall be allowed to discharge in the river and pay no dues?

8259. I do not think you follow me; I did not mean that. What I said was this. Supposing you are going to levy, I will say, 2d. per ton for the sake of argument, upon all goods coming into the river, whether they go to docks or overside in the river, or however they go. Is there any difficulty in your judgment, to a new authority, in allocating the whole of the monies to be derived from that to the dredging of the river and to the maintenance of the waterways in the docks?—I can see no difficulty in that.

8260. That would prevent, would it not, what I was drawing your attention to just before we adjourned—the chance of an authority appropriating a portion of the tax levied on goods towards the fostering of its warehousing at the expense of the private warehousemen?—It would have that effect, certainly.

8261. At the present time I think I am right in saying that the points at which dutiable goods may be landed are fixed by the Customs?—Yes.

8262. I think that is in the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1886, speaking from memory?—I cannot tell you, but the practice is that the bond is applied for and is granted. They become practically licences.

8263. You are not proposing to give the Customs any voice in this matter. You are not proposing any representation whatever?—No, we are not. It has been explained, I think, before, that the Customs are really represented by the Board of Trade. They are simply a branch of the Board of Trade.

8264. I thought they were rather a branch of the Treasury?—Or the Treasury, yes. I mean they are subordinate; they are not a department; they have no representation in the House, for instance.

8265. But you are suggesting a representation for the Admiralty?—Yes.

8266. Whose sole interest is in the Woolwich Dockyard?—And in the river generally. But the reason we suggested—that is, that the Admiralty representatives have shown themselves to be such splendid men of business on anything that they are put that we are very glad to have them. They are an element of great value.

8267. The Board of Trade, the Trinity House, then two representatives of railway companies?—Yes. Do you want to know the reason for that?

8268. Yes?—Because we think that co-operation between the railway companies and the Port Trust is a primary element of success.

8269. Which again would enable a port Trust by dint of those agreements, having first put the goods into their warehouses by a cheap agreement for carriage to get them away landward?—Yes, why not?

8270. I am only asking you. Then two underwriters of Lloyd's?—Yes, the underwriters of Lloyd's

have a very great interest in the river. I should like to say that the underwriters of Lloyd's should be altered to one representative of the underwriters of Lloyd's, and one from the Institute of Underwriters. There is no more useful body of men than that. They know the dock rates in every port, and we thought they would be an element of great strength.

8271. And the remainder, 20 shipowners, merchants, and others contributing dues to the new authority?—Yes.

8272. You would include as eligible under that anyone who pays dues?—Yes, anyone would be eligible.

8273. You propose a Tribunal of Appeal. Has it ever occurred to you that the Railway Commissioners, which I think you suggest as a synonymous body, is not exactly a cheap tribunal?—I cannot answer that question. I have never had to go before them.

8274. You say, to whom any such questions—I do not know what they are—as to charges or preferences? —Preferential rates.

8275. That is as between people landing and warehousing goods of the same type?—No. The shipowner, for instance, might feel himself aggrieved that he was sent into the river when one of his competitors was allowed into the docks.

8276. Then you propose to subject the mere administration of the docks to a judicial body?—Yes, we should like, of course, being a business body ourselves, to see that as simple as can be devised.

8277. Charges or preference. Do you propose under that head to include the relative incidents of charges on or between lightermen or wharfingers and the owners?—No, we put it between persons using the Port and the new authority.

8278. Still it would come to the same thing—they would both be making claims upon you, and it would practically be making a fight between the two. Supposing you had a shipowner saying he ought not to pay a certain due, but that it ought to go over to the lighterman or wharfinger?—But the lighterman or wharfinger would not pay any dues at all under our scheme.

8279. You are taking the power to lay a tax upon the lighters?—Yes.

8280. And you are going to lay a charge upon the goods?—Yes.

8281. I pointed out how an authority might utilise that?—In that case it is quite clear that if the lightermen have to pay dues they would also have representation. It is only if they do not pay dues that they have none.

8282. And the lighterman, after he has had to pay his dues, may become an elector?—Of course he would.

8283. In regard to the tables that you have laid before the Commission concerning the charges at Liverpool; have you considered precisely what services are comprised within those?—We have said no specific services at all.

8284. I want to know are we comparing like with like? —Yes, I think so.

8285. Therefore in order to answer that I suppose you have to consider exactly what is comprised in the Liverpool charges, and exactly what you propose to do in London?—I have put that in the very plainest terms—that these charges are to be made irrespective of any work done.

8286. I will not refer to Liverpool because we have had that. Perhaps you will tell me what you propose to do in London?—We have defined it in our scheme. We propose adding to the docks to the extent of two million pounds.

8287. I do not mean that. What do you propose to do when a ship comes up? Do you propose to indicate the berth to which she shall go?—Yes, that is the main reason why we say there can be no separation between the docks and the river. The Harbour Master would indicate that.

8288. Do you propose to do anything more?—That would depend entirely on the nature of the work.

8289. What do you propose to do when the ship is once at her berth?—Assuming that the ship comes with a full cargo of grain, and no distinguishing marks, it would seem to me that when there are buoys in the river the Harbour Master should direct that ship to go to a river berth, because she would not bring general cargo such as comes, for instance, with a P. and O. boat, coming from China and Japan. The goods would then be discharged into craft alongside, for delivery possibly to the wharf, possibly the docks.

8290. My difficulty is not as to whether she shall stop in the river, or go into the docks, but suppose she has got into the docks. You would not touch her any further if she remained in the river; you would leave her to discharge by her own appliances?—Certainly.

8291. Now she is in the dock, how is her discharge going to be effected?—By her own and the dock appliances.

8292. Is the use of the dock appliances comprised in the charges you propose to make?—Not in the specific charges which we have put. They are for the general improvement of the Port.

8293. Do you see any difficulty in appropriating your tonnage due to the improvement of the waterways and raising specific dues for such services as you rendered to the ships when they came into your docks?—Surely the whole of our report goes to that. We say the income must be general, and it must be applied as the newly-created authority should deem best for the general interests of the port.

8294. You want, as Mr. Scott very suitably phrased it, that it should be smothered up in the charges so that it would be impossible to tell how you were utilising any particular due?—It is immaterial; we only want to improve the port.

8295. You told the Commission you deprecated any reckless competition between the proposed authority and any outside wharves and warehouses?—Yes.

8296. You anticipate some competition?—Most decidedly, and it is very desirable.

8297. Can you name a single case in this country in which Parliament has granted to a body power to trade in competition with private traders already established? —I cannot; I have not gone into that question at all.

8298. Do you think it would be just to trade in competition without providing compensation for any injury that might be inflicted?—"The greatest good for the greatest number."

8299. I am asking you with regard to the interests of the people I represent. Do you think it would be just? —I premised my statement to the Commissioners by saying we were not hostile to anyone, neither did we wish to inflict any harm on anyone.

8300. I am only endeavouring to see how far it might work out when it gets through your hands, who are so desirous of being fair. You see, you might not be a member. Do you propose to place any limit on competition to avoid this reckless competition?—I define, of course, what would be only my own view; that is, that the public warehouses should bear only their proper proportion of rates and such charges as would occur to docks outside them, and then that the charge should be based upon an equitable footing.

8301. Who is going to settle what is equitable? Do you mean a trading authority such as the body you are proposing to establish?

(*Mr. Ellis.*) The witness says he expresses his individual opinion with regard to this.

(*Witness.*) That is so.

8302. (*Chairman.*) I was going to ask you whether you are giving us the views of the Corporation?—How can I, my Lord? We did not discuss it; it is quite impossible.

(*Chairman.*) Then, perhaps we had better pass on.

8303. (*Mr. Harper.*) May I take it, with regard to all the answers you have given me in cross-examination, that none of these topics have ever suggested themselves to the Corporation?—No; that would be going too far. It is obvious that such details as this could not be gone into on such a report as this.

(*Chairman.*) Is it necessary to go on with this discussion?

(*Mr. Harper.*) I think not, my Lord, under those conditions, but I should like to ask this question.

8304. I understand that the statement of the evidence you have given was prepared by the authority of the Corporation?—Certainly.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We have got that clearly.

Alderman Sir M. Samuel.

4 June 1901.

Re-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

8305. In November, 1899, when the Dock Bill for levying charges on lighters was before Parliament, or was proposed, I think most of the interests concerned came to the Corporation asking for its support?—Yes.

8306. Did the docks come?—Yes, there was a deputation.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) What are you referring to now, Mr. Scrutton?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I am referring to a series of deputations that waited upon the Corporation from all the interests asking for their support for their various proposals.

(*Witness.*) Yes; there was a deputation comprised of the dock companies, the wharfingers, the warehousemen and granary keepers, and the London Chamber of Commerce. I may say we were approached by all those public bodies.

8307. The dock company came. And did Mr. Sydney Holland, their Vice-Chairman, put in a memorandum stating their case?—Yes.

8308. I see the first paragraph of that is: "The dock companies of London are in a very serious financial position. It is unquestionably unsatisfactory to have the docks of the Port of London managed by companies which cannot develop it as it should be, and which cannot meet the demands for capital expenditure commensurate with the size and importance of the port." That was the dock companies' case?—Yes.

8309. (*Chairman.*) Will you give us the date of that?—It is the 12th March, 1900.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) And the date of the memorandum is November, 1899.

8310. Did the wharfingers also come to you?—Yes.

8311. And the Chamber of Commerce?—Yes, and many other bodies.

8312. Can you give me the date when the wharfingers' deputation came?—They were all on the same date, the 12th March, 1900.

8313. The Chamber of Commerce came?—Yes.

8314. And all asked you for support for their various proposals?—Yes.

8315. Thereupon the Corporation considered the matter between the various views put before them, and formulated their own scheme, which was laid before the Commission?—That was subsequently; the deputations were only with regard to the Dock Bill.

8316. After that the Corporation considered the various proposals made to them, and after hearing the various deputations, formulated their own scheme?—Yes.

8317. (*Mr. Ellis.*) As this point has been raised of those deputations, let us have it clearly. I gather these deputations came in March, 1900?—Yes.

8318. That was before the second reading debate in the House of Commons on the Dock Bill?—That is so.

8319. And this deputation had no relation whatsoever, and could not have, to the scheme that has been put before us?—None whatever.

8320. We understand that you are going to put in the authorised extracts from the Corporation's minutes of these proposals with regard to the guarantee and so on?—Yes. I hope the Commission will understand the Corporation wish only to act in a public-spirited manner.

(*Chairman.*) We shall be obliged if you will convey our thanks to the Corporation.

Sir HOMEWOOD CRAWFORD called and examined.

Sir H. Crawford.

See 8015; 8206 7.

8321. (*Chairman.*) You are the City Solicitor?—I am.

8322. Do you wish to put in a document with reference to evidence which has been given to-day?—I put in formally the minutes of the Court of Common Council of Tuesday, 16 April, 1901. The Special Committee over which Sir Marcus Samuel presided as Chairman brought up this Report, in answer to a reference to them: "To consider and report on the whole question of the Royal Commission on the Port of London and the city's action in relation thereto, and recommending (*inter alia*) that a body possessing a complete power over river, port, navigation, shipping, and other services, should be constituted." Then the whole of the recommendations are set out. That report having been formally moved by the Chairman, Sir Marcus Samuel, the usual motion was put "to agree with the Committee in their Report." Mr. A. C. Morton moved to add the words, "except that the London County Council should, in the opinion of this Court, be represented on the proposed new authority." That was seconded by Mr. Matthew Wallace. The minutes of the Special Committee showing the division on the question of the representation of the councils of adjoining counties on the proposed authority being called for were submitted. Then the question was put, and the Lord Mayor declared the amendment to be negatived, and on a division being demanded and granted there appeared for the affirmative 1 alderman, 50 commoners, 2 tellers, making a total of 53. For the negative 8 aldermen, 71 commoners, 2 tellers, making a total of 81, with a majority for the negative of 28. The original motion was then about to be put, whereupon Mr. Morton moved, and Sir Marcus Samuel, the Chairman, seconded and accepted a resolution to add the words, "and that in the opinion of the Court the Government should be empowered to contribute towards the cost of improving the river and port, having regard to the national interests involved." The question, as amended, was thereupon resolved in the affirmative.

8323. (*Chairman.*) Was the word "empowered" actually used there?—Yes.

8324. (*Mr. Ellis.*) They were going to empower the Government?—I must explain that. This was a notice of motion which was put down on the paper of business by Mr. A. C. Morton. Then without any discussion whatever Sir Marcus Samuel rose in his place and said, "I formally second that." There was not much consideration given to the strict verbiage, but inasmuch as that was the way in which it appeared on the notice it had to be put in that way. That was carried in the affirmative. Then appended is the division list, showing those who voted for and against.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the Minutes of Proceedings of the Court of Common Council of the City of London, Tuesday, 16th April, 1901. See Appendix, 22nd day, No. 19.*)

Recalled 9374.

Mr. EDWARD PEMBROKE called and examined.

Mr. E. Pembroke.

8325. (*Chairman.*) You are the senior partner of Messrs. Galbraith, Pembroke, and Co.?—Yes.

8326. You are also chairman of the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Shipping Company?—I am.

8327. Will you kindly tell us whether you come here as representing Messrs. Galbraith, Pembroke, and Co. or the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Shipping Company, or the Corporation of the City of London?—I represent Messrs. Galbraith, Pembroke, and Co. and the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Shipping Company.

8328. You do not represent the Corporation of London?—No.

8329. You do not wish, therefore, to support the evidence given by Sir Marcus Samuel?—I approve a good deal of what Sir Marcus Samuel said.

8330. But you come here in your capacity as a partner of those firms?—Yes.

8331. On that understanding will you proceed with your evidence?—When I came to the City 55 years ago, and for many years afterwards, London was the favourite port with all shipowners, and commanded tonnage at the lowest freights current; now, and for some time past, all owners of tramp steamers, unless they have full cargoes of grain in bulk, do what they can to avoid having their vessels at London, owing to the large expense and delay incurred there. In order to regain the popularity of the port, I think it is very essential that a harbour trust, which should certainly include two or more experienced dock directors, should be promptly formed to have the entire control of the river below bridge, the docks, and, if possible, the wharves. The improvements required are on such a large scale, and so much money is indispensable, that the present system is altogether powerless to accomplish what is needed. More dock accommodation is imperative, and the river and docks must be adapted for large vessels. If quay space can be inaugurated satisfactorily down the river, it will, of course, relieve the docks to a certain extent, and be of much advantage. In our own

business my firm are agents for some liners, but we have chiefly to do with tramp steamers, and I must say that all the dock companies, as far as their capabilities go, do all in their power to assist us in every way, but their space is very limited, and as to discharging, we find that when they allow us to employ our own stevedores the work is done much cheaper and more economically. The dock labourers are paid by the hour and are not under control. To show the difference between London and Liverpool, I beg to give a comparison as to expense and time occupied by steamers from Rangoon with similar cargoes, and the same work being performed in each case.

(*The Witness handed in a Statement giving a comparison as to expense and time occupied by Steamers from Rangoon in London and Liverpool respectively See Appendix, 22nd day, No. 20.*)

8332. Have you any remarks to make on those tables?—I take out especially these Rangoon boats, because they bring the same cargoes sometimes to Liverpool and sometimes to London, so that I have the exact figures which were paid in each port and the time occupied by the ship. The first vessel was six days in port in London, and we paid £691 10s. 9d. At Liverpool she discharged 500 tons more cargo in two days less time and the expenses were £367 0s. 6., less. The other vessels are much the same. One was 11 days in London with a cost of £657 against three days in Liverpool with a cost of £379. The next one was seven days in London, including one Sunday. We paid £580 for that against four days in Liverpool with £385. The last one was ten days in London with £536 against six days in Liverpool with £310. Shaw, Savill and Albion Co.'s boats always come to London, and to the Albert Dock. They bring large quantities of frozen meat, so that they cannot use Tilbury Docks. In common with most other lines, the number and size of our vessels has increased largely, but the berth and quay accommodation has remained as it was, and our repeated requests for more room have always been met with the answer that there is none to give. We have had to curtail the dimensions of the steamers we are now building because the length of the boat must not exceed the dimensions of the lock which forms the entrance to the Albert Dock, and the depth of the vessels for loading purposes is limited by the draft of water available there. A single berth and shed on the south side of the Albert Dock is allotted to us for the discharge of our steamers. This is only 385 feet long, and only four of our fleet of 14 vessels can be accommodated there without overlapping our neighbours' berths. Our berth is practically continuously in use by us, and we often have two, and sometimes three, steamers arriving about the same time; the result is that we have to berth two vessels alongside of each other, to the great delay of the discharge of both, or to let one lie with her cargo untouched until the other vessel is emptied. The shed accommodation is inadequate to receive the cargo of more than one vessel. The berth is a considerable distance from the meat stores, and the frozen meat for the dock stores has to be loaded into trucks, and the handling and risk of damage, especially in the hot weather, are most detrimental to the cargo. The berth alongside the meat stores, I may say, is quite unsuitable for the discharge of our vessels, as it is in the narrow cutting between the Albert and Victoria Docks, where the water is too shallow and the width insufficient to allow of barges lying at either side. The dry dock accommodation is totally inadequate. There are two dry docks, but one is so small that very few of the vessels using the dock can be accommodated there; vessels have to take their turn, and delay is constant, involving much needless expense for demurrage of barges, overtime in working, etc., etc. Another difficulty we have to contend with is the dock getting blocked up with barges, which are permitted to drift and lie about the dock unattended in very large numbers. No one appears to have any control over them, and they cause great delay to work generally, and are a standing danger to steamers moored or moving to and from their berths. The depth of water at our loading berth is inadequate, our bigger vessels cannot be loaded to their mark, and at times they are on the mud when we believe them to be afloat, thus making it impossible to be certain as to trim and draft. The number of tugs owned by the dock company is quite insufficient, and many of those they have are very antiquated. Many more hydraulic cranes are required, also considerably improved railway facilities, especially for the removal of frozen meat, but the most pressing need is for much greater shed and quay accommodation. In the interest of the community the trade of the port should be the first consideration, but shipping is hampered at every turn to the loss and detriment of shippers, consignees, manufacturers, and consumers, no less than of the shipowner. The defects are of a kind that would speedily be remedied by any corporation trust or other public body, whose chief consideration is the best interest of the community, the port, and the trade, and who are not fettered financially in the expenditure of money which may not yield an immediate revenue.

See 8428-56.

8333. Will you turn to the table you have put in. Did the £324 10s. 3d. on the "Bhamo" comprise all the expenses to which that ship was put on that particular voyage?—Yes.

8334. That includes town and dock dues?—Yes, I have put the separate items; it includes everything we paid at Liverpool.

8335. The master porterage, for instance?—Yes; it is all there.

8336. With reference to your statement that barges are permitted to drift and lie about the dock unattended, have you personal experience of that?—Yes; it is most atrocious at the Albert Dock, particularly. If the wind blows in a certain direction you have the place covered up with them.

8337. By unattended barges?—Yes; there are fleets of them. We had a steamer loaded for New Zealand, and she could not get out, and absolutely lost the tide on account of the barges blocking up the waterway.

8338. And drifting about without anybody in them?—Yes, they are all driven very much together, and if the wind is in one direction we have difficulty in getting out.

8339. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Would it be true to say that the difference between London and Liverpool is not a question of dock, or harbour, or light dues, but mainly a question of the expense of discharging?—You will see that we paid for overtime £163 on the first vessel for discharging on the dock quay.

8340. That was delay incidental to the deficiency of the port?—Entirely.

8341. Is there any such item of delay in the "Rangoon," the next vessel?—I think in that £378 there must be some expense for landing. The cost of discharging—the last item—includes a charge of the dock company for landing part of the cargo on the quay.

8342. Is it a charge of the dock company?—Yes. These vessels do not go to Shaw, Savill's berth. We have a berth at Shaw, Savill's for which we pay so much a year, but these go into the dock in the ordinary way. If we land cargo we have to pay the dock company's charge for landing on the quay.

8343. These are the dock company's charges for discharging?—Yes; to facilitate the despatch of the vessel.

8344. In all these cases?—Yes.

8345. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You say that more hydraulic cranes are required. Evidence has been before us to show that there are a great many more in London than in Liverpool?—I read that. I am very sorry to say they are not at the Albert Dock. We have the greatest difficulty in getting cranes there, and very often, when our people have been using a crane, some other people have come and taken it away, and the dock people have been unable to order them to restore it. We have had great difficulty with hydraulic cranes there.

8346. With reference to the question of barges, could you recommend any remedy for the barges drifting about in these numbers and being uncontrollable?—It is a most difficult question. It seems to me if a man puts his barge into the dock he ought to be compelled to put a man into it to take charge of it. We have to keep men on board our ships to look after them.

8347. You are actually aware of cases where barges have been left entirely with nobody in them?—Any number of them.

8348. (*Mr. Peel.*) In this Appendix 20, as regards the London charges, there are a number of small charges—tally clerks, shipkeeper, water, tugs, and so on, which tot up to a great deal. Are those not charged in Liverpool, or are they included under harbour dues?—

Mr. E. Pembroke.

4 June 1901.

I have given here the entire cost to be paid at each port. At Liverpool we put the entire cargo on the quay.

8349. As to all those small charges I have mentioned, there is no charge for them at all, is there?—No; not at Liverpool. The master porter covers all that.

8350. Were you asked about despatch in landing; I did not hear what you said?—The entire cargo goes on to the quay at Liverpool.

8351. Did you say that you were going to build some larger steamers, but you could not?—We have steamers building now which are 500 feet long, which is the longest that can get into the Albert Dock. We should like to have had them 25 or 30 feet longer, but it was impossible. We cannot use Tilbury Dock for these cargoes. The New Zealand mutton comes to a large number of consignees, and we are obliged to go into the Albert Dock where we can have it landed and sorted, and delivered to the different people.

8352. Do you find that there are not enough trucks along the lines to get rid of your cargo?—Yes, very frequently we are much delayed by want of railway trucks.

8353. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Just one question on your table. Can you assure us that you are comparing in each case like with like?—Yes; where the differences are I have given them. There is the exact statement of what has occurred, what we paid, and the time occupied.

8354. With reference to the last words of your statement. You desire that a public body should be set up which is not fettered financially in the expenditure of money which may not yield an immediate revenue. Will you amplify that a little?—I mean that it should not be a body that has to pay dividends to shareholders. The money should go, in my opinion, entirely to the work of the port.

8355. A public body would have to borrow money, of course?—Yes.

8356. On which it would have to pay interest?—Yes.

8357. Supposing there was a deficiency of income to meet all working expenses and the interest, where would you derive the necessary funds to make up the gap?—I am clearly of opinion that there should be a small charge on every ton of goods that comes into the port or goes out of it.

8358. You would increase the charges?—I do not think in the end that it would increase the charges, and we should get very much better despatch.

8359. You would increase rates—you would increase something?—Yes, I would tax goods that are not taxed at all now.

8360. You would find out some new source of revenue from those who brought the goods into the port?—Yes, all goods that either left the port or came into it I should put a tax upon.

8361. Supposing that were insufficient, have you any other reserve in your mind?—I cannot conceive that it can be insufficient. The amount of cargo is so enormous, and the rate could be made sufficient, and it would not bear heavily upon anybody, in my opinion.

8362. You have not contemplated, because you think it is unnecessary, falling back in the last resort upon either rates locally or taxes nationally?—No, I do not look upon rates as the proper contributory source.

8363. You do not look upon taxes, perhaps, as the proper source?—No, I do not. I think the port would be entirely self-supporting if a small tax was put upon goods that come in and go out.

8364. You do not think that the trade of the Port of London is so vital to the country that it is necessary to apply to the national Exchequer?—I think it is of the utmost importance to the country that London should remain the first port of the world, and it can be so, in my opinion.

8365. Internally?—Yes.

8366. From its own resources?—Yes; I have no doubt in my own mind at all about it.

8367. Then to that extent you do not quite fall in line with the Corporation's proposal that the national Exchequer should be appealed to?—As guarantors. I did not gather that it was contemplated that the national Exchequer would have to contribute.

8368. If one guarantees a thing, one may have to pay?—Yes; but I think if a large Trust with an important body in connection with it had the power to put a small tax upon goods, they could raise amply sufficient for all purposes.

8369. And you give us that very useful information from your experience as a trader of the port?—I do.

8370. You have long years behind you, and a great amount of business?—Yes, I have seen a good deal of it.

8371. You have no doubt whatever that there is no necessity for either rates or taxes?—No; that is my opinion. It would be a great advantage, of course, to have a Government guarantee; no doubt the money would be found somewhat cheaper.

8372. Do you put it in this way? If you put a charge you could make a balance sheet without going to the exchequer or rating?—I do.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

8373. I wish to ask you a question or two on your charges at London and Liverpool. I think you told one of the Commissioners just now that the despatch in Liverpool was a charge which fell upon the goods?—The Liverpool people make a charge on goods. This is all we pay to Liverpool.

8374. That is just for the labour of taking them out of the hold, and, if I may use the expression, dumping them on the quay alongside?—Exactly.

8375. And you are not concerned any more with them?—No.

8376. But the London charge includes more than that?—Yes, it does.

8377. The tallying, for instance, is another charge, I think, that is paid in Liverpool by the goods?—Yes, we have no special charge for that.

8378. It is quite sufficient. Somebody pays, and it is not you?—That is so.

8379. There is just another general question which arises upon nearly all these cases, I think. In the first case there is a slightly larger amount of goods apparently delivered at Liverpool—500 tons more?—Yes.

8380. Then as regards the others?—It is less at Liverpool.

8381. The difference is largely in favour of London?—Yes.

8382. The "Rangoon" is nearly 4,000 tons, and at Liverpool it is only just over 2,000 tons?—Yes; the only item affected by that is the charge for discharging.

8383-4. But except for the charge for discharging the London dues on the ship—that is, the dock dues—are much less than in Liverpool. The dock dues in every case are less in London than in Liverpool?—Yes, but we do not get the same accommodation for it. At Liverpool they allow us to put the entire cargo on the quay.

8385. They allow you to, but when the goods are on the quay you have to pay for them being there. In the case of the "Mandalay," is it actually more than twice as much as in London; it is 4,230 tons against 2,052?—Yes.

8386. So that when you say you are giving a comparison of similar cargoes they are not quite similar?—But I have given the quantity. If you look at the last one you have mentioned, you will see we only paid at Liverpool for discharging, £79 16s. 11d.; whereas at London we paid £274 17s. 11d. The other items are not affected by the quantity of cargo.

8387. Of course, you know perfectly well that discharging is labour charge?—Yes.

8388. You say you bring large quantities of frozen meat, so that you cannot use Tilbury Docks. In point of fact, frozen meat does come to Tilbury?—It does. We are connected with ships that go there—Australian vessels. But we find it is very difficult, and we could not send our New Zealand vessels there because, as I explained, we have such a large number of consignees that we could not deal with them at Tilbury. I will first tell you this; we bring about one million three hundred thousand sheep a year. That represents a large quantity to deal with.

8389. The difficulty about the frozen meat is this—I

think Mr. Scott mentioned it—that there are a great number of marks in the cargo?—Yes.

8390. And they have to be sorted in an insulated place?—It is desirable to do so. We sort a great deal of general cargo in a shed. We have a dock company's shed, but it is not insulated. Of course, we sort on board the steamer as far as we can.

8391. You cannot do much sorting on the steamer, I suppose?—We do the best we can; we endeavour to sort it.

8392. But it is not satisfactory, is it?—No, it is not.

8393. And that is really the reason, I take it, why you find Tilbury inconvenient?—Yes.

8394. But there are insulated barges?—Yes, but it is not satisfactory bringing them so far.

8395. In your statement, take the "Mandalay," the last two items: discharging in London, £274 17s. 11d., and discharging in Liverpool, £79 16s. 11d.?—Yes; if we land the cargo on the quay we have to pay.

8396. Notwithstanding that, does the discharging in both of those columns mean exactly the same thing, or not?—It means what we have to pay. It does not mean quite the same thing, because at Liverpool they charge the goods with landing them on the quay. At London if we land the cargo on the quay we have to pay.

8397. Does it mean in any way at all the same work done upon the goods?—No, it does not.

8398. And, except that you have given the same name to it, there is no similarity between the work that is done in each case?—I do not quite gather that.

8399. At London certain work is done for that £274 17s. 11d., and at Liverpool certain work is done for the £79 16s. 11d.?—Yes.

8400. The work that is done at Liverpool is not the same work at all that is done in London?—It is a different system. At Liverpool we go alongside the quay and put the cargo on the quay, and then we have done with it. The master porter does all therest.

8401. But then the work that is paid for, if you like, by those two sums of money is quite different work?—Yes.

8402. The £274 may include the work that is done at Liverpool, but it includes a great deal more?—As far as the ship is concerned.

8403. If you like?—Yes; it includes more at London, as far as the ship is concerned.

Cross-examined by Mr. Loehnis.

8404. When you complain of the insufficiency of trade in the docks, do you refer exclusively to the docks on the north side of the Thames?—Yes.

8405. And does the other evidence which you have given with reference to improvements required also refer to the docks on the north side of the Thames?—I think the docks on the south side are quite insufficient. We have had steamers sometimes kept a week or more at Gravesend with timber, unable to get into the Surrey Commercial Dock—blocked.

8406. That was in the height of the season last year?—Not only last year, but every year.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

8407. May we take it that these four steamers that you have given are general average cases?—Yes.

8408. They are not selected in any way?—I only selected those steamers because they sometimes come to London and sometimes go to Liverpool with the same cargo.

8409. But you look upon them as fair average cases?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8410. What is the difference in the discharging? Take, for instance, the first item in the case of the "Bhamo"?—I give you in detail, in the table, the charge on every description of goods.

8411. I notice there that rice and meal apparently average about 6½d. a ton at Liverpool and at London about 1s. 1d.?—London 1s. to 1s. 2d., and Liverpool about 6d.

8412. What is the difference in the services rendered at those two places? What more is done at London?—There is nothing more done at London for that shilling than there is at Liverpool for that 6d. I put the dispatch money at London at £163.

8413. With regard to the dispatch money, that would be balanced by the tonnage dues, which you do not bring into your account?—We have nothing to do with it.

8414. What is the difference in the cost of labour between London and Liverpool?—At London it is more expensive. At Liverpool they have got it more under control. The dock company do all the work.

8415. Do you discharge yourself for the 1s.?—Sometimes at London we discharge, and sometimes we employ the dock company.

8416. Is this 1s. the dock company's charge or yours?—That is the dock company's charge.

8417. Now, with regard to your suggestion of a Trust. You have no special preference for any body, I suppose. You would like to have a good representation of all commercial interests?—Yes. I should like to see it in the hands of a non-political body; one authority—with no bias for trades unions. That we have had great difficulty over.

8418. Do you yourself like the proposal to take over the warehousing or a portion of the warehousing?—I should like to see the entire thing in the hands of one trust, but it is such an enormous thing that one could scarcely contemplate it. I should like to see the docks and warehouses and the wharves all under one head.

8419. But that would be rather a large order?—Yes, it is too enormous a business.

8420. And you would not like to see them separate?—The dock warehouses from the water, do you mean?

8421. Yes?—No, I certainly should not.

8422. You have considered the difficulty that arises about having a trust with power to tax competing with private individuals?—That is a question for the Royal Commission to deal with. I should like to see the tax, and I am sure it would be done equitably.

8423. If the tax were applied to the improvement of the waterways that, as a shipowner, would suit you?—Yes.

8424. If the tonnage tax on goods were applied to warehouses only, and the warehouses were left to the natural effect of competition, that would suit you, would it not?—I do not think it would suit us to have the warehouses in the hands of another body than the water of the docks.

8425. You would prefer to have them all in one hand?—Much; most decidedly.

8426. There is no difficulty in keeping things separate and charging for the work done, is there?—At some of the docks I think it would be impossible to keep them distinct.

8427. You are speaking of St. Katharine's, I suppose?—And the London Dock, too.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

8428. It is the Victoria and Albert Dock that you chiefly use, is it not?—For our Shaw, Savill, and Albion boats, but our other vessels go where we can get them. The dock company select the docks themselves as a rule.

8429. You say that one of the difficulties you have to contend against is "the dock getting blocked up with barges, which are permitted to drift and lie about the dock unattended in very large numbers"?—Yes. That more particularly applies to the Albert Docks as far as my experience goes. See 8332.

8430. And with better management you think that it would be avoided?—It is absolutely necessary that it should be avoided. It stops the work of the docks.

8431. It could be avoided?—I have no doubt it could be avoided. It is a question of cost.

8432. Do you know the powers the dock company has with respect to control over the barges?—Yes.

8433. They are tolerably severe, are they not?—But they do not exercise them.

8434. When a barge is adrift you know the dock company is entitled to fine the owner a sum of 5s.?—Yes.

8435. And they make a very large income out of those fines, do they not?—No, I do not think so. I do not think the fines are often exacted. I know we often send men to take charge of a lighter and move it away, and we generally get notice to say that if that lighter sustains any damage we are responsible for it.

Mr. E. Pembroke.

4 June 1901.

8436. Do you know that there are hundreds of barges in the dock that are exclusively used by the dock company in their own business?—Yes.

8437. For instance, the Tilbury Lighterage Company have over 200 barges that are used by the dock company for their own work?——

(*Chairman.*) I think, Mr. Cranstoun, this is more a matter for your speech, which we shall have the pleasure of hearing later.

See 8465.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Especially as I am informed that we do not employ the Tilbury Lighterage Company at all.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I have only one question to ask further.

(*Chairman.*) I do not think it will be necessary.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) It is only to show that the so-called congestion is largely caused by the barges employed by the dock company.

(*Chairman.*) I do not think it is necessary to go into that.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) That question should have been put to the dock company's representatives.

8438. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) With regard to your own ships, under the terms of your bills of lading are not the barges to be alongside as soon as you break bulk?—Yes, within 24 hours, and they cannot get there.

8439. And is it not a fact that by reason of that clause barges are frequently there for days before they are actually required?—No, it is not my experience.

8440. You do not know whether that is a fact or not?—I know it is not as far as we are concerned.

8441. Then it is probable that the lightermen are not aware of the exact time when they will be required?—They know, they look us up.

8442. But how are they informed. They come to the office and inquire when a vessel will be prepared to deliver?—Yes.

8443. Then are they told the particular hour when the vessel will be ready to deliver?—Yes.

8444. Is that a rule?—Yes.

8445. That you speak to from your own experience as being the fact?—Yes.

8446. On an average, how many barges at one time are around one of your ships when it arrives, for the purpose of taking delivery?—I could not tell exactly.

8447. Is it not a fact that there are as many as 50 or 60 barges at one time round one of your ships?—No, I should say not.

8448. What figure would you put it at?—I should think perhaps a couple of dozen.

8449. 24?—Yes, they are long ships.

8450. Is it not a fact that there are 40 or 50 barges waiting there?—I do not remember ever seeing so many as that.

8451. With regard to the exports, you claim the right to select the cargoes in the barges, do you not, for your ships?—We take it all. We take every ton. We do not fill our vessels for New Zealand; we generally have a third of the space empty, but every ton of cargo that comes we take. There is no selection.

8452. Do you not keep the barges there for days, sometimes as much as three weeks, before you take the cargo on board?—We take it very expeditiously.

8453. But for the purpose of convenient stowage, are not the barges sometimes kept there for as long as three weeks?—No; my remark about the barges unattended applied more to empty barges.

8454. You do not answer my question. My question is with regard to your export cargo. Are not barges detained there by you for your own purposes and your own convenience for as long as three weeks at a time?—No; I should say never.

8455. Do you not pay a demurrage to the extent of thousands of pounds every year?—I think the only time we pay demurrage on craft is when we are delayed getting the vessel into dry dock. Then we have to pay for demurrage if we have ordered the cargo in and the ship is not there to take it. But we go on fixed dates, and we are obliged to work night and day to make up for lost time.

8456. And you claim three days' grace. You claim that you have the right to keep the barges there three days before you pay demurrage?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

8457. Take the case of the "Bhamo." What does two days' detention of the "Bhamo" mean?—£60 a day.

8458. Then besides the difference between £691 and £324 it means it is £120 better for you to get her out two days earlier?—Yes. We take less freight for Liverpool than for London.

8459. Now with regard to a question Mr. Ellis asked you as to your experience: You have been Chairman of the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom?—Yes.

8460. And you are at present on the Committee of the Shipping Federation and of the General Shipowners' Association, and manager and part owner of the Public Schools line of steamers?—Yes.

8461. (*Mr. Ellis.*) On that, do we understand that you have come here at the request of those bodies?—No; in my own private capacity.

8462. You understand the object of my question?—Yes.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) My Lord, Mr. Philcox is on the list to give evidence next, but will it be convenient to take the evidence of Mr. Cooper first?

(*Chairman.*) With reference to the evidence of Mr. Cooper and Mr. Philcox, it is with regard to the Deptford Cattle Market, I understand?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes, my Lord. They are here in consequence of the evidence given by Mr. A. S. Williams, at Question 2170.

(*Chairman.*) Will you be kind enough to tell us how their evidence bears upon our reference?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I do not think it does, but we were asked to bring these witnesses, because Mr. Williams has given an expression of opinion that the Cattle Market should be moved further down the river, which has occasioned considerable consternation in the trade.

(*Chairman.*) I fail to see how this proposed evidence bears upon our reference.

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) The attention of the Corporation was called to the evidence which has been given, and I was told that the Commission would expect to hear something with regard to it.

(*Chairman.*) I desire to say that the question of the removal of the Deptford Cattle Market is not a question with which we are concerned. I think you may take it, Sir Homewood Crawford, that we shall not deal with the question of the cattle market.

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) I should never have troubled your Lordship with it, but we understood you wished the matter to be cleared up, and therefore we prepared to do so.

(*Chairman.*) The Commissioners are anxious not to reject evidence, but shall we have the approval of the Corporation if we do not hear this evidence?

(*Sir Homewood Crawford.*) Certainly.

(*Chairman.*) We do not wish to receive it. Then you may take it that we will not have the evidence of the Cattle Market witnesses at all.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Then, my Lord, that will conclude the evidence of the Corporation.

(*Chairman.*) We are very much obliged to the Corporation for the evidence they have given.

(Adjourned to to-morrow morning, June 5th, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

Wednesday, 5th June, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C. and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. JOHN TROTTER recalled and further examined.

Mr. J. Trotter.

5 June 1901.

8463. (*Chairman.*) I understand you wish to make a correction with reference to the answer given to Question 7109?—Yes. It has been represented to me that my answer to that question was interpreted as meaning that the Millwall Dock Company did not feel that there was any grievance in regard to the amount of goods that come in in barges, and do not contribute to the expenses of the dock. Inasmuch as that is directly contrary to the opinion that is unanimously held by the Millwall Dock Company, I thought it right to ask to be allowed to come and explain the matter more fully. We do feel it a very great grievance indeed that in regard to export goods 90 per cent. come into the docks in craft and do not contribute at all to the expenses of the up-keep, and in regard to import goods nearly 60 per cent., and if this Commission were to report favourably on that point we should most unquestionably seek for powers to do away with this exemption. We hold exactly the same opinion on that point as has been put forward in the evidence of the London and India Dock Company.

8464. (*Mr. Ellis.*) What you really wish to say is that it does not depend on the decision of the London and India Dock Company; it depends rather on the decision that may be come to by the Commission?—That is so.

8465. (*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) If the decision should be favourable, you would certainly promote a Bill?—We should certainly promote a Bill. The matter has been considered from that point of view by our board, and they are unanimous on that point.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) May I draw your Lordship's attention to a statement by Mr. Wallace yesterday. It is at Question 8437? Mr. Wallace said: "I am informed that we do not employ the Tilbury Lighterage Company at all." I think my friend must be under a misapprehension.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) If my friend had not been in such a hurry, I was going to give your Lordship the exact facts with reference to that. What was put at the time was that there was an enormous number of barges in the dock which we employ for ourselves, and my friend said: "For instance, the Tilbury Lighterage Company." In point of fact the contract which my friend had in his mind was determined some time ago with the Tilbury Lighterage Company, but we do still employ the Tilbury Lighterage Company to do internal lighterage work in the docks. The barges which we employ for that purpose do not exceed at the Victoria and Albert from 30 to 40; at the East and West India from 12 to 15; and at Tilbury 4 or 6. The large contract that we had with the Tilbury Lighterage Company has been for some time at an end.

CAPTAIN GEORGE RAWLINSON VYVYAN, called and Examined.

Capt. G. R. Vyvyan.

8466. (*Chairman.*) You are the deputy master of Trinity House?—Yes.

8467. How long have you held that office?—Since November, 1898.

8468. You desire to give evidence as to pilotage and other matters which have been referred to before the Commission?—Yes.

8469. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say?—First of all I shall confine myself as far as possible to answering a few of the allegations that have been made, and some of the questions. Then I will deal with what in my mind is the benefit that will arise in the Port of London if the work or most of the work that is now undertaken by the Trinity House is left to it. I see that in the schemes that have been brought forward before this Commission, it is intended to take from the Trinity House the buoying, the lighting, and the pilotage. I will endeavour to show that it will not be an advantage in any way to the Port of

Capt. G. R. Vyvyan.

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London that the Trinity House should be deprived of that work. I will deal first with some of the allegations that have been made before the Commission, and first of all I will deal with the difference between the London river, the Liverpool river, and rivers at other ports.

8470. With relation to pilotage?—Yes, with relation to pilotage and general expenses, but chiefly pilotage; I say there can be no comparison whatever between London and Liverpool as regards the pilotage duties. In addition to the pilotage above Gravesend, the length of the district from Dungeness to Gravesend is 87 miles, and the course has to be changed fifteen times. From the Middle Mouse, that is, the western district of the Liverpool inward pilotage, to the landing stage at Liverpool is 55 miles, 40 of which is one straight course at sea, and only four changes of course are required, whilst the outward pilotage at Liverpool is only 15 miles, and only three changes come under the pilot's directions. Or if you take in and out for London, disregarding the river, 174 miles with 30 changes, against total pilotage at Liverpool 70 miles with seven changes of course. I will hand in a paper showing the length of the pilotage waters in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp, with the rate per mile:

(*The Witness handed in a comparative statement of the Pilotage Rates for steam vessels drawing* 8 *feet,* 18 *feet, and* 28 *feet of water at certain ports in the United Kingdom and abroad, the distance piloted, and the rate per mile. See Appendix,* 23*rd Day, No.* 1.)

That will show as far as the pilotage rates are concerned, London compares favourably with any of the British ports, and is very much below nearly all of the foreign ports. The average rate per mile briefly speaking is 2s. 10d. inwards and outwards from London, against 2s. 2d. inwards at Liverpool and 3s. 6¼d. outwards; 4s. 8d. inwards at Hull and 3s. 7d. outwards; 5s. 4¾d. inwards and outwards on the Tyne. Then at Antwerp it is 21s. per mile inwards and 13s. 4d. outwards; Rotterdam is 21s. 7d. inwards and 17s. 3d. outwards; and Amsterdam 23s. 6d. inwards and 15s. 7d. outwards. So that from that point of view, London compares very favourably with any of those ports that I have mentioned. When Mr. Alfred Jones gave evidence here he said that he could not see the necessity for having two pilots. It is at Question 4837: "I have never been able to understand why we should have to employ two pilots to assist a vessel during her run from Dungeness to London, whereas at Liverpool we have only one. No doubt this accounts for the pilotage at London costing double what it does at Liverpool." Of course I have shown that it does not do anything of the sort. Then with regard to the question of the two pilots I should like to state this as shortly as I can for the information of the Commission. Before 1854 the Trinity House licensed through pilots and the Cinque Port authorities licensed pilots to London Bridge (although but few accepted the licence beyond Gravesend). The through pilot from London Bridge became extinct in 1896, and there were only four of them for several years before that. There does not appear to be any objection if Parliamentary powers can be obtained to revive the practice, and no doubt as far as the outward pilot is concerned, it could be satisfactorily worked, as pilots leaving the docks are fresh to their work and leave the ship some time after she is in the open and free from difficulties. But as regards the inward pilot if he has charge of the inward vessel from the Isle of Wight or from Dungeness and has been on the bridge on look-out until he gets to Gravesend, he may not be in a fit state to commence the difficulties presented by a narrow navigable channel, beset by barges, small craft and the outward rush of traffic from the Pool, surrounded by vessels seeking shelter in the docks or in the wharves, and often enveloped in smoke and fog; and if at night dazzled by the glare from the numerous lights that line the banks of the river. No time is lost now in shipping the river pilot because the vessels must stop for the Sanitary Officer, and the ships will also stop at times for their choice of pilot. The cost is trifling if the shipowner is content to pay the bare pilotage, but if all the time he indulges in such luxuries as keeping the pilot to do all kinds of work that should be done by the master and crew of the ship or by watermen, he must expect to pay but should not in justice complain of dear pilotage. At the same time, I do not think that much difficulty would result if powers could be obtained to license pilots as far as Tilbury or even the Albert Docks. The restriction of pilots to the river work was introduced in 1854 in consequence of application from the shipowners of London, who were then of opinion that a distinct body of men were needed for the service. So that the complaint to which Mr. Jones alludes was of something that was introduced by the London shipowners themselves. I will now deal with the question of the "Livonian," which is mentioned in the evidence of Mr. Becket Hill at Question 2269.

8471. Have you anything to say with reference to Mr. Becket Hill's statement that the pilotage is much heavier at London than at Liverpool?—That is what I am going to. The case has been traced and I should like you to hear what work was done in each river. I will take London first. The "Livonian" into London took her pilot at Dungeness to Gravesend, changed her pilot, and went into Tilbury Dock on the 19th October, 1900; the following day she left the dock, went to the cattle market, Deptford, and back to Albert Dock. On the 28th October she left Albert Dock and discharged her pilot at the South Foreland, having entered and left two docks and discharged her cattle at the Deptford Market. The distance piloted was 189 miles, which, inclusive of docking, putting pilot on board, and landing charges paid to pilots, is at the rate of 4s. per mile, the sea pilotage, 151 miles, being at the rate of 3s. 7¾d. per mile, and the river pilotage, 38 miles, including docking, 5s. 10½d. per mile. That is what she did in London. Going to Liverpool she took her pilot to the eastward of Great Orme's Head to Liverpool, Castle Wharf, discharged her cattle on the 13th September, 1900, and on the 5th October discharged her pilot at the Bar Light Ship, being a total distance of 50 miles, the rate being 5s. 4¾d. per mile, including shipping and landing the pilot. I think that disposes of Mr. Becket Hill's case. Now I should like to say a word about the pilots' incomes. That is referred to in Mr. Becket Hill's evidence at Question 2269: "In London the choice pilots will make incomes from £1,000 to £1,500 a year, which is more than we pay our best captains. That shows that the rate of pilotage is excessive." I will hand in a table showing the earnings of the pilots for the year 1900.

(*The witness handed in a table showing Earnings of pilots for the year* 1900. *See Appendix,* 23*rd Day, No.* 2.)

The average gross earnings are: At Cardiff, £390; Liverpool, £234; Newport, £380; the Tyne, £264; and at London, £405. Of 329 pilots there are only 15 who make over £900 a year, and that includes all sorts of work outside, extraneous to their pilotage work, which need not be paid for by the shipowner, and need not be done by the pilot, and it also includes pilotage right down to the Isle of Wight, which is outside the London district altogether. The highest earnings below Gravesend are: Inwards, £906 gross; outwards, £1,363 gross. In the river, £1,187 gross, above Gravesend. The lowest earnings below Gravesend are, inwards, £113; outwards, £146; and out of the 329 pilots 41 per cent. earn under £300 gross. Now, with your lordship's permission, I will deal with the delays, which are referred to in Appendix No. 3, of the sixth day. It is entitled a "Statement of Steamers of the Atlantic Transport Company and the National Steamship Company compelled to anchor in the neighbourhood of the Nore during the year 1900 on account of deficient draught of water," and was handed in by Mr. A. S. Williams. I will deal with it in the abstract. All complaints concerning delay are considered by the Pilotage Committee, on which a representative shipowner sits. The pilot is brought up and questioned, and if proved to be in default is punished or admonished. I do not think it is fair for anyone first to say that it is useless to make a complaint when on being pressed they have to acknowledge that they have never done so. As a matter of fact, only seven complaints of this nature connected with delays have been made to the Trinity House during the last five years. I am speaking now chiefly as regards delays owing to the conduct of pilots, and several cases quoted before you have been examined, but one case quoted by Mr. Williams requires comment. I am sure Mr. Williams would not intentionally be unfair, but the evidence given with regard to this vessel might leave a wrong im-

pression. It is the case of the "Minneapolis." In the statement handed in by Mr. Williams, the "Minneapolis," stated to have been detained aground 11 hours 45 minutes at the Nore on account of deficient draught of water, was put on shore at Shellhaven at high water in a thick fog to avoid collision. That is all I have to say with regard to delays.

8472. Then will you kindly tell us what you have to say as to the unification scheme for the Port of London from a Trinity House point of view?—No scheme of unification will be of much avail to London unless you provide the authority—whether it be a new trust or the Thames Conservancy—with additional powers for acquiring the necessary funds, particularly for the removal of wrecks and for the purpose of dredging the river where required to a reasonable depth. I should not call a 30ft. channel a necessary depth at low water. To provide such a channel you would make the whole community pay very largely for the temporary convenience of a few vessels. During the last year there have been piloted in London 34 instances of vessels drawing over 28ft., over 29ft. four instances, 30ft. two instances, 31ft. eight instances, 32ft. two instances—in all, 50. So that if you required a depth of 30ft. at low water you would in this last year have only benefited twelve vessels, and the difference of depth between 28ft. and 30ft. would involve a large amount of cost. But there is an aspect connected with the unification of the port authorities which I should wish to comment on at some length. I mean the work which is now done by the Trinity House as far as it relates to the guarding of the river and the pilotage thereof, which I will call the expert work of the river, and I wish to point out that in my opinion it will be to the benefit of the port as well as of the authority you may wish to recommend if you will allow such work to remain with the Trinity House for them to carry out as they are now doing. Leaving pilotage questions for the present, I will confine myself to the lighting and buoying. It is impossible for any legislature to create experience in expert matters. It is not in their power. They may create boards, and corporations, and dues, and levy them how they like, but it is not in their power to create experience in expert matters, and I hope to show that though such an authority may deal usefully and beneficially with matters such as docks, warehouses, dredging, barge traffic, wreck works, bye-laws for vessels, and other similar work, they will do well to entrust the expert work of buoying and lighting to the expert body already existing, and which must continue to exist, who are doing the work well at the present time and at an infinitely cheaper rate, with their established organisation and appliances, than could be done by any newly created local authority, however extended their powers may be. I will assume that the limits of jurisdiction of the new authority are below the present ones, and are those I have seen mentioned, that is a line between the North Foreland and the Naze, though I must not be held to agree with the proposal. If you fix it lower down you would have to deal with waters on which there is an immense traffic which is unconnected with London. I would, however, include in this limit Gunfleet, which is one of four pile lighthouses. This line being assumed, the area defined will include eight light vessels, twelve lighthouses, 114 ordinary buoys, and sixteen gas buoys; and this number will be very largely increased when the deep water channel is dredged. It does not include the three buoys which we maintain for the London County Council, or the spare light vessels or buoys which will also be required. I will for the moment assume that the new authority takes over all jurisdiction connected with this expert rival establishment such as engineering works and gas works. They will want steamers, not only at London, but towards their limit, to attend on the light vessels, watch and refill the gas buoys, and perform the various duties connected with the lighthouse service, including the personal examination by the expert officers, and they will have to create a staff of expert officials side by side with those already existing in the Trinity House, who could not be abolished, for the purpose of checking the changes in the sands and channels, and the instant correction of such changes. At present the London river has the advantage of three depôts, London, Ramsgate, and Harwich, and if an accident happens, or a sudden change of channel is discovered—as happened only last January off the North Foreland—the nearest boat goes out at an hour's notice, subject, of course, to tidal conditions rectifies the difficulty, and supplies the material for the notice to mariners which is published by the Trinity House. I wish to impress on the Commission that all the lighting and buoying work is at present done for the Port of London at the cost of the General Lighthouse Fund, to which all ships contribute that trade to the United Kingdom, irrespective of whether their ports of arrival or departure are London, Newcastle, Glasgow, or anywhere else in the kingdom, or whether the ships are British or foreign. That is an important thing. So that this tax falls not on the Port of London, as erroneously stated by several of your witnesses, but on merchant ships generally. Up to April, 1899, the assertion made by those gentlemen would have been justified to a certain extent.

8473. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Will you kindly develop your evidence a little further with regard to the fund from which this is drawn. I think it would be of advantage to have it. You are pointing out that these charges are borne by a fund which is drawn not from the Port of London only, but universally, as it were. Will you amplify that in a sentence if you can. Do you understand my meaning?—Yes. I was going on to that. Up to April, 1899, these gentlemen would be justified in what they have said, for each light and each buoy was supported by a toll which was levied on the vessels which either passed or derived benefit from such sea marks, but that is all altered now, and with the exception of certain outports all lighting and buoyage is paid for regardless of the vessels' track by a toll for vessels doing that.

8474. That is all levied by Act of Parliament?—Yes. It is therefore incorrect to say that because a vessel pays the light dues of London, such charge should be regarded as part of the expenses peculiar to the Port, as she would have to pay just the same amount for a similar voyage to any other United Kingdom port; in fact, they may be said to have an advantage over Liverpool and Glasgow and certain other large ports, the approaches to which are marked by the local authority, which charges local dues. By the Act of 1898 no cognisance is taken of the ship's route, all lights and sea marks under the general local authority being maintained by a general toll, which is paid by all vessels trading with the United Kingdom, regardless of any particular port, the only distinction being that Home trade ships are charged a lower rate and sailing ships have a preferential rate over steamers or foreign-going ships, but it must also be borne in mind that these dues are now only levied for a limited number of voyages in each year, ten in the Home trade, and six in the Foreign. Does that answer your question?

8475. Thank you, yes. I have what I want?—Consequently, if you make London a local port as regards the lighting of the river, light dues would have to be substituted to pay for the sea marks now maintained by the general lighthouse fund, which will be manifestly to the disadvantage of the shipowner and to the port of London, as a ship trading with London would then have to pay both local and general lighthouse dues. Nor do I see how any contribution could well be made by the lighthouse fund towards the expense of the London river lights, the whole purpose of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1898 being against the principle of each light being paid for by the user on each voyage. Under the system which existed prior to the Act of 1898, it would have been possible to have made the Thames river lights a local toll, and in fact some were charged in this manner, but the present system of charges precludes this being done. Now, my Lord, I will deal with the pilotage question, still assuming the imaginary boundary. Are your pilots to be under two authorities? If not, they will have to be changed on crossing this line, and establishments will have to be kept up for providing the necessary changes, the Trinity House man giving place to the Trust man inwards, and *vice versâ*. There is an obvious advantage to the shipping community in having the pilotage and the buoyage services under the same authority. A change which may become known to the pilot in charge of a vessel is at once communicated without any trouble, and it was by that method that a recent change just below the North Foreland was detected, which necessitated the removal of a gas buoy, and is now engaging the attention of the Admiralty, who have just completed a thorough survey in the vicinity. *Per contra*, a change becomes known to the buoyage authority, and is at once communicated to the pilots at their stations.

Capt. G. R. Vyvyan.

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I think the advantage here is so obvious that it is unnecessary to dilate upon it. Then your expert difficulty will come in again. The Trinity Corporation have been for centuries past the governing body for pilotage for the Port of London, and also since 1808 for many of the principal ports of the United Kingdom. Their management has been from time to time subject to the strictest enquiry, and it is only necessary to state that it was found expedient to place the Cinque Ports pilots under the control of the Trinity House to show the appreciation of their efforts in instituting, directing, and maintaining a system satisfactory to the majority of shipowners and to the public generally. I am justified in saying that, owing to the absence of complaints. We have naturally no desire to part with functions which we have so successfully instituted, and (subject to the control of the Board of Trade) carried out, nor does the Trinity House see the necessity for the change, which does not arise from any public outcry in consequence of failure in those functions, but simply to satisfy the cry of a few individuals who desire to govern, and who apparently claim to possess a knowledge of technical subjects of all kinds, which it is difficult to understand how they could have acquired. The Port of London, surrounded as it is by dangerous sands, is in need of special protection, and no radical change should take place to jeopardise the safety of shipping using that port without mature consideration. The members of the Trinity House are men who are known to be possessed of knowledge peculiarly adapted by nautical experience, by long usage, and by the practice of the duties of buoying and lighting the channels, to perform the functions requisite in the supervision of pilots and pilotage, a supervision which would be difficult to obtain from any municipal body. From the evidence of some of the witnesses at this Commission, economy is put forward as an essential element necessary for the increase of trade in attracting shipping to the Port, and maintaining its supremacy. On that score the Trinity House stands pre-eminent, it being a body having duties of a kindred nature extending to the principal ports in the Kingdom. It already possesses the machinery for carrying on the work and is able by combination to conduct that work on the most economical lines. Under these circumstances, unless it is intended that the Trinity House still carries out the work I have alluded to, I fail to see how without great injustice and increase of expense you could adopt the system of unification in its entirety. But when you come to dredging, and particularly wreck work, that is quite another matter. I should like to see the powers of the Thames Conservancy largely extended in this line, as in my opinion the Trinity House is not the proper authority for carrying such work out within the limits of the Port, and it could be done more effectively by the river authority, given that the means and the plant were provided.

8476. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to say anything more in relation to dredging?—No, my lord. I have covered that part of it—unless you wish to ask me any question.

8477. Will you refer to the table (Appendix No. 2) which you have put in of the earnings of pilots for the year 1900. It does not seem to be clear as to how pilots are paid, and by whom?—They are paid entirely by the shipowners.

8478. And is this return of earnings made up from their returns?—From their returns. It is handed in to the Trinity House.

8479. By the pilots?—Yes.

8480. You have every reason to believe it is reliable?—They are obliged to do it by Act of Parliament.

8481. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I think you mentioned, however, that the pilots sometimes did work beyond their proper functions as pilots, for which they were paid by the shipowners?—Beyond their compulsory functions.

8482. Would that remuneration be included in that return?—Yes, it is all included.

8483. (*Chairman.*) Have you any further statement to make before questions are put to you?—Do you wish to hear anything about compulsory pilotage; it is a big question?

8484. I should like to ask you whether it is not a fact that compulsory pilotage above Gravesend was recommended to be abolished by the Committee on the Navigation of the River Thames in 1879?—Perhaps I had better deal with that part of it. In 1888 the Parliamentary Committee which sat on pilotage matters reported that they were strongly of opinion that the time had arrived when the exemption of the owner from liability for damage done by his agent when the ship is placed in charge of a pilot by compulsion of law should cease to exist. They said such exemption was indefensible and inimical to the safety of life and property at sea. The abolition of compulsory pilotage is a question that has frequently been before Parliament, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, in 1891, when President of the Board of Trade, said, to a deputation of shipowners, that the Board of Trade have never acted upon their powers for the abolition of compulsory pilotage upon a particular district, and that it was not his business to press upon the pilotage authority to abolish compulsory pilotage. He further stated that when the proposal was made that the liability of the shipowner should be done away with, it was rejected in 1899 mainly by the influence of the shipowners, although unanimously recommended by the Parliamentary Committee. A shipowner present stated he invariably found one very strong ground which has been always urged by careful shipowners against the removal of compulsory pilotage, and that is that if removed their own vessels would be run into by other vessels, seeing that three-fourths of the vessels entering the Port of London are not in charge of a pilot. The report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Merchant Shipping in 1860 was in favour of its abolition "in most ports of the Empire" with due consideration for existing interests. In 1862 the Merchant Shipping Act was passed, but no alteration was made. In 1870 a Select Committee reported in favour of its abolition in the Port of London. In 1879 the Thames Traffic Committee reported in favour of abolition in the Thames above Greavesend, and in the bills introduced into Parliament in 1881 and 1884, clauses were inserted to abolish compulsion, but failed to become law. The Elder Brethren have always been of opinion that passengers need legislative protection because they are not so well able to judge of matters relating to their own safety as officers and seamen are. They have stated that they would refrain from opposing the abolition of compulsory pilotage provided the necessary safeguards for navigation towards the port and a proper provision for existing interests are secured. It would be necessary in the event of its abolition to provide for a system of cruising at Dungeness and a tax of some kind made to meet the expense.

8484a. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Functions which the pilots discharge and which are paid for beyond compulsory pilotage are in the nature of pilotage—it is pilotage work, is it?—I am not sure whether docking work could be called pilotage work. I have said that such work might easily be performed by the captain in ships and by the crews. They are very largely carried on by by pilots.

8485. But whatever it is, what the pilot receives goes into that account which you handed in?—It does, it is a monthly return of his gross earnings; whether they are earned under his compulsory pilotage or whether they are earned by the extraneous duties which the shipowner asks him to carry out for him.

8486. He would not be allowed to receive a tip of any kind from the shipowner beyond what he returns to you?—We should not know it if he did. On the other hand it is quite conceivable, and it has been stated that his returns to us are very much in excess of what he actually receives.

8487. How can that be?—It is very conceivable. The shipowner may make an arrangement with a pilot which is an illegal one. He is obliged to return his full dues, but he need not necessarily get them.

8488. Is it an offence if he makes an improper return?—Yes. Some years ago I was sitting in the Admiralty Court myself. The pilot told me after the case was over that he received £500 a year from his owners in quittance of all services, whether his pilotage rates were below that or whether they were above. As a matter of fact they were always above, but he was serving in compulsory waters, and whatever his pay was it was commuted for £500 a year. So that that pilot was absolutely the owners' servant.

8489. For £500 a year?—For £500 a year, but he returned a different amount.

8490. You have fifteen pilots altogether who have received upwards of £960 a year?—Upwards of £900 I think I said.

8491. Some of them, perhaps, may earn as much as £1,500. Is that so?—The highest is £1,363.

8492. Absolutely the highest figure of any pilot?—That is one man. That was the highest pilotage which was earned in the London district.

8493. How many over £1,000?—Eight; five in the Channel and three in the river.

8494. These are pilots engaged by the great shipping companies for the big steamers, I suppose?—Generally speaking, so; the P. and O., the British India, and the other large lines.

8495. This is a select class of pilots, the very pick of the profession?—Yes; they call them "choice."

8496. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You are speaking for the Trinity House, not for yourself, I presume?—I am speaking for the Trinity House.

8497. Could you give the amount received per annum for pilotage on the river by the Trinity House?—I could hand it in later.

(The witness subsequently handed in a Table giving particulars as to Vessels piloted between Gravesend and London Bridge in the year ending December 31st, 1900. See Appendix, 23rd Day, No. 3.)

8498. The amount that the Trinity House received for one year for inward and outward pilotage, and the duties they perform on the river?—Yes.

8499. We were told in previous evidence that pilots took outward bound ships, and did not bring in inward bound ships, and that there were two pilots on the river, namely, one to Gravesend and then one from Gravesend to the sea?—Up to about 1888 the pilots could either take out or bring in vessels. That was done away with, as it entailed a great injustice on those pilots who had to cruise at Dungeness, because they had to cruise whether their work was done by the outward man or by themselves. It was easier very often to obtain an outward man to bring in an inward ship, and the pilotage Order in Council was strictly enforced and was made from Gravesend to sea, or *vice versâ*.

8500. Therefore one pilot does all the outward work and another pilot does all the inward work?—Yes, one class of pilot.

8501. Surely that must be a very expensive mode?—Not more so. The inward pilots must cruise to pick up the ships; the outward pilots must live in London or Gravesend or the vicinity.

8501a. You have told us a great deal about the disadvantage of London, but compare it now, for instance, with Calcutta, where you have the most difficult pilotage in the world, and where one pilot takes the ship out and remains at the entrance for an inward ship, and is able to bring her in. Why should not London do something of the same sort?—The outward man would not cruise.

8502. Could it not be arranged? Would it not be a very much cheaper plan?—Some of our pilots come up from Dungeness or the Wight, and some of them come up from the northern channel.

8503. But that is their own option. They choose to cruise?—No, they are obliged to cruise at those stations. It is open to any outward pilot if they cruise (which they will not do) to bring in an inward ship.

8504. But why will he not do it?—It does not pay him.

8505. Surely it must pay him to get the return voyage?—These choice pilots have their time fully occupied and would have to take their turn. Take the case of a pilot belonging to the P. and O. Company.

8506. Do you know any port in the world where the same system is adopted?—At Liverpool they cruise.

8507. But where the outward pilot does not bring in an inward ship?—I think in most ports, Southampton, for instance, the same thing occurs—and Liverpool and Plymouth. It is the general custom, I think.

8508. It is only in England, I think. I have not heard of it in any other country?—It is a long time since I was in Calcutta; there are the brigs there still, I suppose?

8509. Yes; they have the brigs outside. Will you look at Question 1652, when Sir Dixon Hartland gave his evidence. He stated that the Yantlet Channel had been dredged in accordance with the advice of the Commission that was held on the Lower Thames but it had not been buoyed, and the question was asked, "The Yantlet Creek channel having been deepened, can you explain why the Trinity House did not buoy it?" The answer was, "I do not know"?—I am under the impression that Sir Dixon Hartland was wrong.

8510. If you follow the next question, you will see "Did they tell you why they did not buoy it?" He also says, "I do not know." But the fact remains, I believe, that the Yantlet channel was not buoyed?—Nor dredged, I think.

8511. They state distinctly it was dredged?—The Trinity House went into this question—the Lower Thames Navigation Commission appointed by the Committee in 1894, suggested the buoying of this channel; it never was absolutely officially before the Trinity House. It came before them in a private notice from Sir George Nares, who was one of that Commission, to my predecessor, calling attention to the new surveys of the river about to be published, and stating that the Commission had found a channel had opened south of the river, called the Yantlet channel, and suggesting it should be buoyed for navigation, with a light at either end. It was referred to our Committee for report, and the Trinity House took a good deal of trouble in obtaining evidence, and they came to the conclusion that they did not approve of the schemes; neither did the pilots; nor any of the superintendents. I am under the impression that Sir Dixon Hartland was wrong.

8512. Now, to go on to another question. Supposing the Conservancy dredge a channel, and they refer it to the Trinity House. Who has the responsibility of buoying that channel?—The Trinity House.

8513. In the case of the Conservancy actually dredging a channel?—May I correct my answer. The Trinity House, if it was outside the Thames Conservancy limits.

8514. I know you do not agree with this, but presume for the moment that the Thames Conservancy had dredged the Yantlet channel?—Not thoroughly dredged.

8515. Presume they had and had acquainted you with it, would you have the power of saying, "We will not buoy it"?—Yes.

8516. Then, in fact, there are two authorities on the river who might possibly be brought into direct contest with each other?—It is very unlikely. It never has occurred.

8517. I think you will find it is the case that the Yantlet channel was dredged, and that the Trinity House never buoyed it?—We never buoyed it.

8518. But it was dredged, I think you will find?—What we said was, that even if a 27ft. channel did exist at the Leigh middle, and was marked for night and day navigation, it would be of little use until a channel of sufficient width for deep draught vessels was made right up to Gravesend.

8519. Do the Thames Conservancy consult the Trinity House before they dredge a channel?—No.

8520. Then it comes back to the same point—that if the Conservancy dredge a channel the Trinity House are not compelled to buoy it, and therefore the channel may become useless?—It might be so, but I should say that the Thames Conservancy had the power of buoying themselves.

8521. Do you think the Thames Conservancy have the power of buoying?—Yes. They come to us as a matter of convenience, but they could buoy themselves.

8522. Would your pilots recognise their buoys?—They would have to conform to the uniform system of buoying.

8523. And therefore you would have a dual system of buoys in the river, presuming they adopted that course?—No, not a dual system.

8524. But two owners, we will say?—So we have now with the County Council. We work in harmony.

8525. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You work in harmony, but you have a dual system to that extent?—In that respect. We act as a sort of agent for the County Council. It is easier and much cheaper, and after some hesitation we agreed to do it for them.

8526. It is not two co-ordinate authorities?—No.

8527. It is an agency?—Yes. Before departing from that may I just read you the last recommendation of my committee appointed to deal with this subject: "In conclusion the committee"—that is to say, the Tri-

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nity House committee—"recommend that until the Thames Conservancy alter the depth of the channel below Gravesend the decision arrived at by the board and communicated to Sir G. Nares in their letter of the 2nd October, 1895, be adhered to, and that no steps be taken to establish the gas buoys proposed by Captain Weller at present."

8528. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Will you look at Question 2166 with regard to the "Minneapolis" being grounded?—Yes.

8529. She was grounded to avoid collision by the pilot, was she not?—The pilot's report is here. This is the official report: "We suddenly ran into a fog; I had to hard-a-port to clear a barque. Before the vessel could recover herself from starboard helm she took the ground. It was then dense fog."

8530. When a vessel is put ashore like that by your pilot do you make a charge for removing a bank?—No.

8531. I see your claim is made there. The engineer proposed to carry out this work?—That was the Thames Conservancy business not ours. We immediately held a court of inquiry on the pilot.

8532. And the pilot was exonerated. Then you stated just now about the deepening of the river—that there are only a small number of vessels which would benefit by the increased depth of water obtained by dredging?—That is so.

8533. Surely that argument applies to all steamers drawing over 24ft.? I am talking as a seaman?—I am in no way averse to the river being dredged. The question I dealt with was the difference between 28ft. and 30ft.

8534. But you would advocate dredging the river to the depth proposed by the Commission on the Lower Thames?—I am not quite sure what they did recommend.

8535. I think it was 30 feet to Gravesend?—30 feet at low water—it is not a question on which the Trinity House is an authority. If they can afford to do it certainly the deeper the river is, the better. But in the last year that would only have benefited 12 ships.

8536. You think it would only have benefited 12 ships?—Yes.

8537. It would not have benefited every deep draft ship coming up to London?—No; and not even those twelve unless they had happened to be there at low water.

8538. If you think that, you would not advocate the dredging of the river?—Not up to 30 feet.

8539. Up to what depth would you advocate it?—I should say 30 feet should be the limit unless they had plenty of money. It is a question of money. As the Thames is deepened so vessels might be altered, in which case the river ought certainly to be made sufficiently deep to admit all reasonable draught of ships.

8540. But as an expert of the Trinity House I am asking you to what depth you would advocate up to Gravesend?—I should not oppose the dredging of the river up to 30 feet at low water.

8541. But would you approve it?—I should think it is rather too much.

8542. Then what would you advocate?—I should think 28 feet at low water—springs.

8543. You stated just now that if the river was dredged there would be an increase of buoyage?—Gas buoyage.

8544. Why should that be?—If the river was dredged part of the scheme is that there should be a large number of gas buoys.

8545. I do not think that came before us at all in any of the evidence. I ask you more or less as a practical man. I cannot see why the channel being dredged should necessitate a larger number of buoys?—It was part of the Lower River Commission scheme that there should be gas buoys there and I think it certainly would have that effect. There would be a very considerable number of gas buoys. The tendency is to increase gas buoys all round England and certainly there would be a very large increase in the River Thames and there must be before many years are over in any case.

8546. But that would not be necessitated by the deepening of the river would it?—Yes, I think there would be a deep water channel which would have to be lit at night in order that the deep draught vessels might be kept within its limits. I put the question to my committee. They thought that there would be as many as 30 to 40 gas buoys required with a 30 feet channel up to Gravesend.

8547. Going back to one answer you gave just now about pilotage at Liverpool and pilotage at London, virtually according to what I gather from what you said, Liverpool pays not only London dues but Liverpool dues?—Liverpool does not pay London dues, but general lighthouse dues.

8548. Does that include the pilotage to London?—Buoyage.

8549. I got rather confused just now in regard to what you said. You said that the great advantage of London was that there was so much service done which was charged to a general fund and not to London?—Lighting and buoyage—not applied to pilotage.

8550. And therefore Liverpool pays for the lighting and buoyage of London as well as the lighting and buoyage of the Port of Liverpool?—Yes, that is so.

8551. Why should the Trinity House allow Liverpool to do its own pilotage instead of doing it themselves, if they keep London. You say that the Trinity House does the pilotage of many of the great ports. Why should they have allowed Liverpool to do their own pilotage instead of carrying out the pilotage of Liverpool in the same way that they carry out the pilotage of London?—Pardon me, I did not say the great ports; I said the outports.

8552. Will you give us the reason for that?—That is by Act of Parliament 6 George III. They have rights over their own ports, and other large ports do their own pilotage. They are their own pilotage authority.

8553. Then why should not London have its own pilotage authority?—It has to some extent.

8554. Surely not; it has got Trinity House; Trinity House does the coasts, and so on. I am rather wanting to separate them?—They are separate. There is a London district pilotage. We have 37 Trinity outports of London, but London has a separate committee.

8555. Was Liverpool ever under the Trinity House?—Never.

8556. Have you ever had a port under the Trinity House which you have allowed afterwards to do its own work?—Yes. Newport and Gloucester in the Bristol Channel under the Bristol Channel Act of 1861.

8557. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to take you for a moment or two into the matter of pilots and pilotage. You have put in a schedule of fees or earnings on the voyage. I suppose you are satisfied with the *personnel* of the men that you get as pilots?—I think so. I should say that they are as good as any other pilots in the world; certainly as good as any other pilots in England.

8558. They are sufficient for the Thames?—They are submitted to a very rigorous examination.

8559. One of them gave us an interesting account of the examination at Question 4156. Has that system been in operation for a number of years?—There has been no alteration in this for many years. That is our system—first below the 14 feet up to 14 feet, and then beyond it.

8560. That system of examination has been found quite satisfactory for a number of years?—Yes.

8561. When you appoint a pilot after examination, do you hand him any copy of rules which he has to observe?—Certainly.

8562. I do not know whether Mr. Kent, when he was before us, put in a copy of those rules. I think it would be convenient to have the rules of the London pilots on our notes. Perhaps you would hand a copy in?—It is the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 which is handed to him, and besides that there are some private rules.

8563. You used the word "private." Have you any objection to our having a copy of the Rules?—I will hand in a copy.

(*The witness handed in a copy of the Rules and Regulations relating to Pilots in the Port of London. See Appendix, 23rd Day, No. 4.*)

8564. Then I turn to accidents; of course the pilots were before us, and we had some evidence given us with regard to accidents on a question put by myself. Will you turn to Question 4271 and Question 4346. You see

both Mr. Davies and Mr. Rigden mentioned that they had had some accidents. Is there in every case a report made by a pilot to the Trinity House when he meets with an accident?—Invariably.

8565. How many reports had you during the year 1900 from pilots with regard to collisions; can you give me the figure approximately?—On an average about seven or eight a week.

8566. From 350 to 400 per annum?—The average number of collisions reported in the London District for the years 1897, 1898, 1899, and 1900 amounts to 402 per annum, there being 360 pilots.

8567. That includes large and small?—Yes, chiefly small.

8568. What was the nature of the small accidents—running down small craft or what?—Coming into collision with them and touching the ground.

8569. In how many cases approximately of the 400 or so did loss of life occur?—Very few—hardly any.

See 10783.

8570. Would ten lives be lost per annum, speaking from memory?—About two a year.

8571. Then on these reports what action, if any, does the Trinity House take?—The Committee examines and reports to the Board if any punishment is required.

8572. As regards the pilot?—As regards the pilot. I have here the form. This is a particular case, the "Minneapolis."

8573. The pilot reports on a schedule form?—Yes. I will hand in a copy of the forms.

(*The witness handed in Forms of Report used by Pilots in the Port of London. See Appendix, 23rd Day, No. 5.*)

8574. There are a series of questions, I see?—Yes.

8575. Is the conduct or misconduct, as the case may be, of the pilot the only subject of the inquiry?—By "conduct of the pilot" do you mean his technical conduct?

8576. I mean does the inquiry only touch the conduct of the pilot?—That is all.

8577. Supposing the pilot says for instance: "I was surrounded by so many craft; they were lying more or less derelict; they were not under proper charge." Does the Committee take any notice of that?—Certainly; it is part of their duty to ascertain and determine whether the pilot has acted in a seamanlike manner.

8578. Supposing they determine that a pilot had acted in "a seamanlike manner," and was in no way to blame, and let us assume for a moment that a death had occurred in consequence of this, do they make any representation to your Board?—Yes.

8579. Does the Board make any representation to anybody else?—No, unless in answer to complaints.

8580. It stops there?—We are final, unless, of course, there is an inquiry of the Board of Trade or the Admiralty Court.

8581. Does the Trinity House think it its duty in any case such as I have assumed, or attempted to describe, to report to the Board of Trade and suggest that a further inquiry should be held?—No. If it becomes obvious to us that an action at law is probable, we do not even hold the inquiry, because it would prejudice the case. We should hold an inquiry, but we do not give any judgment. If we were to find the pilot had been to blame it would prejudice the case, certainly.

8582. You see what I am trying to get at. I am trying to get at whether the Trinity House, as a public body, consider their functions entirely confined to the conduct of the pilot or not. Do they?—We always have the knowledge that the Board of Trade is behind us, and that it would be within the functions of the Board of Trade to ask us why we did this, or that, if it was contrary to what they thought was the reasonable course to take.

8583. You do not consider it your function in any way to suggest or initiate, having the Board of Trade behind you?—No.

8584. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Would it be the fact that any case that came before you of a pilot's conduct in grounding a ship would also be reported to the Marine Department of the Board of Trade?—No, not unless it emanated from them.

8585. Is not every casualty to a ship reported to the Board of Trade?—In that case the Board of Trade would approach us, and in that case we should communicate to them the result of the trial.

8586. Is not every casualty reported to them?—I am not sure, but I think when there is loss of life or great loss of property—certainly not every trivial case. They would be innumerable.

8587. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Was the change that was to be made by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1898 in respect to the fund which you described to us made on any suggestion from your body, the Trinity House, at all?—Only so far that it was made on the suggestion of a select committee.

8588. But you concurred in it?—I personally was one of the committee. I represented the Trinity House.

8589. I am asking you as regards the Trinity House?—Not as a body.

8590. Of course, I may take it that this morning you are here supplementing the evidence of the secretary, fully authorised by the Trinity House?—Yes.

8591. We may take it that all you have said has been said on their behalf?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Serutton.

8592. Within the last few years a rather important change has been made in the constitution of the Trinity House, has it not?—Yes.

8593. The Pilotage Committee had put on it by Parliament a representative of the shipowners and a representative of the pilots?—Yes, that is so.

8594. Perhaps you can give us the date?—1889.

8595. The Trinity House, I think, opposed that proposal?—Yes.

8596. They thought it was going to work badly?—They did not see any necessity for it.

8597. You gave evidence against it, amongst others?—Yes.

8598. Have your fears been realised in actual working?—I should not say it has resulted in any good.

8599. Has it resulted in the harm that you foresaw?—It has been a great deal of trouble to the pilots.

8600. Has it resulted in any harm having the shipowner and pilot on the board?—No, I do not think so.

8601. I think at that inquiry evidence was given that a number of other ports were adopting the same practice?—Generally where there was no nautical element on the board.

8602. I gather the Trinity House does not consider it part of its duty at all to attempt to put the law of compulsory pilotage in order?—No; it leaves it to the Legislature.

8603. It leaves it in its present chaotic condition?—We do not make the law—we carry it out.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

8604. If the channel of the river is deepened up as far as the Albert Dock entrance would that throw a good deal of extra work on the Trinity House?—No, I do not think so.

8605. There would be no alteration to be made in the buoys and lights; they would stand just where they are?—Do you mean from sea up to the dock?

8606. Take it from Yantlet up to the dock?—I have said a very large number of additional buoys would be required.

8607. Instead of what may be called maintenance work there would be a certain amount of new work to be done?—A little.

8608. In case of conflict between the Trinity House and the river authority it would be more serious if it were going on while this channel was being widened than it would in the present state of things?—Speaking under correction, I should think if there was any conflict between the London authority and the Trinity House, Trinity House would give way. It would be in their waters.

8609. That is not quite an answer to my question?—Only that I cannot conceive the possibility.

8610. I think that besides London, Southampton is the only large port in the country of which the buoying and lighting is in the hands of Trinity House is it not?—We buoy the Tees. We do not buoy Southampton Water except one or two gas buoys for them.

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8611. But except Southampton—Southampton is the principal port is it?—We do not buoy Southampton except with one or two buoys.

8612. Then may I say that London is the only first-class port in which the buoying and the lighting is in the hands of Trinity House?—We buoy the Solent and the Tees.

8613. You said, as I understand you, that London had the advantage of getting its lighting and buoying done out of the General Lighthouse Fund?—Yes.

8614. I did not quite catch your evidence, but I think you said something very much like that. Do you say that London gets more advantage out of that General Lighthouse Fund in comparison with its shipping than other ports in the country do?—Than some other ports, Liverpool for instance; more than all local ports.

8615. But putting aside what you call local ports—by which I understand you to mean ports which do their own buoying and lighting?—Yes.

8616. Putting those aside do you say that London under the present arrangement gets a greater advantage from having its lighting and buoying paid out of the General Lighthouse Fund than it would if the General Lighthouse Fund were split up between London and the other ports *pro rata* to shipping?—Yes.

8617. To a substantial extent?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

8618. In the case of collision with craft you say that a report is sent in by the pilot?—Yes.

8619. Is it always a written report?—The form is printed; his remarks are written, of course.

8620. It is a skeleton report that he fills up?—This is it; these questions are printed.

8621. And that is sent in within a day or two of the accident?—As soon after as possible.

8622. You say that when there is a prospect of litigation arising out of the accident you take no steps?—I do not say we take no steps.

8623. You hold no inquiry?—I will not say that we do not hold an inquiry. We do not adjudicate. We do not pass judgment.

8624. Then I misunderstood you. When there is a prospect of litigation do you hold any inquiry as to the pilot's conduct?—I think we should not until it was over.

8625. Who decides as to whether there is a prospect of litigation?—The solicitors.

8626. Your own solicitors?—No, the solicitors of the parties.

8627. Do you say that on all occasions you get a letter from the solicitor, say, of the barge that has been run down?—In all cases we get a letter or a personal application.

8628. And when you get this letter no inquiry is held?—We generally get information that there is going to be a trial and then we wait.

8629. But in hundreds of cases the trial never comes off. In the case of a pilot who is impecunious and would not be worth suing I may take it that no inquiry into his conduct is ever held?—I do not say that.

8630. But is it ever so. How long do you wait before you hold an inquiry?—It depends very largely on the delay that is occasioned by the solicitors—sometimes 18 months.

8631. This is a somewhat serious matter, and I wish to treat it seriously. There are cases in which the pilot is not worth suing, as you know?—I do not admit that at all.

8632. We will take the case of a pilot who gets, we will say, £125 a year as his gross earnings, and then he has deductions made from them. Do you think in that case, supposing damage was done to the tune of £1,000, it would be worth while suing the pilot?—They would get something perhaps.

8633. But do you know, as a matter of fact, that in scores and hundreds of cases they do not get a farthing—that the pilot is not worth suing?—I do not know about hundreds of cases; I know that it has occurred.

8634. I should mention here that we have had given in evidence fifty cases?—In what lapse of time?

8635. Will you look at Appendix No. 1 of the 16th day? There the cases range from the 7th May, 1895, down to November, 1900. There is a great array of claims made against pilots which had to be abandoned, and in some cases the pilot was an undischarged bankrupt?—In all these cases has it been proved that the pilot was to blame?

8636. I do not know whether he was to blame or not, but the action was not proceeded with on the ground that the pilot was not worth suing. Litigation has arisen, and I want to know when the inquiry in these cases was made as to the conduct of the pilot. In some cases an action was brought. On the 18th January, 1896, there is one. The "Nellie" was sued, and the pilot was held to blame. It was abandoned against the pilot. Costs £140 were paid by the plaintiffs in addition to bearing the damage and their own costs of action. Then there is another case immediately following: "Abandoned; pilot no money." Then there is another: "Settled for £10." Then another: "Abandoned; pilot undischarged bankrupt." That is 7th October. Then the 20th February: "Abandoned; pilot impecunious." There are two cases of that kind. Then the next one: "£16 only recovered from pilot under a committal order." That is upon pressure being brought to bear. I need not go through all these cases, but I want to know when was the inquiry held in these cases by the Trinity House as to the pilot's conduct?—When a complaint is made an inquiry is held.

8637. You have said it is not always held?—Unless we know that there is going to be litigation.

8638. In all these cases there was not only going to be litigation, but there was litigation. In those cases were inquiries held?—Were they brought to the notice of the Trinity House?—I presume that they were. The pilot would make his report to you in each of these cases.

8639. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You remember I asked you specifically the question whether in all cases the pilot made a report?—Yes.

8640. And I understood you to say, yes?—Yes. So I am advised.

8641. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) What I want to understand is this. If litigation is threatened, or if it goes on, the Board stops; it makes no inquiry?—That is so.

8642. So that in all those cases no inquiry was held?—I should not say that. Inquiry might have been held afterwards.

8643. There are cases here in which the pilot is an undischarged bankrupt?—Yes.

8644. Did the Board not know that they were employing a man who was an undischarged bankrupt?—We are not advised that the fact of a man being a bankrupt incapacitates him from being a pilot.

8645. May I take it that you know that undischarged bankrupts are employed?—Yes. One case is present to my mind which occurred just recently.

8646. On the 31st January there is the case of a pilot an undischarged bankrupt?—Yes.

8647. You have an absolute power, have you not, to withdrawn a pilot's licence at any time you choose?—Yes.

8648. And in the case of an undischarged bankrupt acting as a pilot, who is the only person to whom the barge has to look to for damage, you were not advised to withdraw his licence?—We have taken legal advice on this question, and we act on it.

8649. The advice was that you could still keep the undischarged bankrupt on with his licence, although he might occur liability in the course of his duty. Would you yourself, in your official capacity, object to an undischarged bankrupt being kept on as a pilot?—I have said just now we have taken legal advice on this subject.

8649A. I presume you have the case that was laid before counsel on that point?—We have the case that was legally stated.

8650. This is a case of an undischarged bankrupt incurring liability. You have the case, have you?—Yes, we know of it.

8651. And the opinion?—Yes.

8652. (*Chairman.*) Could you supply us with a copy of the pilotage rates?—I will do so.

(The Witness handed in a Table of the Rates of Pilotage in the Port of London. See Appendix, 23rd Day, No. 6.)

Mr. JOHN MCEWAN called and examined.

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8653. You are a member of the firm of McMeekin and Company, importers and exporters, and wholesale dealers in tea?—Yes.

8654. You desire to give evidence on behalf of the tea trade, so far as it bears on the subject of the Inquiry of this Commission?—Yes.

8655. With regard to your evidence, we wish to tell you that we are prepared to hear you so far as matters of fact are concerned which you know of your own knowledge, but we understand you desire to hand in certain statistics dealing with the growth of the tea trade, which you say are, to some extent, merely approximate. We are not prepared to take statistics which you tell us are merely approximate. Those statistics, we think, should come from the bodies directly concerned. Further than that, we do not wish to hear general views with regard to the tea trade, but any complaints you may have to make so far as regards the working of the trade with which you are concerned, we shall be pleased to hear. On that understanding would you like me to ask you some questions?—Yes.

8656. You have had 24 years' experience in connection with the tea business in London and elsewhere, and have personal knowledge of the working of the tea trade in other ports of the United Kingdom, particularly in Glasgow and Manchester?—Yes.

8657. You have also had personal experience of the handling of tea in such large centres of tea business as Calcutta, Colombo, Melbourne, Sydney, Montreal, New York, Moscow, Odessa, and Hamburg?—Yes. May I explain that my statement of evidence was prepared in November last, before I knew what would come before the Commission, and the statistics I proposed to give you were designed to present tea separately to you as a very important article coming under your reference with regard to dutiable goods.

8658. That you will refer to later in your evidence?—Yes. The statistics I was prepared to submit are all official figures abstracted from the books of the Custom House and of the Board of Trade, but they are in such a form as to show the state of things with regard to the tea trade in London.

8659. You tell us that the statistics are merely approximate?—So they are merely approximate, but I bring them up to show to you the position of the tea business under existing conditions, and they bear upon how it may be affected by any change.

8660. Will you tell us whether you have any complaint to make as to the dock facilities or accommodation?—No, I have no definite complaint. I have been asked to give evidence with regard to the tea trade, and I wish to point out what seems to me to be the advantages and disadvantages of the existing system, and what would go wrong if any change took place.

8661. If there is any reason to suppose that any proposed change will affect you individually or your firm, we shall be pleased to hear your evidence with regard to that, but a general statement as to the condition of the tea-trade in the Port of London I do not think comes within our reference. Do you say that London bears favourable comparison with many other ports?—For conducting transhipment trade in tea London is in an exceptional position, the goods being absolutely free of expense save that of lighterage, and although dutiable goods, His Majesty's Customs take no control over them beyond safeguarding the revenue from the possibility of such cargo being landed in the United Kingdom without duty having been paid thereon. London bears most favourable comparison with many other ports owing to the absence of any dues or charges on tea in transit in this way, or upon tea arriving from abroad, and consequently it has always been a large transhipping port. The amount of tea thus transhipped within the port gradually rose from 76,784lbs. of the value of £7,678 in 1851, to 16,308,000lbs. of the value of about £830,000 in 1888; but thereafter it declined, till in 1894 the total was 6,953,000lbs. of a value of about £308,000. It has since further again gradually risen to 13,511,000lbs. of a value of £294,731 in 1899. I do not attribute the falling off in that class of trade to anything whatever connected with the Port of London, but to the ordinary commercial development of other nations and of the British Colonies. New trade routes have been opened up, and particularly the increase in the number of steamships, induced by the opening of the Suez Canal, has given facilities for direct transit that renders London no longer necessary as the general tea *entrepôt* of the world. Then, again, the existence of six or eight trans-Continental lines of railway in North America, all more or less in competition with each other as to rates, has caused the United States and Canada to obtain a large portion of their tea supplies through their western sea-board, *viâ* San Francisco, Seattle, Tacoma and Vancouver, leaving Great Britain to supply, instead of all as formerly, only a small proportion of the requirements. Russia and Germany in particular, although the latter is only a small consumer of tea, have established lines of steamers sailing direct from tea-ports to Odessa, Hamburg, and elsewhere, and in addition to the Transpacific lines of steamers there are now regular sailings from the principal tea-ports of the East, *viâ* the Suez Canal, to New York. The reason why this transhipment business has not entirely ceased is that there are still many ports to which no direct steamers ply, and that London with its cheap system of transhipment and its constant large supply of tonnage, both inwards and outwards, is undoubtedly the best transhipping point. The increase shown in recent years arises from the fact that the teas of Indian and Ceylon production (formerly too costly for certain outlets), have of recent years fallen so much in value that they have largely displaced China tea in certain markets not yet sufficiently important to have direct steam communication. An example of how, for transhipment business, London is able to hold its own in competition may be cited. Tea from Calcutta or Colombo for Montreal may be shipped either on through bill of lading, *viâ* New York with rail transit thence, or *viâ* London with steamer transit thence. The total freight by the latter route is slightly less, but the difference is about absorbed by the extra insurance premium for St. Lawrence risk. The time occupied by the total journey is very much shorter *viâ* London, because of the better and quicker class of vessels available for both portions of the journey. For that particular port London would doubtless lose this transhipment if dues on tea cargo were payable in and out of port.

8662. Then have you anything to tell us about the special expenses in London. There is no complaint to make, is there?—Yes, there is very serious complaint. There can be no doubt that the great size of the Port and City of London entails expenses upon commerce which smaller places escape. For tea business the long distance for rail, lighterage or cartage, the frequent handling by men earning such wages as the standard of living and expenses in London call for, and the general high cost of materials, all operate adversely, but beyond those considerations tea entails heavy special expenses for handling through three causes: (a) The high standard that has hitherto been demanded and maintained as to the uniformity of all samples. (b) The ascertainment of weight to satisfy the requirements of the Revenue. (c) The irregularity of weights and tares. The first cause necessitates the opening, emptying out, bulking, and refilling of a large proportion of the tea imported from India and Ceylon. The tendency of modern times, where large quantities have to be quickly handled, and where values have fallen so much that slight differences in character make but little alteration in value, is not to insist so strictly upon bulking in London, and much of the bulking is done in the factories where the tea is made. If producers of tea could ship large lines of uniform sample in chests of nearly uniform net weights, and buyers would agree to accept samples drawn in the simpler manner followed in other countries, charges might be greatly reduced. The tea traders in London, however, as a rule, have in their methods been very conservative, and shown unwillingness to relax old conditions, while the producers have been slow to adopt improvements which would simplify the handling of tea, and therefore lessen the cost entailed. I have said that I saw no disadvantage under which tea suffers so far as the docks themselves are concerned, but when the tea comes to be warehoused in London it is subject to heavy charges which undoubtedly press hardly upon the producer, and must somewhat handicap the exporter. It has become the custom to talk in a rough-and-ready way about "dock charges," but where tea is taken overside on arrival there are no dock charges, properly speaking. The only expense until the tea is

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housed in the bonded warehouses is that for lighterage. The more correct term to use would be that of "warehouse charges."

8663. May I take it that the conclusion you have come to is that you do not consider the London warehouse rates are unduly high, but that they are higher than they would be if the system were less complicated in London?—Yes.

8664. But I understand you to say that you do not suggest any method of making it less complicated?—I do for certain classes of business. As far as I can gather the general belief is that the expense might be lessened under certain conditions—that is working tea for home business.

8665. Have you anything to tell us with relation to the quay rate in the bonded warehouses?—The quay rate does not come within my knowledge in my business. I pay no quay rates. The question of proposed rates I have tried to deal with. It would affect this transhipment business seriously if there were anything put on.

8666. Do you wish to say anything more about that?—From my own experience, and from accounts in my possession, I can show that, taking 2s. 6d. per package as the London rate, the same work is done in New York, Montreal, and Sydney, for, on the average, an equivalent of 8d. per chest, in Melbourne for 1s. 3d., and in Hamburg for 1s. 1d.; but the system is so absolutely different in its simplicity that there is no real comparison.

8667. Have you anything to say with regard to the rates on re-exported tea?—Tea which has to be re-exported has, as a rule, already borne the charges referred to in connection with tea for home consumption, and, in addition, has to pay a rate of 10s. 5d. per ton, which includes collection, conveyance to docks, wharfage, and porterage. It cannot be considered a very excessive rate in view of the work done, but of course when the charge has to be added on to the charges previously incurred as imports, it will be seen that a very material expense beyond that incurred in the case of transhipment, falls to be added to the cost of the tea, which undoubtedly would give a preference in dealings to ports where all those expenses are on a lower scale. The re-exporting trade of the port of London by 1884 reached a total of 45,185,000lbs., or about one-fifth of the total imports. It had, however, in 1899 declined to 31,571,000lbs., or about one-ninth of the total imports. The reason of the falling off is largely to be found in the increased direct trading facilities referred to in dealing with the transhipments, and here the expensive method of handling tea in the London warehouses has doubtless been a factor. I may point out that the average value of tea in London was, in 1870, 1s. 4·42d.; in 1880, 1s. 1·47d., and well over 1s. in 1884; but it had fallen in 1889 to 8¾d., and, of course, the working charges in London make an appreciably higher percentage on the reduced value. Another effect of the tea warehousing method followed in London which is somewhat restrictive of re-exportation business, is, that the handling necessitated by the weighing and bulking operations conducted as they are at present, causes the packages to suffer, and they have, before shipment, to be recoopered, and in that condition they are frequently objected to by shipping companies, and in America particularly they are referred to as "In English order," a term synonymous with "bad order." If it were practicable to establish a bonded wharf in London directly under the control of H.M. Customs, in which tea could be temporarily warehoused without being brought to account and with a minimum of the elaborate operations previously referred to, such facilities might in time be freely taken advantage of, and put the port in a better position to compete with, say, tea warehoused in the Freihafen at Hamburg. If sampling facilities were given for tea so warehoused, it could be offered for sale abroad and very little cost incurred, and it could, if necessary, provided it had not been sold abroad, be ultimately moved into an ordinary warehouse for sale in London in the usual way. There is at present some provision of lower rates for tea actually entered at time of arrival as for exportation, but there is still a large margin for economising were my proposal of a Customs bonded wharf for waterborne teas adopted. Considering the question of the warehousing of tea in bond generally in London, I am of the opinion that it would be better for the trade of the port if all bonded tea warehouses were under a public trust, and the work done at the lowest possible rates consistent with efficiency. Were this the case, merchants would have more confidence in the administration and in the proper handling of the goods than can be the case where private ownership has little in view but the obtaining of a maximum of profit for a minimum of service. At present certain of the warehouses are in the hands of firms who are themselves tea merchants, importing tea or taking part risks in the tea stored in their warehouses. The buyers of such teas have to accept the warrants issued by those who are in whole or in part proprietors of what they have sold, but still retain in their own custody, and it certainly would be preferable if the custodians of the goods were absolutely independent of either the sellers or the buyers. There is this to be said for the practice, H.M. Board of Customs allow those firms to hold in their own bonded warehouses their own teas, so that doubtless they have been satisfied as to general standing and character.

8668. (*Mr. Peel.*) What are the docks that are principally used by your business?—The docks into which tea vessels principally come are the Tilbury, the Victoria, and the Albert Docks. There is hardly any tea comes to any other dock.

8669. The bulk of it goes overside into barges, does it not?—That is not within my own knowledge. I should say, roughly speaking, that the bulk of it does go overside.

8670. Are those ports that you speak of with regard to transhipment mainly English ports?—They are not English ports at all. "Transhipment" does not relate to English ports,

8671. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You said that in 1851 the value of about 77,000lbs. of tea transhipped at the Port of London was £7,678, but are you aware that the value of tea at that time, or the value of any other article in the Customs, was not ascertained in any shape whatsoever, if you have taken the figures from the official statistics?—I have taken them from the Board of Trade statistics.

8672. That is a merely artificial value?—That is why I qualify it by saying that the figures were merely approximate.

8673. We have no reason to believe that it was in any shape the value of the tea at the time. It was an artificial valuation established about the year 1690, and there was no ascertainment of the values in the way that they are ascertained now?—That is interesting from a statistical point of view.

(*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I merely put the point to you so as to have on our notes that the thing was not allowed to pass without the question being raised.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I have listened to what this gentleman has said, and I think the only criticism he makes is with regard to transhipment, and, as your Lordship knows, there is no proposal to alter the charges with regard to transhipment traffic at all. Our Bill did not propose to do it, and we have not submitted any proposal to this Commission with regard to transhipment, so that the custom, practice, and charges would be precisely what they are to-day. With regard to rates, of course I do not propose to follow this gentleman into the question of existing rates at all.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8674. Where do you draw your samples from which you sell?—At the warehouses.

8675. The up-town warehouses?—Yes.

8676. Cutler Street?—All the warehouses.

8677. Is it not a fact that the great bulk of the tea trade of London is done through the wharves?—There are 21 bonded warehouses.

8678-9. You have probably seen the table which Mr. Ryder handed in on the 3rd day, Appendix No. 1?—Yes.

8680. I find there that approximately not more than 4,000,000lbs. of tea out of nearly 217,000,000lbs. imported into London for the year ending 31st December, 1899, was in the dock warehouses at the docks, and of that at Tilbury only 77,000lbs., and at the Victoria and Albert, 66,000lbs.?—Those statistics merely refer to small payments of duty.

(*Mr. Harper.*) Forgive me. They are quantities of tea imported into the Port of London on which Customs dues are received.

Mr. JOHN INNES ROGERS re-called and further examined.

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8681. (*Chairman.*) You are chairman of Joseph Travers and Sons, Limited, importing and exporting merchants, dealing largely with Colonial produce?—Yes.

8682. You desire to give evidence as to the trade in which you are engaged in so far as it bears on the subject of this inquiry?—Yes.

8683. Will you proceed with your evidence?—I gave general evidence on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce before, but I am speaking now on behalf of my own firm.

8684. We wish you to speak to matters within your own knowledge?—Yes. My firm is a very old-established one, and they are very much interested in the dock question and the question of charges. In our last business year we paid in the Port of London £11,877 in dock and wharf charges for the imports, rents, and delivery of goods, together with sampling charges and the like. In addition to this we estimate that goods which were bought by us of other persons landed in this port had their prices raised to the extent of £21,000 by the landing and other charges paid upon them by others. Putting those two amounts together, we estimate that the dock charges paid in London on the goods we sell amounted in our last business year to £32,000. Any material increase in such large figures would be of vital importance to us. Most of our goods liable to these charges are lodged not in the premises of the dock company, but in the public waterside wharves along the Thames. The reason for this is that the charges at the public wharves in our trade are on the average about 10 per cent. less than at the docks. The wharves are also nearer the centre of business, and their system of delivery is much quicker than that of the dock. If it were not for the lower charges at the wharves we should in most cases prefer to store goods at the docks, in order to save the delay caused in lightering up and down the stream. The insurance is also less at the docks. I wish to point out that, although the wharfingers' charges are, to the extent I have named, in our experience lower than those of the dock, yet the wharfingers are subject to the heavy cost of lightering goods from the docks to their premises, which is a great addition to their expenses. If we were compelled, as would be the case if the dock company obtained and exercised the powers recently sought by them (to charge rates on goods lightered up to waterside wharves) to warehouse goods in the docks, we should presumably have to pay at least 10 per cent. more for the charges on goods transferred to the docks. I am not in a position to say what the exact proportions may be that are housed in the docks and in the wharves in our case, but I believe that the compulsory storing of the goods in the docks would involve our firm annually in an extra charge of several thousand pounds in the year. The probable result of the proposal to charge rates on lighters would be that we should be driven to warehouse the whole of our goods in the docks. Ours is only one typical case, for the same result would follow with other firms throughout the whole extent of the London business. The wharfingers are already at a disadvantage as compared with the docks in the charge the wharfingers have to bear for lightering their goods up the stream.

8685. Are you speaking within your own knowledge as to the wharfingers?—Yes, because we are wharfingers ourselves. Although, as I have said, the wharfingers are already at a disadvantage as compared with the docks, yet they are able to undersell the docks in our trade to the extent of 10 per cent. If in addition to the cost of lightering in itself the dock dues proposed were charged upon the lighters and any goods they contained it is my belief that a gigantic monopoly would be created in favour of the dock company at the cost of the wharfingers and merchants of London. In years past London was the European depôt for many branches of the grocery trade which have now been to a great degree removed so far as exports are concerned from this port. I will hand in a table taken from the Customs Returns showing the Imports to the United Kingdom, and to London of certain articles in 1879 and 1899.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the Imports to the United Kingdom and to London, of certain articles in the years* 1879 *and* 1899. *See Appendix,* 23*rd Day, No.* 7.)

Such goods are now sent direct to ports like Antwerp and Hamburg. I am fully aware that there are other causes for this, but one main cause is the heavy nature of the dock charges in London—when I say dock charges I mean of course dock and wharf charges—insufficient depth of water in the river and other general causes, which are rapidly destroying the character of this port as an entrepot for colonial and foreign trade.

8686. With reference to the London and Hamburg rates are you prepared to put in any specific instance comparing like with like?—No. I got up a comparison for the purposes of our own business to see whether it was best to send the goods to Hamburg or London.

8687. Have you any account sales?—No; they are taken from the dock books.

8688. Have you anything to say with regard to the shipping ring?—Yes. The shipping ring is a combination between various companies of shipowners to charge certain rates of freight and to allow at the end of a term—a year I think it is—a certain discount, 10 per cent. or 5 per cent. in some cases, to those who can guarantee that they have only shipped by that particular line. If they have shipped by any other line than the lines belonging to the combination they forfeit their discount.

8689. Is it in the nature of an agreement?—Yes, it is.

8690. Is it an agreement of which you are cognisant?—Yes, I have it in print.

8691. Are you prepared to put it in?—Yes, I think I can.

(*The witness subsequently handed in a copy of claims made for discount by Messrs. Travers & Sons under the agreement referred to. See Appendix,* 23*rd Day, No.* 8.).

8692. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Does this matter touch you in your own personal transactions?—Yes, it does. We have a branch at Singapore, and we suffer very much.

8693. You have arrived at this knowledge in the course of your own business?—Yes. It is my belief that the shipping ring has a very injurious effect upon the trade of London as British vessels, some of them subsidised by Government, it is stated, charge lower rates for shipment in some cases from ports like Antwerp and Hamburg than they do from London. Then I do not think the question of the depreciation of private riverside property (which, in my opinion would follow if the Docks charged the proposed rates on lighters), has been before the Commission. This is within my own knowledge. In addition to storing large quantities of goods at public docks and wharves of this port, my firm has two warehouses on the shores of the river at Bankside. That is for my own business. At these warehouses we receive a certain quantity of goods which we import and which are lightered up the stream. We also send down goods by lighter for shipment abroad and to the Colonies. For these water-side facilities we pay an extra proportionate rent for the convenience we enjoy as compared with inland warehouses. We have an inland warehouse and a waterside warehouse and the waterside warehouse costs us for the accommodation a third more. If the proposed dock charges were made on lighters, we should lose this advantage, and the extra rent we are paying would be confiscated for the benefit of the Dock Company. In our own case the loss might not be very serious, but in the case of the public wharfingers it would amount to many millions of pounds if they were deprived of the privilege of dock-free lighters which they enjoy by Act of Parliament. The general objections to the system of barging have been dealt with in the Chamber of Commerce evidence. I wish to add that in our own case we often have orders for comparatively small lots of goods for export. In these cases it is not practicable to fill a barge, and goods have consequently to be sent by land, which is expensive. In my belief, a system of collecting and delivering barges, propelled by steam, or other mechanical power, is required, to ply up and down the river and to deal with large or small quantities much as land carriers, such as Messrs. Pickford, Carter Paterson and others, do on land. I ought to say with reference to the evidence of one of the Dock Company's witnesses that my idea is not large barges because they are for small quantities of goods.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I think your Lordship has had this from this witness before. I find it under Question 1231.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Surely Mr. Rogers is entitled to explain what he meant by that previous evi-

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dence which has been commented upon in the evidence given by one of the directors of the Dock Company.

8694. (*Chairman.*) I think Mr. Rogers was telling us that he meant small barges?—Yes. The object of my remark was this. Mr. Scott as I understood, said that this pointed to thousand-ton barges, which would entirely destroy the use of the dock, but it is quite impossible for thousand-ton barges to go and land at small wharves along the Thames, because there is no depth of water or accommodation for such leviathans. Why I say "other mechanical power" is because by the present law they are only allowed to be propelled by steam. In our own case we find that sailing vessels with canned salmon from San Francisco take weeks to unload here as compared with days in Liverpool for a similar class of vessels.

8695. (*Mr. Ellis.*) If you are speaking now from your own knowledge, cannot you give us specific illustrations, the names of the ships and the dates?—I could do so, but it is constant. We had a case the other day.

8696. That is very vague. We must have in this Commission some specific data. Can you put in anything confirmatory of that afterwards?

8697. (*Chairman.*) Do you yourself wish to complain?—Yes.

8698. Will you kindly tell us why?—We import salmon into Liverpool, and we also import it into London in precisely the same class of vessels, and it always takes longer to get the goods in London than in Liverpool.

8699. (*Mr. Ellis.*) That you say from your own experience, do you?—Yes, it is constant. The system of delivering goods for home use at the docks is very dilatory. Our experience, confirmed by that of the leading carriers, is that it takes much longer there than at the wharves.

8700. I do not wish to interrupt, but I should like to say that a general statement has very little effect on my own mind. Cannot you give us specific instances?—It is constantly occurring in the course of business. When goods for export or to be sent coastwise have to be barged from the docks the company makes in every case far higher charges than for land delivery. This overcharge is much against the interest of the Port, particularly where exports are concerned. Then I go on to explain what I believe to be the root of the whole thing. The root idea of the dock arrangements in London is that goods have to be landed in a public warehouse and housed there. With this in view a consolidated rate is charged, which most goods have to pay directly they are landed on the quays.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) Is not this going into the charges on goods—the 25 per cent.?

(*Chairman.*) I think we are bound to hear this because it touches on the system and method of rate, which is a fair question for the Commission.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) If your Lordship pleases.

8701. (*Chairman.*) Please continue, Mr. Rogers?—This consolidated rate includes a number of services which are not required in a vast number of cases. For instance, it includes one, two, or three months' rent according to the nature of the goods. In former years the system of warehousing goods for comparatively long periods was very convenient, goods only arrived at certain times of the year, and were kept in the docks until wanted. Customs duties also were heavy, which rendered it desirable to keep goods in bond, in order to save interest on capital. In modern trade prolonged warehousing is quite unnecessary, but, while the system of business has changed, our dock companies have not moved with the times. In Liverpool the system is to have a low quay rate which includes the landing, weighing, and sorting of the goods only, and a short delay is allowed during which the goods remain on the quays or in the sheds under the protection of the dock company. It is my belief that the same system is wanted in London, and that with it the dock company would attract an immensely increased trade. Then I go to another point, Customs licensing. The use of private warehouses on the river would be much more extended were it not for the regulations of the Customs restricting the receipt of duty on dutiable goods to places licensed as bonded warehouses. It would be to the interest of the revenue to encourage the payment of duty as soon as possible after goods leave the ship's side, and not to compel the housing of goods, as is now the case. Were it not for the Customs' regulations, we should, in our own case, import dried fruits and teas more extensively—that is, instead of buying them at the market here, in order to land them at our own wharves and thus economise in landing and housing charges. We should be prepared to pay for the time of all the officers required to properly safeguard the revenue, and also to pay the Customs' duties on the whole parcel at once. The goods in question have ultimately to pass through our warehouses, so that we have to store them uselessly at the docks and to go to quite unnecessary expense.

8702. Then do you wish to complain of the shortness of the Customs hours?—Yes. I think, generally speaking, the hours of the Customs House ought to be lengthened by one hour. Of late years the Board of Customs has been most considerate of the interests of traders, and desirous of affording every facility compatible with the security of the revenue. In the following suggestion, therefore, I must not be thought to reflect on the Board; one obstacle is the Treasury; the other is the inheritance of an old and cumbrous system, difficult to modernise speedily. My firm, in common no doubt with the rest of the traders of London, has to complain of the shortness of the Customs hours, and of the dilatory way in which the work of the Custom House is performed. It is our constant experience, that when Customs papers for bonds, export, or for delivery, duty paid, have to be sent, as they all have, from the Custom House in Thames Street to a bonded warehouse, that it is impossible to rely upon the Customs officers taking these documents down in due time; that is, without considerable delay, and that we have to take the papers on ourselves for despatch, throwing needless work on our staff. In the Custom House itself the communication between the Long Room, where the first entries are made, and the seats for special offices for the different wharves on the ground floor is so slow and dilatory that our clerks, to ensure despatch, have also to take the papers themselves from one department to another. Clerks are often kept unnecessarily waiting at the entry seats for entries to be passed for free goods and delivery outside, and also at the various seats for the clearances. This is partly due apparently to the limited staff employed, but there is also apparently very little desire to expedite business, but rather to do the work in a routine way. The Customs hours are too short for the present system of business in this port, and the general closing hour (both for receipts of duties and for passing bonds, either for export or coastwise, or for entries of goods in ships for warehousing and delivery) should in my opinion be extended to 5 o'clock. All documents received up to that time at the Custom House should, without fail, be sent on by hand to the bonded warehouses, docks, etc., the same night, and not left to next morning as is now very often the case, even with the shorter hours that are worked. Considerable delay and inconvenience are caused in duty payments by the fact that the Customs will not accept cheques, which is the ordinary method of payment in business in London, for duties from anyone, unless those cheques are endorsed by a banker to the effect that there are assets at the bank to meet the amount. I consider that this system is really degrading, especially as it is applied often to amounts of a few pounds paid by firms who are in the habit of collecting hundreds of thousands of pounds for the revenue in the course of the year, without any remuneration whatever. I would suggest that the system of guarantee should be extended so as to meet these cases, viz., that a general guarantee should be given by some guarantee society to, say, one, two, or three thousand pounds, and that then, for a special list of firms, the Customs should accept the cheques of the guaranteed firms up to the amount guaranteed, without the banker's endorsement. A similar difficulty occurs with export bonds. Persons wishing to export goods on a general bond have to name a certain amount for which they hand in a guarantee or security, and this is, of course, so far quite right. Further, when the amount upon the bond is up to the limit of the security they can issue no fresh bonds, which is also quite right up to a certain point; but the Customs have an extraordinary system of retaining on the bonds all goods until they have been exported for one month. This often makes the bond full so that no fresh bonds can be issued on it, whereas the goods in question have left the kingdom long before. This system should be altered so that the various goods on export bonds should be written off directly the goods

are exported. As compared with the proposed closing times of the Customs, the present hours are as follows:—Free Goods for warehousing and delivery overside, 4 p.m.; export and coast-wise bonds, 4 p.m.; duties on goods for home consumption, 3.30 p.m. Difficulty also arises owing to the time limits up to which bonded goods may be delivered by cart from up-town wharves and warehouses, to be sent to the docks for export, which I show in a table which I will now hand in.

(*The witness handed in a statement showing the time limits up to which Bonded Goods may be delivered by cart from up-town wharves and warehouses to be sent to the docks in London for export. See Appendix, 23rd Day, No. 9.*)

I am of opinion that goods should be allowed to leave up-town stations for all docks up to 4 p.m., with the exception of those for Victoria and Albert, when the time should be 3 p.m. The remarks I have made refer to the hours for carted goods, the limits for goods sent by lighter do not require alteration. Considerable delay is often caused by the fact that the regulation that an officer should be waiting at the docks to receive bonded goods for shipment, is not carried out in practice. The carman, on reaching the docks, hands in his shipping bill to the searcher's office, or drops it into the letter box, and then proceeds to the shed where the vessel for which the goods are intended is loading. The goods are then received by the wharfinger and stowed in the shed until the ship is ready to receive the goods. The wharfinger advises the officer that his attendance with the papers is required, perhaps a day or two after the arrival of the goods. No wharfinger will deliver bonded goods unless they have first been examined by the Customs, and it is therefore somewhat preposterous that the goods, on arriving at the export dock, should have a certain percentage opened for examination by the Customs. This opening involves a dock charge of as much as 8d. per package, which is obviously unnecessary in the case of original packages of currants, raisins, and figs, or similar goods, or of tea, as any officer accustomed to the sight of such packages could not fail to tell by their external appearance what they contain. Then I should like to amplify the evidence with regard to some questions that were asked. When I gave general evidence on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce I was told that certain points would have to be amplified. Most of the points were dealt with by other witnesses, but I wish to deal with some which I do not think they touched upon. One point was with regard to the absence of canal facilities in London. I mentioned incidentally that in France a large amount of money had been spent in canals.

8703. I think that was in answer to Question 1247?—Yes, I simply wish to say this: The French Government have spent over 56 millions sterling between the years 1814 and 1891 on the canals of France, which are entirely free from tolls, and are (in my opinion) brought up to the requirements of the age in every respect. I will give you a table showing the gradations of expenditure by the French Government in the period I have mentioned, which table is copied from a Foreign Office Report (Miscellaneous), No. 362, year 1894, page 4.

Years.	Amount.	
	Currency.	Sterling.
	Francs.	£
1814–30	141,179,329	5,967,173
1831–47	341,246,125	13,649,845
1848–51	37,792,039	1,511,681
1852–70	238,791,789	9,551,671
1871–78	127,641,355	5,105,654
1879–91	515,971,538	20,638,861
Total	1,402,622,175	56,424,885

Then, with regard to the Watermen's Company, I was asked at questions 1229 to 1231 with regard to steam power only being allowed. I desire to call the attention of the Commissioners to the fact that under a bye-law of the Watermen's Company, steamboats are the only vessels allowed to tow barges, lighters, and other river craft within certain limits. This obtains under bye-law No. 57 in the 1860 series, and reads as follows:—"That if any person towing or navigating any boat, lighter, barge, or other craft (except steamboats), exceeding the burthen of ten tons, between Vauxhall Bridge and the entrance to the Victoria Docks, shall at the time navigate, or have any other boat, lighter, barge, or other craft exceeding the burthen of 10 tons, attached thereto, he or they shall incur a penalty not exceeding forty shillings, and if two or more boats, lighters, barges, or other craft, exceeding the burthen of 10 tons, attached to each other, shall be navigated by separate persons, then each and every such person so navigating every such boat, lighter, barge, or other craft, exceeding the burthen of 10 tons, shall incur a penalty not exceeding forty shillings." Then I should like to refer to Questions 1195 to 1197, which were put with regard to an attempt to apply the North Atlantic clause universally in London. In the year 1896 an attempt was made by the London and India Docks Joint Committee to induce shipowners using the Port of London to insert a clause in their Bills of Lading which, if accepted by merchants, would have enabled the shipowner to discharge the whole of the cargo on to the dock quay, where his liability would end. The dock company could then have imposed rates on the importers of goods for the work of sorting on the quay and delivery to craft. The Merchant Shipping Act obliged a shipowner bringing goods to the Port of London to deliver goods into barges or lighters at his own expense, providing such barges or lighters are alongside the ship (with papers lodged) within 24 hours of the ship's report. If the shipowner for his own convenience lands the cargo on the quay, he must pay the cost of sorting and delivering into lighters such goods for which free delivery has been duly claimed by the importer. The dock authorities apparently find it advisable to make the charges for this work when paid by the shipowner, very much less than when paid by the importer of goods. This is simply in amplification of the previous evidence, but there is one point that I think is of importance. If the docks had the power which was proposed in 1896, of making the ships land all goods on the quays, they would charge a higher rate to the owner of the goods than they now charge to the shipowner.

Cross-examined by Mr. Balfour Browne.

8704. You speak of the "cost of lightering goods from the docks to their premises," meaning the premises of the owners of wharves?—Yes.

8705. And then you say that wharfingers are already at a disadvantage as compared with the docks in the charge that the wharfingers have to bear for lightering their goods up the stream. Are you aware that all the goods in the docks have to be lightered at the cost of the dock company?—They are lightered a very much shorter distance.

8706. Do you know the charges?—I do not.

8707. But as a fact do you know that the charges paid by the dock company are practically equivalent to the charges paid by the wharfingers?—I should think it was impossible. A large number of ships come into the docks and unload there.

8708. Do you know that it is quite the exception for a ship to load there, goods which are intended to be stored on that particular quay. They unload in that dock, and the goods have to be lightered away to other docks to be stored?—It may be so, but it is a very much shorter distance.

8709. You do not know the distance, do you?—No. It varies in every case.

8710. Are there warehouses at Tilbury?—No, not that I know of.

8711. Then if anything has to be warehoused it has to be lightered all the way up from Tilbury?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8712. I understand you to complain that the present charges are somewhat heavy on tea?—Very heavy indeed.

8713. Am I not right in saying that there exists what is called a Tea Clearing House in London?—Yes

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Practically all the people interested in tea are members of that Tea Clearing House, are they not?

8714. Are you a member of the Tea Clearing House?—Yes.

8715. And all tea importers are, I take it?—We are tea dealers, not importers.

8716. You would not suggest that of recent years the expense of warehousing or wharfing has decreased, would you?—No, I should not. The price of tea has decreased very much.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

8717. Although you have not come prepared to-day with the details to show the delay that occurs in London as compared with Liverpool, I suppose you would be quite willing to supply the Commission with any details required?—They occur in the course of business every day, and really we are so used to it that we keep no record of them. It always takes place.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) My Lord, I should have liked to ask Mr. Rogers some questions upon two points. First of all I should have liked to ask him some questions with regard to the changes on tea. From the point of view of the traders, considerations of that kind are most important. I do not want to go outside the ruling your Lordship gave the other day, but may I explain how that evidence is relevant to your inquiry? Certain proposals have been put before this Commission with a view to the improvement of the Port. Those proposals involve an increased charge upon goods, and with all respect to your Lordship and the Commission, it does seem to the London Chamber of Commerce that the effect of that increased charge upon the trades interested is a matter which is relevant to this inquiry, and that the facts with regard to it ought to be placed before you before you adjudge whether the proposals are wise or not.

(*Chairman.*) We are entirely with you. Any evidence which we may get from a witness at first hand as to the tendency of any increase in the burden to smother or kill his particular trade, we shall be glad to hear.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) That is what I understood. Now really if the present dock charges and rates are heavy, *a fortiori*, the addition of 1s. 6d. a ton would make the burden still more grievous.

(*Chairman.*) If the witness will give us any instance where the burden will hurt his particular trade, we shall be glad to hear it.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I wanted to get it quite clear. I thought your Lordship excluded that line of evidence.

(*Chairman.*) No. We do not want to argue. What we did say was that any question as to the reasonableness of a rate was not within our province, but any question as to the system, or the method, or the composition, or the incidence of the rate on the individual, we would hear.

8718. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Then with your Lordship's permission I will ask this question. What would be the effect on your particular trade of the increased charge involved by the proposals of the Dock Company?—It would be very serious indeed. It would amount to several thousand pounds a year as far as we can gather. It would practically compel us to warehouse our goods in the dock.

Recalled 10129.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

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Mr. JOHN HENRY ROBINSON called and examined.

8719. (*Chairman.*) You have been nominated by the London Flour Millers' Association to lay evidence before this Commission?—Yes.

8720. Have you heard our ruling as to the evidence we wish to take?—Yes, I have.

8721. Do you wish to give us some particulars as to the system of charges with reference to the working out of grain?—Yes.

8722. As to charges, I think you know that we have already said that we do not wish to hear anything of that nature except as to how far any proposed increase of charge may affect you in your particular trade?—That is what I wish to show, and I think I shall be able to do so.

8723. We shall have to stop you, I am afraid, if you touch on matters which do not come within the scope of this inquiry?—Of course, I am entirely in your lordship's hands in regard to that. I propose to offer evidence concerning the bad system of charges on goods imported into London as illustrated by some of the excessive dock charges on bulk and bag wheat. This evidence has been submitted to and approved by the London Flour Millers' Association. The members of the London Flour Millers' Association and the traders in foreign wheat import about 500,000 tons of wheat annually for the purpose of manufacturing into flour.

8724. Is there anything in the proposals of the dock companies which you suggest would have a bad effect on your trade?—The proposal to levy a fresh charge would undoubtedly have a very crushing effect upon our trade.

8725. Do you wish to say anything more about that?—I wish to say also that the existing charge, which is nominally a charge for working out, is really a very crushing charge in many cases on the whole of the grain trade.

8726. Do you wish to call attention to the system and method of that charge?—Exactly.

8727. Will you confine yourself to that, please?—Wheat is imported into the Port of London either loose in the hold of the vessel or packed in bags. Wheat shipped from ports on the Atlantic coast of North America, from Russian ports, and from Baltic ports is usually loose in the hold of the vessel. Wheat shipped from ports on the Pacific coast of North America, South American ports, Australian and New Zealand ports, or East Indian ports is packed in bags. Probably about 80 per cent. of wheat imported into London comes in bulk, and has to pay the working-out charge, which we complain at the present time is crushing. It is the custom of the London flour millers to collect their wheat from the ship by means of barges. May I here say that the flour millers of the Port of London have to compete in price with the millers of other ports, and the competition is such that the margin of profit is small, and any additional charge must seriously injure the milling industry of London. The charge in London for obtaining delivery of bulk wheat from the ship into barges in bulk or by means of sacks is the excessive sum of 1s. 9d. per ton.

8728. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I think we should ask if that is a charge. We understand that goods are delivered over the ship's side free into barges?—We have to pay 1s. 9d. before we can get our wheat, wherever it goes in, and we maintain that that working-out charge of 1s. 9d. is not only a working-out charge, but it is an imposition on the goods. We say it is an unjust imposition. May I put in a table of charges for delivery to craft at various ports.

8729. (*Chairman.*) Is it from your personal knowledge?—I may say that I have been to Hull, and I have been to Liverpool, but we are not importers into Liverpool or Hull.

8730. Unless you have personal knowledge of those things as affecting your own trade we cannot take the figures?—I had this from the officials of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

8731. Have you any personal experience of this in your own business?—Not in my own business.

8732. Then we cannot take it?—The charge in London is made upon all bulk wheat delivered into barges or landed on the quay, and in the latter case is additional to the high quay rates charged, whether the wheat comes from America, Russia, or any other country; it was not first imposed by shipowners trading with North America when they obtained the right of discharging their vessels in the docks, but it was the official charge made by all the dock companies of London for the working out and delivery overside of bulk wheat into barges. And now since the introduction of the "London Clause" into the North American bills of lading, the consignee is committed *nolens volens* to

paying this charge to the shipowner, who does the work formerly done by the dock companies, before he can get his goods.

8733. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) It is a charge to the shipowner?—In the North American bill of lading it is a charge you have to pay to the shipowner, but it was really originally a charge of the dock company which was taken over by the shipowners. I emphasise this point, as Mr. Henry Coke was examined by Sir Robert Giffen (on the fourth day's sitting of the Commission at Question 1362) in the same connection, and to my mind the impression conveyed by this part of the evidence was to the effect that the London Dock Companies do not make this charge. This is not the case. As I have stated, it is the official charge of the London Dock Companies or the American shipowners since the introduction of the "London Clause," and has remained the same since the year 1872, at which time all imported loose grain was filled into sacks by hand labour in the ship's hold, such sacks being hoisted on deck, weighed by hand there, then tied up and delivered overside to the barges. Even for those operations 1s. 9d. per ton, I maintain, was always an excessive charge; this is proved by a comparison with the charge at Hull. What I have said about the charge of 1s. 9d. per ton for working out from the bulk applies also to all beans, peas, lentils, dari, maize or Indian corn, tares, linseed, rapeseed, millet, when imported in bulk. The charge is even higher on barley and malt, namely, 1s. 11d. per ton, and for oats 2s. per ton. The total import of our grain into London amounts to about 1½ million tons a year. The quickest and most economical method of working out bulk grain from ship's hold into barges is to employ elevators to raise the wheat from the hold without sacking, weigh through automatic or semi-automatic scales, and deliver the grain loose to barges lying alongside. The cost of the power required for actually elevating the wheat or grain by bucket elevators is considerably under ·15 of a penny per ton. The labour in the ship's hold and on deck is reduced to a minimum, and the speed of unloading immensely increased.

8734. (*Chairman.*) How do you show that this point is a matter which concerns yourself? It is an argumentative point?—I wish to show that 1s. 9d. is an altogether unreasonable charge for working out, and that the dock companies are able where they still do the work to obtain a very large revenue from all the grain that they handle.

8735. We have already laid down that we do not wish to go into the reasonableness of a rate. We will pass by that?—But I wish to show that they make a big profit from that, or they might if they did it in an up-to-date manner. I am of the opinion that the total cost of unloading bulk grain in this manner need not exceed 3d. or 3½d. per ton under favourable circumstances.

8736. This is pursuing the same subject; I must ask you to pass from that?—My Lord, we feel we have a very strong grievance against the Dock Company in the way they treat us.

8737. I think you must abide, if you please, by our ruling?—I am entirely in your Lordship's hands.

8738. Have you anything to tell us in relation to the proposed dues on lighters?—It would be a further imposition on the milling industry. Although the London and India Docks have withdrawn one Bill before Parliament this session (London and India Docks Lighterage Bill, 1901) asking for powers to charge one shilling per ton on wheat (among other goods) delivered into barges and lighters, and 4d. per ton upon the registered tonnage of such barge or lighter, in addition to the already excessive charge of 1s. 9d. per ton, they still suggest to the Commission that they should be empowered to make such charges. I am of the opinion that if the London and India Dock Company obtain and exercise these powers, of charging barges and lighters and their contents, the greatest harm will be done to the manufacturing milling industry of the Port—the total charge on wheat delivered into barges will be then about 3s. per ton, and as prices are already cut very fine in order to meet competition the tendency of this excessive charge would in my opinion, be to close the flour mills of London. Members of the London Flour Millers' Association——

8739. Do you represent them?—I do. Members of the London Flour Millers' Association owning large premises situated on the banks of the River Thames and other waterways within the Metropolitan district, are of opinion that the imposition of this charge would cause a very large and very serious depreciation in the value of such premises, which were acquired, relying on the clause in the various Dock Acts, which gives free access to barges and lighters entering the docks for the purpose of delivering and receiving goods to or from vessels loading or unloading therein. I submit that if the docks of London were controlled by a body alive to the needs and conditions of the industries of the Port, the charges on imported wheat would be decreased to an amount that would be more consistent with the actual cost of labour, plus a fair profit for the finding of the labour, and the appliances used, and would also place the London flour millers on an equal footing with their competitors. The London Flour Millers' Association are of opinion that the Port of London should be administered by a public Trust solely for the benefit of the trade of the Port; that sufficient charges should be made without interference with the free water, to maintain the best and most economical conditions of commerce, and that any surplus revenue, should be applied to the reduction or surrender of the charges, and in no case to the relief of local rates. We think that for the benefit of the manufacturing industry of the Port of London and the centres it supplies, every possible facility and accommodation should be given to the importation of raw materials. Further that the Dock Trust if one is formed should own all the elevators and weighing apparatus employed in unloading grain vessels. That the weighing should be done by the dock authority, being an uninterested authority. Should the Commission see fit to report to Parliament in favour of the abolition of the exemption clause on barges and goods so often referred to before this Commission, the London Flour Millers' Association think that dues charged on goods coming into the Port should be to some extent *ad valorem* in principle, lower on raw materials imported for the purpose of manufacturing, than on manufactured articles, and that inward dues on goods delivered to water carriage should be less than on those using the quay. The London Flour Millers' Association are of the opinion that the monopoly possessed by the licensed lightermen of the Watermen's Company on the River Thames within certain limits, is most detrimental in many ways to the interests of the Port of London, and should be abolished.

8740. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are you quite clear in your own mind whether it is the dock company or the shipowner that charges you for the delivery of wheat?—On all except the American wheat it is the dock company that charges us.

8741. But on all except the American wheat you are entitled by the custom of the port to have delivery to barges, are you not?—Yes.

8742. So that if you ask the dock company to unload and pay them it is a matter of choice on your part to some extent?—No, we have no option; we cannot help ourselves.

8743. But you say you have the option of delivering it into barges over the ship's side; you have just told me that?—We cannot get our wheat without paying the 1s. 9d.

8744. Whether it is an American Company or any other company?—Exactly. We have to pay 1s. 9d., that is for bulk wheat.

8745. Then have you no option to have it delivered over the ship's side?—Absolutely none.

8746. How is that?—It is the custom of the port.

8747. The custom of the port, we have been told, is quite different—that you always have it delivered over the ship's side?—It does not apply to loose grain; it is the working out, we pay the 1s. 9d. for. Our point is that out of that they make an enormous revenue.

8748. That is for the dock company and you to settle, but the statement has been made to us that the dock company simply get nothing out of it, but that it is the shipowner who gets it?—The London and India Dock Company surrendered their right of working out to the American shippers, and now they complain that they can get no revenue on the goods passing through their docks.

8749. However, you cannot give us any further information as to whether it is the dock company or the shipowner that gets the money?—It is the dock company that gets the money in all except the

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American trade. In the American trade it is the shipowner who gets it.

8750. And do you say that it is the custom of the Port of London in the wheat trade that there should be no delivery over the ship's side to the barge?—I say that we cannot get our wheat without paying the 1s. 9d.

8751. But you cannot give us any explanation of the circumstances further than what you have said?—I can only repeat that we have to pay 1s. 9d. before we can get our wheat.

8752. But we have had so much evidence to the effect that it is the custom of the Port of London that the barges come into the docks and take away the goods, and that nothing is charged for them. I wish to know how it happens in this particular case. You say there is a custom to the contrary effect?—There is a custom to the contrary on all loose grain.

8753. That you say?—I do distinctly.

8754. Can you explain how it arose in any way?—I cannot give you the detailed history of it, but it is a relic of the right which the City of London had prior to 1872 to work out the grain. In 1872 the dock company took over that right.

8755. That is all you can tell us about it?—Yes; but it is an undoubted fact that we have to pay 1s. 9d. all round before we can get our wheat.

8756. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) What services do the dock companies, or the American shipping companies, render for the 1s. 9d.?—They simply take the wheat from the hold and put it on to the barge.

8757. They discharge the wheat into the barge for you?—Yes, an operation which we can do from barges into our own premises for 1½d.

8758. Why do you not do it yourself?—We have no right to do so.

8759. I thought the dock company always allow you to employ your own labour?—Not in London.

8760. Then in reality this charge is for discharging the wheat into the barges?—Exactly.

8761. (*Mr. Ellis.*) As I understand, what you wish to convey to this Commission is this: that any addition to the 1s. 9d. (leaving that aside for a reason which has been explained by the Chairman) would be a burden which would place the trade at a disadvantage in London as compared with other ports. Is that so?—Certainly.

8762. Supposing any addition were made to the 1s. 9d., who do you suppose would bear the charge?—The miller largely. You see we come into competition outside London. England, roughly speaking, is supplied by three or four main ports.

8763. Would the miller put it on to his customer?—He would not be able to.

8764. Then it would all come out of the miller's balance sheet?—I believe so entirely.

8765. You are here as a miller?—Exactly, and to represent the whole of the London millers.

8766. Then that is your grievance—that you cannot recover the dues?—No, I cannot see how we can. We would come into competition with Liverpool and Hull just the same as we do now.

8767. Therefore speaking for yourself, and for those whom you represent, you wish us to infer that any addition would be a burden inimical to trade?—Distinctly.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

8768. Can you tell in general terms how much flour comes to London by rail?—I have no figures to show that.

8769. Does a large quantity come to London by rail?—A very considerable quantity.

8770. From Liverpool?—No, I take it that it would be shipped round from Liverpool.

8771. As regards the grain that is shipped round from Liverpool, that would bear any charge just like any grain coming from anywhere else?—Not if it was discharged in the river.

8772. It is always open to you to discharge your grain in the river. You could get your grain discharged in the river to some extent?—Very seldom indeed. A few of the Baltic steamers will discharge in the river, but the big steamers will not. I beg your pardon—did you say grain or did you say flour from Liverpool?

8773. I asked about flour first. Flour does come to Liverpool from America?—To some extent, but they have a charge of 2s. on flour, and perhaps 6d. on wheat, in dues. That explains why the flour is dumped into London.

8774. I will tell you plainly what I want to find out. You say that if there is a charge put upon grain in barges in London which is now fair, you would be hampered by Liverpool competition. It was with reference to that; I wanted to know how much grain came to London from Liverpool. You say it does not come by rail?—I do not say grain comes at all.

8775. Does flour come to London from Liverpool?—At times.

8776. Much or little?—Not very much, I think, but we come into competition with the Liverpool millers outside London.

8777. Where does your competition come. Where do you meet it?—All round the south coast, and I suppose even up to Birmingham and that district.

8778. Grain from Liverpool to the south coast?—Flour.

8779. Not grain at all?—No, not grain.

8780. To what extent does Liverpool compete with you in flour on the south coast?—To a very considerable extent. I could not give you any figures.

8781. Now with reference to this 1s. 9d. a ton. You are the merchant taking delivery of your grain from the ship—that is your position, I gather?—We are the miller, the consignee.

8782. Very well; I mean the merchant as against the shipowner. The ship has got to be discharged by somebody?—Certainly.

8783. And the 1s. 9d., as you have told the Commission, is the cost of taking the grain out of the ship and putting it into the barge?—I do not admit that. It is the charge for doing the work—a very different thing to the cost.

8784. It is too profitable; that's what you say?—Exactly.

8785. Now I am speaking on behalf of the London and India Docks Company only. Is there any compulsion by which the dock company is compelled to be employed to do that discharge?—You do not do it. The ship does it.

8786. Then the 1s. 9d. goes to the person who does it?—Certainly.

8787. That is the ship?—Certainly. Our grievance is that you gave the right over to the ship.

8788. Then that 1s. 9d. is not a compulsory dock charge in any shape or form?—It is, decidedly, with the exception of the North American bill of lading, and there we maintain you simply passed it on to the ship.

8789. I am afraid I do not understand you. You told me that my company does not do it and the ship does. How do you say that it is a dock charge at all?—It is a dock charge on all except American wheat.

8790. Give me any instance at all in which you have paid that 1s. 9d. to the London and India Docks Company; give me the date and the name of the ship?—We used to do that prior to the introduction of the North American clause. See 9904-8.

8791. The North American clause was introduced how many years ago?—About ten or eleven years ago.

8792. Will you give us some modern history—something up to date?—They will bring a steamer of Russian wheat into a dock——

8793. Will you give me, please, facts and not hypotheses?—I have not anything before me, but I daresay I can find them.

8794. Will you give me the name of a steamer where you have paid 1s. 9d. a ton to the dock company?—I can do so. I have not the information here by which I can do it now.

8795. Remember what you have told us just now. Do you want to go back from it—that the dock company did not do the discharging?—The dock company do not do the discharging of American wheat, but in other vessels they do.

8796. What other vessels?—From any Russian ports

8797. Does the London and India Dock Company get any Russian wheat at all?—They used to do so.

8798. Since when?—I could not tell you.

8799. Ten years ago?—Since then, I should think.

8800. Long ago; give us some figures; you have plenty of assistance—one person telling you one thing and another another. Will you give me some particulars, please?—I have no particulars here to give you.

8801. That is a kind of general statement you have been giving in your evidence—with no particulars. Is that so?—It occurs every day that we pay these charges.

8802. To the dock company—you know what I mean?—Not on American wheat.

8803. Or on any wheat?—To docks other than your docks, but we should have to pay it to your dock if a Russian steamer went in there.

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

8804. Let me see if I can understand it. The North American clause applies to the wheat coming from North America; most of it coming into Tilbury?—Some of it to Tilbury.

8805. Now, never mind North America at all. Take Russian or Indian wheat. To what dock does Russian wheat come?—Mainly to Millwall Dock, now.

8806. Where does the Indian wheat come to. Is there any Indian wheat in bulk?—No; all the Indian wheat comes in bags.

8807. The charge you are talking of is only a bulk charge, I understand?—Exactly.

8808. Is there any place from which the wheat comes in bulk? Does the wheat come in bulk from the Plate?—No, that is in bags.

8809. From any other place?—From the Baltic.

8810. That is practically Russian. Anywhere else?—Those are the main places.

8811. Then it is a matter of the Millwall Dock where the Russian wheat goes that this 1s. 9d. is charged?—Yes, most of the Russian wheat goes into the Millwall Dock.

8812. Is there any common form of bill of lading in the Russian trade?—Not that I know of.

8813. Do you know what the obligation of the shipowner is as to where he is to make delivery. Is it at the ship's rail?—I do not know, but the custom of the port is that we have to pay the charge before we get our wheat.

8814. Who presents you in the Millwall Dock with the item of 1s. 9d. which you have to pay?—The dock company.

8815. The Millwall Dock Company?—Exactly.

8816. They present you with an item of 1s. 9d. a ton on the work, and you pay it to them?—We pay it to the Millwall Dock Company in that particular case.

8817. Is the Millwall Dock Company's work done by elevators?—Yes, certainly, some of it.

8818. Dock elevators?—Yes, pneumatic elevators.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

8819. You have said that the London Flour Millers' Association are of opinion that any surplus revenue should be applied to the reduction or surrender of the charges, and in no case would relieve the local rates. Will you just explain that? Are you assuming that some municipal authority would carry out these improvements?—We had in mind then the possibility of the docks being taken over by some municipal authority and their making a profit from that.

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8820. You do not suggest, do you, that there is any proposal before the Commission that it should be applied to local rates?—No, certainly not.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8821. As I understand, what you have been giving your evidence about applies principally to Millwall. Have they two rates—have not they 1s. 9d. for light grain and 2s. for heavy grain?—I say it applies to all wheat.

8822. But principally at Millwall?—No, the bulk of the wheat goes into the London and India Docks.

8823. The wheat in bulk?—Yes.

8824. I mean not in bags?—The largest quantity of wheat undoubtedly comes from America into the London and India Dock.

8825. That comes under the American bill of lading?—Exactly.

8826. And for that the shipowner gets paid. He puts it on the quay and is paid 1s. 9d.?—Not necessarily puts it on the quay. They put it overside into barges and they make a charge.

8827. Still, he gets 1s. 9d. on the bill of lading?—Exactly.

8828. With regard to that which comes in bulk and not under the North American bill of lading, you pay 1s. 9d. still, but then it is called a working-out charge?—And it is called a working-out charge under the North American bill of lading.

8829. Your suggestion is that that working-out is actually done at a very much cheaper rate than you are paying, and that there is smothered up in that some dock rate?—Yes.

8830. So that although you call it one thing, it is in substance another?—Yes; and we would rather have them under their proper names.

8831. Your view also, as I gather it, is that with modern appliances the actual cost of working out bulk cargo could be very considerably reduced?—Undoubtedly. I may say I am well acquainted with this, and I say the whole thing could be done for 3d.

Re-examined by Mr. Whitehead.

8832. Your flour comes into competition with the flour from Liverpool and other places?—Exactly.

8833. You would feel an additional charge of 1s. to 1s. 6d. a ton a serious burden in the conduct of your business?—Certainly.

8834. With regard to the unloading by the Millwall Dock Company, you can, if necessary, produce from your books any details as to the occasions upon which that has been done by the dock company, and you have paid them the charge?—Yes. May I say that they have put it in as an official charge in the Appendix to the fourth day's evidence.

8835. You say it is already in evidence that the Millwall Dock Company make that charge. Will you give the reference?—It is contained in a table put in by Mr. Duckham on the fourth day, Appendix, No. 6. "Rates on grain for working out, weighing and delivering overside 1s. 9d. per ton."

Recalled 9904.

Mr. Stephen Cannon called and examined.

8836. (*Chairman.*) You have been nominated by the Kent Millers' Association to represent them before this Commission?—I have.

8837. Will you be good enough to give us your evidence?—I am managing director of Cannon and Gage, Ltd., Millers and Corn Merchants, carrying on business at Erith Mills, Kent. I am also President of the Kent Millers' Association. My firm collect wheat, flour, oats and other corn from vessels discharging in the docks of London to the annual extent of about 12,000 tons of wheat, 5,000 tons of flour, and 2,500 tons of oats and other corn. These goods are collected from the ship by craft and barged to the mills. In order to obtain delivery of these goods to craft my firm have to pay on wheat 1s. 9d. per ton, on flour 1s. 6d. per ton, on oats 2s. per ton. I may mention that the 1s. 6d. per ton for flour has since been increased to 1s. 9d. It is my opinion that 1s. 9d. a ton is a very excessive charge as it can be done for about 2d. by machinery. It costs us about 2d. to work it out of the barge into the warehouse. These charges on my firm amount to £1,050 on wheat imports, £375 on flour imports, and £250 on imports of oats and other corn totalling the sum of £1,675, making

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£1,737 10s., the total which our firm pays for working out, or for the whole of the Kentish millers £8,687 10s. During the session of 1900 the London and India Docks Joint Committee lodged a Bill in Parliament, to obtain powers to impose charges on barges and lighters, carrying goods to and from vessels loading and discharging in the docks. This Bill was rejected in May, 1900, and has again been lodged by the London and India Docks Company under the title of the London and India Docks (Lighterage) Bill, 1901. The second of these Bills is a modification of the first in some respects, but these modifications do not affect the trade of my firm, nor (so far as I can judge) that of the other members of the Kentish Millers' Association. The powers sought are to impose rates which in the case of my firm are equal to 1s. 4d. per ton, on the goods (previously mentioned) taken away from the docks in craft by my firm. If these powers are granted to, and exercised by, the London and India Docks Company, my firm will have to pay a sum of about £1,300 annually in addition to the present charges which will amount to a dead charge upon their business. The other members of the Kentish Millers' Association work altogether about four times the quantity of grain and flour that my firm do. This trade would therefore be burdened with a further charge of about £6,500 per annum, which would (in my opinion) have a disastrous effect. because mills situated in the vicinity of Liverpool, Bristol, Cardiff, East Coast and other ports, are enabled (by reason of their lower port charges) to send flour into Kent, and undersell the Kentish millers to such an extent that nearly half the mills in Kent are now closed. Those mills in Kent that are still working earn such a bare pittance, that if the London and India Docks (Lighterage) Bill, 1901, becomes law, and the dues mentioned therein are charged, it is probable that other mills in Kent will be closed.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

8838. You say that nearly half the mills in Kent are now closed?—Yes.

8839. How long has that been going on?—For the last two or three years.

8840. Only the last two or three years?—Three or four probably.

8841. Or four of five?—Some of them have been closed four or five years.

8842. Or it might really, I suppose, run up to about ten years?—No, I should not think so much as that.

8843. To what do you attribute that—the American flour coming into England?—No; the competition with Liverpool, Cardiff, Hull, and the East Coast firms who have got warehouses on the Medway and on the Thames at Gravesend, and resident agents, and they undersell us with their flour.

8844. American flour or English flour?—Their own make of flour.

8845. Does it come out of American grain?—Probably out of American grain; I do not know what grain it is made from.

8846. So that they can mill it in Liverpool, or thereabouts, send it to London, and undersell you in Kent?—They do not send it to London; they send it to Rochester and Gravesend.

8847. Send it into Kent and undersell you there?—Yes.

8848. Though at present you get your grain in London without any dock charges at all?—We have to pay 1s. 9d. a ton for getting our wheat out of the docks.

8849. (*Mr. Harper.*) Does a vessel going to Rochester pay those dues?—No.

Mr. F. Wingent.

Mr. FREDERICK WINGENT called and examined.

8850. (*Chairman.*) You are the managing-director of the firm of Wingent and Kimmins, Limited, millers, carrying on business at Chatham, Rochester, and Canterbury?—Yes

8851. You have been appointed by the Kent Millers' Association, acting in conjunction with the London Chamber of Commerce, to offer evidence before this Commission?—Yes.

8851a. And you desire to give evidence as to the loss sustained by your firm owing to detention in the docks?—Yes.

8852. Do you wish to hand in a table illustrating this?—Yes.

(*The Witness handed in a statement showing the Detention to Barges belonging to Wingent and Kimmins, Limited, sent to collect goods from vessels unloading in the London Docks during the months of July, August, and September*, 1900. *See Appendix, 23rd Day, No.* 10.)

See 8921.

8853. Have you any remarks to make in connection with this?—I have only to say that we are seriously handicapped in carrying on our business in competition with millers from other ports by the delays that occur in the London docks, thereby increasing the cost of carriage of wheat and flour from London to us at Chatham.

8854. Will you give us any specific complaints that you have?—I put on that sheet a list covering three consecutive months. It represents the actual work that was done in that connection, and in the margin you will see the number of days occupied by the barges in the London docks. As a result I found that the barges carrying wheat were on the average just about three days beyond the day allowed, and the barges carrying flour were very nearly five days beyond the three days allowed to get to the ship and get their freight.

8855. We take it that this table comprises all the business which was done in this three months?—That is so. Entirely. The result of that is that the carriage is seriously increased, and I think if there were better facilities in the docks for loading the craft in reasonable time the carriage from the docks to Chatham might be materially reduced. I have put it at 10 per cent., but on going into it rather more carefully I think that if half the extra time were occupied in loading those craft only, the cost of carriage might be reduced 20 per cent. between London and Chatham. That is a very serious matter to us indeed.

8856. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do I understand that you attribute this delay to the want of facilities in the dock?—I cannot explain why the barges are detained. I believe it is largely through want of facilities in the dock—sometimes want of quay-room, sometimes want of labour, I am told. But I am not at the dock to see the reason. All I know is that the barges do not come when they should, and that we have to suffer.

8857. I was rather wanting to ascertain whether you include the want of mechanical appliances in the dock?—I do think so.

8858. But you do not speak from much personal observation, I gather?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Lewis Coward.

8859. I see in your table you have first Millwall; number of days' delay six. Can you of your personal knowledge tell me to what that delay is attributable at all?—No.

8860. Then I see the next one at Millwall, "no delay," and the next, "no delay." You cannot tell in any case to what the delay is attributable?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

8861. Let me put one question upon that table. What is the point of giving the date of delivery order in the last column but two. What does that mean. Is that the date when the delivery order is given to you?—Yes

8862. Who gives you that delivery order?—The wheat or flour factor.

8863. That is the representative of the buyer?—Of the seller.

8864. You cannot get delivery until your parcel has been sorted out for you?—He gives us the delivery In the case of wheat we have to get our craft alongside that ship in 24 hours.

8865. But you cannot get it until it has been sorted out for you. Is this in bulk or not?—Montly in bulk.

8866. But if there are other people coming before you you may have to wait for your turn?—If there are not sufficient facilities it is so.

8867. I see that the American flour would all come in under the American bill of lading, of which we have heard?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8868. Apparently the two longest instances of delay are the "Frank" and the "Warden Court"?—Yes.

8869. I suppose all this described as "quarters" in the second column is wheat in bulk?—Not necessarily. The American wheat is in bulk. certainly. All American wheat is in bulk.

8870. Am I right in saying that the whole of these instances of American flour and American wheat would come under the American bill of lading?—Entirely.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

8871. Then these goods are placed on the quay first?—The flour. But although placed on the quay, as it happens, there is more delay in getting the flour than there is in getting the wheat.

8872. You have told us that the barge is to be ready there when the ship is ready to break bulk?—In the case of wheat it has to be ready within 24 hours after the date of the delivery order.

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8873. If you got 24 hours' notice, would you be able to have a barge there in time?—Yes; we have to.

8874. But would that notice have the effect of lessening the congestion at the docks?—I am afraid I do not follow you.

8875. Are there numbers of barges there long before they are actually required?—Undoubtedly.

8876. If the bargeowner or lighterman had some notice when it was probable that his consignment would be placed in the barge, the congestion might be lessened?—Undoubtedly, and a great deal of time might be saved, and expense also.

8877. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you made any representations verbally or by writing with respect to these delays?—To the dock companies, do you mean?

8878. Yes?—We have not. I am sorry to say—I am sorry to be obliged to say—that the conduct of the dock companies, so far as my experience goes, is very arbitrary, and very one-sided, and it is utterly useless to make any representation at all.

8879. You really mean to assure this Commission that you have not thought it worth your while to write a letter?—That is so.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES BLACKBURN called and examined.

Mr. C. J. Blackburn.

8880. (*Chairman.*) You have been nominated by the Colonial Wool Merchants' Association, acting in conjunction with the London Chamber of Commerce to represent them before this Commission?—Yes.

8881. You are the manager of the Wool Department of the Australian Mortgage Land and Finance Company, Limited?—Yes.

8882. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say?—My company was established in the year 1863, and my own experience of the wool trade extends over a period of twenty years. The following figures show the quantity and value of the colonial wool imported into London by my company during the five years ending 1899.

Year.	Number of Bales.	Value.
		£
1895	108,470	1,175,405
1896	89,099	1,099,209
1897	70,747	834,441
1898	72,962	938,220
1899	65,563	1,032,227

All these have been stored at the warehouses of the London and India Dock Company, and taking an average over the past five years my firm have paid in respect of dock and warehousing charges the sum of £19,200 annually. The actual amounts paid are as follows: 1895, £26,174 1s. 5d.; 1896, £22,041 14s. 2d.; 1897, £16,580 7s. 8d.; 1898, £16,725 19s. 9d.; 1899, £14,381 1s. 7d. During this period of five years the imports of Australasian and Cape wool decreased only 16 per cent., or by 423,000 bales, while the total production of Australasian and Cape wool decreased only 16 per cent., or by 262,800 bales. From the following figures it will be seen that the proportion of the production of Colonial wool, dealt with at the London Wool Sales, has decreased during the past five years from 63 per cent. to 52 per cent.:

Year.	Total production of Australasian and Cape Wool.	Imports into London of Australasian and Cape Wool.	Proportion sent to London.
	Bales.	Bales.	
1895 - -	2,270,800	1,420,000	62 per cent.
1896 - -	2,134,000	1,237,000	58 „
1897 - -	2,108,000	1,253,000	59 „
1898 - -	1,982,000	1,076,000	54 „
1899 - -	1 908,000	997,000	52 „

I would call attention to the increase in the quantity of Australian wool, dealt with at the Wool Sales in Australia and New Zealand, and shipped either direct to the Continent or Liverpool, or transhipped in London for Yorkshire manufacturing centres or for the Continent. During the past five years the quantity of wool dealt with at the Australasian sales increased 7 per cent., or by 61,000 bales, notwithstanding that the Australasian total production decreased 18 per cent., or by 360,000 bales. Then I have prepared a table which shows the production and the proportion dealt with in the sale in Australasia as compared with London:

Year.	Total Production of Australasian Wool.	Quantity dealt with at the Australasian Wool Sales.	Proportion dealt with at the Australasian Wool Sales.
	Bales.	Bales.	
1895 - -	2,001,000	850,000	42 per cent.
1896 - -	1,846,000	897,000	48 „
1897 - -	1,834,000	855,000	47 „
1898 - -	1,703,000	906,000	53 „
1899 - -	1,641,000	911,000	56 „

It will be seen that the proportion of the production of Australasian wool, dealt with at the Australasian Wool Sales, has increased during the past five years from 42 per cent. to 56 per cent., and that London is not holding its own against the markets established in Australasia and New Zealand. I submit that the present method of levying dock and warehouse charges is out of date, and grossly unfair. The method is retail instead of being wholesale. Merchants, brokers, shipowners, and insurance companies simply charge an exact figure for work done or obligations entered into. Dock charges are levied per bale of wool, and are assessed in a manner that bears very hardly on the trade. Bales weighing between 1½ and 3½ cwts. are charged a consolidated rate of 4s., and bales weighing between 3½ and 5 cwts. are charged 5s. Thus two bales apparently similar both in size and weight are landed. One weighs 3 cwts. 1 qr. 27 lbs., and pays 4s.; and the other, by being, as often happens, left on a wet quay an hour or two, absorbs enough water to turn the scale at 3 cwts. 2 qrs., or 1 lb. heavier. This bale has to pay 5s.; in other words, the charges are raised 25 per cent. I am of the opinion that upon the total weight of the bales we should be charged as elsewhere at per ton. Now I will show a comparison of the charges at London and Liverpool. For a bale weighing 400 lbs. of greasy wool the charges in London would be 26s. 2d. per ton; and for a bale weighing 300 lbs. scoured wool the charges in London would be 32s. 3d. per ton. The charges in Liverpool would be 19s. 1d. per ton. Australian wools are rarely sold in Liverpool, but a calculation has been made in an equivalent weight of East India bales. The work performed on a bale of wool does not vary. Some years ago sales were less frequent in London, and it was arranged that the consolidated rate should include the cost of twelve weeks' rent. This is now unnecessary, as, taking the average of the wools my company received for sale in 25 ships, the average period for which the bales are warehoused is 42 days.

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8883. Are these changes within your own experience?—Yes.

8884. Have you anything to say with regard to the Dock Company bringing large vessels to their upper docks?—The Dock Company cannot at present bring large vessels to their upper docks, thus time and money are expended after the safe arrival of the ship and the further risk of transport undertaken. For many years it has been the custom of my company to contract by clause on bills of lading for the discharge of our consignments at the London Dock, contiguous to the wool warehouses, and in one year 27 out of 108 ships carrying wools for my company were discharged under this arrangement. The Dock Company were thus enabled to save lighterage or cartage on the wools mentioned but they declined in any way to mitigate their charges. This is not business, and strangles enterprise. Special rates should be forthcoming for special facilities. It must be borne in mind that the proprietors of private warehouses not having water frontage are thus at great disadvantage to the docks. They must of necessity cart or rail everything to their warehouses. In several instances the above arrangement fell through owing to the vessels being larger than the dock could accommodate, thus our enterprise was wasted. We have little complaint to make over a series of years, but in 1900 in the spring there was a good deal of trouble owing to dilatory discharge, and as mentioned in a letter addressed to the Dock Company no Landing Accounts were received for 471 bales ex "Samoa" (which arrived on the 22nd February) by the 22nd March notwithstanding that the wool had been actually sold on the 9th March. The management of the wool business at the docks, though capable of considerable improvement, is fairly good; the work is well done, and the space and warehouse accommodation allotted to the trade are admirable; considering the enormous turnover, complaints are very few, and most of these are small departmental matters. My experience of over 20 years' wool work tells me that there is a great want of elasticity in the methods in vogue at the docks, and a want of touch between merchants and the higher officials of the dock company, who are not acquainted with the needs of the traffic. It seems a monstrous proposition to put forward the theory that if you do not like the charges you can go elsewhere. Every effort should be made to conserve business existing and to encourage new, by exacting a fair price for fair work, and economising the labour bill wherever possible. The value of the wool warehouses should be capitalised, and rates fixed to net a fair return on the capital, but not to cover deficiencies in other departments. We cannot see why any person or craft should have the use of the docks or the services of the dock company's servants without payment. We suppose whatever charge be made it must come out of the merchants' pocket in the end, as goods are delivered free after sale. An ever-improving mercantile fleet, and keenly competing business community, always striving to do business on better terms all round, find the present dock system incapable of improvement; by its lack of means, they find the management too worried to expend their energies and experiences for the benefit of the docks by overhauling rates and competing for business. The times have rolled over them, and they are resigned, for they can offer no inducement to attract fresh capital. It needs a dock trust, having the money to execute, as well as suggest reforms. I am of opinion that, as the buying power of the world concentrates in London, every effort should be made to induce goods to use the Port of London. The roadway from the dock gates is out of repair, and this makes it unnecessarily difficult to get heavy loads out of the docks for delivery. As the great cost on wool is the storing and then moving it from intermediate floors to top show floor, an endless lift or moving floor might with advantage be used. During the March sales on a busy day the passenger lift could only carry four men less than 50 per cent. of which it should have carried. Boys for light work might be largely employed in keeping gangways clear, and filling in loose wool after sale, as they are less expensive and quite as smart as men, if they can be employed continuously. There should be one or two strong gangs of pilers to perambulate the sale. What is lacking is the grasp of business which is so characteristic of our railway managers. They make the boot fit the man, not try to make the man fit the boot; in the boom which preceded the introduction of the McKinley tariff, wool-buying was against time, and the English railways covered themselves with glory by their grasp of the situation. High officials never left the wool till it was on board ship. What we want is a touch of the same quality.

8885. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Where do you get these figures of the production of wool and the quantity coming to London in bales? What is the source of your information?—They are taken from a circular issued by Helmuth, Schwartze, and Co., the highest authority in the trade.

8886. And, of course, they are liable to the observation that a bale is not a sound unit, because bales differ so much in weight?—That would apply in some cases, but all our bales are packed in a press, and the weight is uniform.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8887. The wool business does not affect the wharves, does it?—Not to any great extent.

8888. But it is a fact, is it not, that a great deal of the decrease would be owing to direct buying in Australia now?—That is so.

8889. Many Yorkshire firms send their buyers direct and ship direct to avoid you?—Yes.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

8890. As I understand you, the circumstances of the wool trade have been modified very considerably during recent years in London?—That is so.

8891. And has there been any corresponding modification either in the system adopted by the dock companies as affecting the wool trade or in the charges which they make to you?—There has been no modification.

Mr. William Baker Daniels called and examined.

Mr. W. B. Daniels.

8892. (*Chairman.*) You are acting manager of the wool department of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited?—Yes.

8893. And you have been nominated by the Colonial Wool Merchants' Association to appear before us on their behalf?—Yes.

8894. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—My Company has been for many years a very large customer of the London and India Dock Companies; as it has for the past five years paid on an average the sum of £9,400 per annum in settlement of charges incurred in respect of wool and other produce stored at the docks. I offer evidence with special reference to the excessive dock charges on Colonial wool and the bad system of management prevailing in the wool department of the London and India Docks Company.

8895. Now will you tell us about the various operations incidental to the storage and showing of wool?—The various operations incidental to the storage and showing of wool are charged for at so much per bale of wool, the rate varying at exactly marked gradations of weight, thus on a bale of wool weighing 3 cwts. 1 qr. 27 lbs. the consolidated rate is 4s., but on a bale weighing 3 cwts. 2 qrs., or 1lb. more, the charge is 5s. I am of the opinion that the proper basis for a tariff of dock charges is the actual weight. The freight is charged for on this basis, and if the dock charges were so made up, many anomalies constantly occurring under existing conditions would be removed. The Dock Company's consolidated rate includes 12 weeks' rent, but whereas this was a reasonable provision when the arrangement was first adopted the substitution of 6 series of wool sales for 4 series renders six to seven weeks the usual time that parcels require to be warehoused under normal conditions. When the tariff was arranged, due allowance was doubtless made for the 12 weeks' storage, but now that goods rarely rest in warehouses for this length of time, a proportionate reduction should be made in the consolidated rate.

8896. Have you anything to say on the question of delay at the docks?—The work of handling the wool at the docks has of late been performed in a very unsatisfactory manner. As a typical instance I quote the undue delay in producing wools available for the second series of 1900 sales when called for, for lot-

ting purposes, in consequence of which some 129 bales consigned to my company, affecting 19 separate interests, could not be sold in the sales for which they should have been available, resulting in considerable loss to the owners as the market receded. In connection with this matter the attitude taken by the dock company, regarding the representations made by my company, was not such as was reasonably to be expected from a business concern, apart from any consideration of the value of my company's business to the dock company. In furnishing landing and sale weights, and particulars of charges relative to several of the parcels referred to, undue delay occurred, for example, while the "Waikat" and "Rakaia" completed discharge on the 6th March, weight notes were not completed until 2nd and 4th April. In the case of certain of our wools shipped by the vessels named, as well as by the "Wakanui," sales of which were made on 21st, 22nd and 24th March, relative charges notes were not furnished—and then only after repeated applications had been made—until 3rd April, the formulation of account sales in consequence being unduly delayed. While it must be conceded that work at the docks during the year 1900 was interfered with by labour troubles, I consider that such a state of affairs as at times existed might have been avoided, had there been better supervision exercised in the Wool Department at the docks, and in my opinion, to ensure the proper handling of wool, there should be appointed a responsible and capable officer, who should be located at the docks, and that the direction of affairs there should be left less in the hands of "foremen"—as has of late been the case—who shift responsibility from one to another. Again, arrangements should be made for complaints being more promptly investigated and dealt with. The facilities, as regards floor space, lighting and showing wool at the dock warehouses, are ample for present requirements, and with proper organisation the dock company should be in quite a favourable position to handle wool.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

8897. I think in the second series of the 1900 sales there was a very great glut of wool, was there not?—Yes; there was a good deal of New Zealand wool.

8898. And the market fell, did it not?—Yes, it subsequently fell.

8899. And a small quantity was sold in consequence of the fall of the market?—Yes, the withdrawals were unusually heavy, but not so much as regarding New Zealand wool.

8900. There was a great glut of wool which had to be dealt with?—There was no glut of wool, but the market was a bad one. The arrivals were not unduly heavy.

8901. But there was plenty of wool in the warehouse?—The wool was arriving and in the warehouse.

8902. And not going out. You really do not remember, do you?—Yes, I remember exactly, but I do not quite see your point. They had the wool, but we could not get it. The wool was in the warehouse and we could not get it.

8903. I am not here for the purpose of your finding out my point. We want the facts. In point of fact did the dock companies make you any payment on that account?—They have since done so. The new management have done so. The old management declined to entertain our claim.

8904. You said: "In consequence of which some 129 bales consigned to my company, affecting 19 separate interests, could not be sold in the sales for which they should have been available, resulting in considerable loss to the owners as the market receded"?—That is so.

8905. And that claim has been paid by the dock company?—Yes, since my evidence was put in or rather since it was drafted.

8906. Will you kindly tell me when your evidence was drafted?—In November last year.

8907. So that it cannot be described as up to date, When was the claim paid?—Some time this year.

8908. What time?—I could not give you the exact date. Probably February or March.

8909. Or April?—Possibly.

8910. Or January?—No, I do not think so.

8911. Would you kindly give us something. You see you are coming here to give evidence. You should assume an attitude such as is reasonably to be expected from a business concern, and you cannot tell me when this claim was allowed or whether it was allowed, or anything about it?—I can tell you it was paid this year, since the new management came in.

8912. What do you mean by the new management?—New managers of the docks were appointed. The old managers declined to entertain it.

8913. Have they not got the same chairman that they had last year?—I am talking of the managers.

8914. The managers have not the sole control of the dock company?—Apparently they had in those days.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8915. Wool comes in large ships, does it not?—Yes.

8916. And goes to Tilbury?—Some of it goes there.

8917. Or the Albert Docks?—Yes.

8918. And is then barged up?—Yes.

8919. The London Docks are mostly used for the storage of wool?—Yes; it is barged up.

8920. Is it barged up by the dock company?—Yes.

8920a. In, I suppose, large barges?—Yes.

(Adjourned to Monday next, June 10, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

Monday, 10th June, 1901.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

MR. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and MR. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

MR. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

MR. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

MR. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and MR. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

MR. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

MR. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

MR. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

MR. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

MR. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

8921. (*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) Before you begin will your Lordship allow me to correct two statements of fact that were given in evidence at the last sitting of the Commission. I will ask your Lordship to turn to the table which was put in at Question 8852 on the 23rd day. Your Lordship remembers that a statement was put in then showing the detention of barges belonging to a firm of Wingent and Kimmins, Limited, and two delays were attributed to the Millwall Dock Company, namely the "Ernest Albert" and the "Bethell." It was elicited from the Witness by Mr. Ellis that it was not his personal observation, but the facts are so totally at variance with the statement in that column that I will deal with it. The "Ernest Albert" was a barge belonging to the London and Rochester Barge Company. It entered the Millwall Dock, not on the 23rd June, as alleged, but at five minutes to four on the morning of the 29th June; it was loaded with 338 quarters of wheat ex "Breckfield" by 2.30 p.m., on the same day, and it left the dock at 3.45 a.m. on the 30th June the following day. With regard to the "Bethell," that was a barge belonging to the same company, namely the London and Rochester Barge Company. That vessel entered the dock at 4 p.m. on the 12th September, and not on the 7th September as is alleged in the column. It was loaded with 350 quarters of wheat ex "Oceana" by about 8 p.m. on the 13th September, and was also loaded with 10 tons of nitrate, ex "Condor," on the 14th, and left the dock the same day at 4.40 p.m. Of course it was impossible for me on the spur of the moment when that was put in to cross-examine the witness upon it, but I am prepared to prove that now by a witness who is here.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I was going to say that if evidence is contradicted, of course it must be contradicted by evidence; but I understand the Counsel to say he is prepared to prove it.

Mr. Lewis Coward.) Yes, I am prepared to prove it. It is a little unfortunate that tables are prepared in that way.

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) My Lord, one thing I want to say about the Surrey Commercial Dock is this: There is only one delay alleged, that of the "Young George," from the 21st to the 24th September. The 23rd September happened to be a Sunday.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) You have looked into that and are sure about it?

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) My client has.

Mr. RICHARD KNOWLES SPENCER called and examined.

Mr. R. K. Spencer.
11 June 1901.

8922. (*Chairman.*) You are a director of the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited, and are also manager of the Stewart Brothers and Spencer branch of that business?—Yes.

8923. Your firm are seed crushers, and you desire to give evidence as to the seed oil and cake trade in so far as it bears on the subject of this inquiry?—Yes.

8924. You are also chairman of the London and Rochester Barge Company, Limited?—Yes.

8925. Will you be good enough to give us your evidence?—The business of my firm (Stewart Bros., and Spencer, now amalgamated with the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited,) was established in 1870, their mills being situated at Brambridges, on the Upper Medway. The tolls imposed by the Upper Medway Navigation Company under Act of Parliament practically secures to the Upper Medway Navigation Company a monopoly of the water carriage over the waters which that company control. The tolls and rates for transport became unbearable to my firm, who sought for fresh premises in free water, and after considering sites upon both the Thames and Lower Medway, selected a position at Rochester, below bridge, on the banks of the Medway, where they were enabled to avail themselves of the free navigation of the Thames and Lower Medway, with the freedom of entry to the docks for barges necessary to the business. Barges trading between the Medway and the London Docks keep within specified water limits of the Port of London, and therefore are not classed as "vessels trading coastwise" upon which the London Dock Companies levy dues. In the year 1896 the dock companies attempted to levy dock dues upon

such barges. My firm joined with others in a test action, instituted under the auspices of the cement trade section of the London Chamber of Commerce, which resulted in legally establishing the right, which had been in force for nearly 100 years, of free entry to the docks for barges taking cargoes to or receiving cargoes from vessels loading or discharging therein. The London and India Docks Joint Committee then lodged a Bill in Parliament to repeal those rights and enable them to legally impose certain rates and charges upon all barges and lighters and their contents entering or leaving the docks. The second reading of this Bill was opposed by the London Chamber of Commerce, negatived in May, 1900, and the Royal Commission on the Port of London appointed.

8926. I understand you are of opinion that the constituted to administer the docks in the interests of would be greatly improved by the abolition of the control of the companies at present exploiting the water and quays of the docks on the River Thames?—I am.

8927. And you think a public Trust should be substituted to administer the docks in the interests of commerce?—Yes. I desire to offer evidence on the subject of the control at present enjoyed by the Watermen's Company over the water carrying trade within certain limits on the River Thames. I have experience of this matter in the capacity of Chairman of the London and Rochester Barge Company. This company are barge and lighter builders and also have a water carrying trade upon the Thames and Medway. They have absorbed the firms of James Fox and Co., one of the oldest lighter barge builders in London, and of G. H. Curel and Co., sailing barge builders of Rochester. Sailing barges, trading between the Medway (among other places) and the Thames and its docks, are manned by men who are skilful and experienced in the management of these craft, and while navigating to and from points outside certain limits of the River Thames, from and to points within such limits do not require to hold a waterman's licence. When these craft carry goods to and from places within the limits of the Thames over which the Watermen's Company possess powers, they are compelled to submit to the presence of men holding the Watermen's Company's licence. Unnecessary expenses are incurred by owners of sailing barges, steam tugs and other craft, on account of the "boarding money" paid to Freemen of the Watermen's Company; while a demoralising effect must be produced upon such Freemen who are enabled to obtain a living by loafing upon the waters to secure this "boarding money" paid to them nominally for work which they are usually quite incapable of performing safely. I am of the opinion that the monopoly enjoyed by this company, facilitated the recent strike, and encouraged the men who were very well paid, to follow the lead of those responsible for its organisation, whereby heavy losses have been inflicted on manufacturers, merchants, wharfingers, barge owners and others interested in the water carrying trade of the Thames, and a further blow given to the trade of the United Kingdom in general and of London in particular.

8928. Now have you anything to tell us with reference to the effect on your own trade of the charges proposed to be made by the dock companies?—Referring to the first attempt of the Dock Company to levy the tolls upon barges trading between the Thames and the Medway, that would affect the Rochester branch of our company to the extent of about £1,000 a year. The present powers which the company are applying for would affect the same branch to the extent of £2,000 to £2,500 a year, and the effect on the company's business as a whole would amount to £10,000 to £15,000 a year. I can give you the figures if you wish.

8929. Have you any statement of those figures prepared?—I have not a statement here prepared in a form to put in, but I can go over them in a minute. They are very simple. I have some figures here, but they are rather in the rough.

8930. Tell us first, please, the capitalisation of the company to which you refer?—The nominal capital is £2,250,000.

8931. Is it all paid up?—£1,750,000 paid up.

8932. Do you publish a balance-sheet?—Yes.

8933. Will you tell me your gross income for the last year?—Off-hand I could not trust my memory.

8934. Then I think you had better put in the last year's balance-sheet of the company?—Certainly. *Mr R. K. Spencer.* 10 June 190

(*The Witness handed in Report and Balance Sheet of the British Oil and Cake Mills Company, Limited, for the year ended June 30th 1900. See Appendix, 24th Day, No. 1.*)

8935. Now, will you be good enough to tell us what figures you propose to give us. Do you propose to give us a statement of the loss, or suggested loss, which would be incurred by your company per annum?—What the cost would be to the company. The Dock Company are going for powers to charge 4d. a ton on the barges' register. I will give you what the charge would be on 100 tons at 4d. a ton on the barges' register. A barge to carry 100 tons registers about 50 tons, so that would be 16s. 8d. dues per barge. Then they are proposing to charge 1s. per ton on oilseeds, which would be £5 on a 100-ton barge. That is £5 16s. 8d. for 100 tons. A considerable portion of the oil manufactured from seed is exported. On 100 tons of linseed there would be about 35 tons of oil. If that were sent on to the docks in one barge load there would be 16s. 8d. barge dues, and 1s. 6d. a ton on the oil, which would be £2 12s. 6d. The total figures together amout to £9 5s. 10d. per 100 tons. The Rochester Branch Mill has a larger capacity; but, taking a crush of 500 tons a week, that is practically £40 to £45 a week, and if you multiply that by 52 it comes to about £2,250 to £2,500 a year.

8936. Does that embrace all the loss?—No; that is only the loss on the branch which I particularly represent. We have other mills that draw from London, and I estimate that their output is four times more. Then we also sometimes draw from London supplies for our county mills, situate in Hull, Bristol, Gloucester Glasgow, Leith, and Burntisland. I am speaking within the mark if I say that the total liability of the company under the powers that the dock company are now asking would be £10,000 to £15,000 a year.

8937. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Will you tell us where the limits of the Upper Medway and the Lower Medway are?—The Lower Medway limits are about half a mile below Maidstone Bridge. The Medway navigation limits are scarcely, if you will allow me to say so, a point in this present inquiry.

8938. Are your premises on the Lower Medway?—Yes, but outside the limits of the Lower Medway Navigation Company.

8939. Then you say the Upper Medway Navigation Company have secured a monopoly of the water carriage?—Yes.

8940. Is that in consequence of tolls which they are authorised to take by Parliament?—Yes.

8941. At any rate it does not affect us in this inquiry?—No.

8942. You said that you thought that the conditions of the seed crushing trade would be greatly improved by the abolition of the control of the companies at present exploiting the water and quays of the docks on the River Thames, but you did not give any reason why that improvement might be anticipated?—The charges under the present conditions are very much heavier than they are for similar services at most ports. I can discharge seed at Rochester and bring it to London at a cheaper rate than seed can be discharged in London and delivered to London mills.

8943. Therefore what you mean is that you think that under a public Trust you would get lower rates?—I think under a public Trust the business would be managed, if I may say so, from a serving-commerce objective point, instead of from a dividend-earning objective point.

8944. You have not told us how many barges your company own. Can you tell us that?—We own 57 sailing barges and 22 dumb lighters.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) Would you mind, sir, also asking him upon what tonnage he has calculated those losses, because without the tonnage it is impossible to make much of the figures?

8945. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Can you answer that question?—I deal with 100,000 tons a year at the Rochester branch.

8946. Is that mainly in barges?—Yes.

8947. Is that mostly from the docks?—Yes, mostly from the docks.

Mr. R. K. Spencer.

10 June 1901.

8948. There is not much of your cargo discharged in the river?—Very rarely is it discharged in the river.

8949. What are the limits of freedom for the sailing barges?—I believe an imaginary line drawn from the Naze to the North Foreland. When the company tried to make sailing barges pay dues they relied upon a Treasury Minute which drew an imaginary line from Port Victoria, I believe, across to Southend. I cannot give you the exact bearings, but that Treasury Minute can no doubt be produced if you wish it.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) My Lord, may I intervene? I think the witness is under a misapprehension. I think he is confusing the limits of the Watermen's Company with the limits of the Thames Conservancy. I am told that the Watermen's Company's limit is between London and Gravesend.

See 8986.

(*Witness.*) Quite so. I answered what I understood to be the question.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Perhaps you will be able to refer us to that?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Yes. I have the Watermen's Com-Company's bye-laws here.

8950. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You alluded to the charges made by the freemen of the Watermen's Company for "boarding money." Is that boarding money paid for coming on board your sailing barges?—Yes.

8951. How much does it amount to per barge?—I believe it is 6s. per tide.

8952. (*Mr. Ellis.*) When were the mills to which you allude as having been put up at Brambridges erected?—I think in about 1805.

8953. As I understand, your old firm of Stewart Brothers and Spencer, which has now been absorbed, commenced its operations in 1870?—Yes.

8954. At those mills?—Yes.

8955. Have your old firm spent any capital on those mills since 1870?—We rented those mills.

8956. Were they enlarged?—They were enlarged under our occupancy and at our expense.

8957. And are those the mills to which the 100,000 tons per annum is attached?—No, the 100,000 tons per annum is attached to the Rochester mills—the new mills built at Rochester.

8958. Is the whole volume of trade with regard to which you desire to speak 100,000 tons?—No.

8959. I am speaking now of you in your capacity as manager of Stewart Brothers and Spencer. That is 100,000 tons?—Yes, that is so.

8960. And that trade comes from two places, does it—Rochester and Brambridges?—No. The Brambridges Mills are shut down; they are destroyed altogether.

8961. They are extinct, are they?—Yes, they are extinct.

8962. Then you carry on your business now at what you call the New Mills?—Yes, the Rochester mills.

8963. Do those belong to you?—Yes.

8964. And were erected by you?—They were erected on our own freehold.

8965. In what year?—1880.

8966. And during the last 20 years have you added to those?—Very considerably.

8967. Your volume of business has steadily increased during the 20 years?—Considerably.

8968. And it is in regard to that volume of business that the loss you spoke of attaches?—The smaller loss of which I spoke attaches to that. That is the £2,000 to £2,500 a year.

8969. Now I pass to the other capacity in which you come here, namely, that of a director of the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited. That company absorbed your old firm?—Yes.

8970. Am I to take it that the 100,000 tons is in relation to the whole concern now?—No, only to my branch of it.

8971. Then the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited, has a much larger volume of business than that, has it?—Twenty times, I should say, speaking roundly.

8972. Has your evidence relation to that larger volume also?—Yes, but only to the tonnage that passes through the London Docks, because the dock campany are proposing to charge all lighters and all goods. Therefore the lighters of the London Mills would be liable to those charges.

8973. I wanted rather, if I may, to ask as to your capacity, in order to gauge the value of your evidence. You speak to us in another capacity, that is as chairman of the London and Rochester Barge Company?—That is so.

8974. Your original capacity as manager of Stewart Brothers and Spencer's business has been absorbed in that of the British Oil and Cake Company?—Quite so.

8975. But you also have another capacity as chairman of this company?—Yes, a separate company entirely.

8976. And your evidence covers the whole?—Yes, it covers the two.

(*Chairman.*) Mr. Balfour Browne, I do not know whether you wish to cross-examine this witness. If so, I would make the suggestion before you begin to do so that as there seems to be a little confusion in the witness's mind, it might be convenient for you to ask on behalf of the dock companies as to this charge of 4d. being levied on empty barges, which I understand is not intended.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) It is barges coming to take away goods from the dock, my Lord.

(*Chairman.*) It is for you, not me, to ask, of course.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I was not proposing really to take up the time of the Commission with cross-examining the witness at all. The only thing I should like, following on what Mr. Ellis asked, is to get the tonnage upon which the witness calculates the loss of £10,000.

Cross-examined by Mr. Balfour Browne.

8977. You said you thought about twenty times 100,000 tons. Would you give me the exact tonnage?—In mentioning twenty times 100,000 tons, I was referring to the business of the Company, not only in London, but its various branches. In dealing with the specific question it is only as affecting the position of the company as regards goods through the London Docks.

8978. You spoke of goods at Bristol, Gloucester, and so on. Upon what tonnage were you calculating that loss?—I was calculating on a tonnage of 500,000 and 600,000 tons a year.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

8979. I understand you do not get much from the wharves?—No, not much from the wharves.

8980. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do you, as a matter of fact, in the Company of which you are chairman, deal with a tonnage of 500,000 to 600,000 tons per annum?—No, so far as the Rochester branch is concerned; is it about 100,000 tons per annum.

8981. You calculated a loss; I do not quite follow you; if you do not deal with that very large amount of tonnage, how does the loss accrue to you?—It accrues to me in my position as director of the British Oil and Cake Mills.

8982. Does the Company deal with that tonnage?—Yes, and more.

8983. It does deal with 600,000 tons a year?—Yes.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I cannot understand, with great respect to the witness, because the total amount of seed and nuts dealt with in our docks is only 145,000 tons for the whole year; I cannot understand how he makes it, but I do not know that it would be very useful to pursue it.

(*Witness.*) I hope no mistake has been made in the figures.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Are your figures correct?

(*Witness.*) I am afraid there is a mistake. I am very sorry. My own branch, Stewart Brothers and Spencer, deal with 20,000 to 25,000 tons a year, and the company deal with 100,000 to 120,000 tons a year.

8984. Let me have it clear. The figure of 100,000 tons must be struck out, and 20,000 to 25,000 tons substituted?—Yes.

8985. And the figure of 600,000 must be struck out, and what substituted?—100,000 to 120,000 tons.

8985*a*. Do you think now we have it right?—I believe so; I relied upon someone to copy correctly my figures and terms.

See 8949.

8986. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) As the matter has arisen on Mr. Spencer's evidence, it might be convenient to point out the limits of the Watermen's Company. The Act of 1859 has been handed in by learned counsel. As I read it it appears that whereas the limits of watermen and lightermen by the Act of George IV., Cap. 75, were the River Thames between Yantlet Creek and Windsor, the Act of 1859 appears to make the limits all parts of the river Thames from and opposite to and including Teddington Lock in the counties of Middlesex and Surrey to and opposite to and including Lower Hope Point, near Gravesend, in the county of Kent, and to all docks, canals, creeks, and harbours in or out of the said river so far as the tide flows therein. Is that right, Mr. Cranstoun? *Mr. R. K. Spencer.* 10 June 1901.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Yes.

(*Mr. Whitehead.*) The Commission have already had this in evidence at Question 3343.

Mr. Francis Carbutt called and examined.

8987. (*Chairman.*) You are engaged in the rice trade?—Yes. *Mr. F. Carbutt.*

8988. You appear before us in order to give evidence with regard to that trade in so far as it bears upon the subject of this inquiry?—Only as far as my firm is concerned. I do not appear as a representative of the trade, but only as a representative of my firm. I am a director of Carbutt and Company, Limited, who have for the last 38 years carried on business as rice merchants and millers in Bermondsey. For the purpose of their business my company import rice into the Port of London, and take it away from the ships to their mills to be prepared for consumption. My company have expended large sums of money in building mills, wharves, and warehouses on the banks of the River Thames.

8989. (*Chairman.*) Where?—St. Saviour's Dock in Bermondsey, just below the Tower Bridge. It is just below Butler's Wharf. We have relied on the clause in the various dock Acts, which gives free access to barges and lighters entering the docks for the purpose of receiving and delivering goods to and from vessels unloading and loading therein.

8990. We have already heard the proposals of the dock companies. Do you tell us that if those powers are granted your company will suffer loss?—Undoubtedly, owing to the depreciation in value of their premises. I may say my evidence was prepared before the second Bill was brought in, in which they put only 1s. on rice; it was then proposed to be 1s. 6d., I believe. If the tax of 4d. per ton upon the registered tonnage and 1s. 6d. per ton on the contents of the lighters and barges receiving and taking my company's goods from and to vessels lying in the docks is imposed it will amount in the case of my company to the sum of at least £3,500 per annum, and, as I will presently show, much more. This will in the case of my company be a total loss, as no portion of this sum can possibly be recovered from the consumer, owing to the close competition of the Continental merchants with my company. The above-mentioned sum of £3,500 per annum will be augmented unless some method could be found by which the barge or lighter could be always full of goods leaving the docks. As it is impossible for barges always to carry a load equal to the registered tonnage, 4d. per ton on the registered tonnage would amount to more than this on the contents. For instance, should a barge of 100 tons be sent for 50 tons of goods the charge of 4d. on the registered tonnage would amount to 8d. per ton on the goods, which plus 1s. 6d. amounts to a burden of 2s. 2d. per ton on goods. This example of a 100-ton barge being sent to fetch 50 tons of goods is given as a specimen of the charges on imported goods; while, when the goods are re-exported, this charge would be still more oppressive, as frequently two or three tons are sent into the docks to an exporting vessel in the same barge used for the import traffic, which are of any size from 10 to 120 tons burden. I do not wish to say we put 2½ tons in a 120 ton barge. I wish to state that my company, as large manufactures and employers of labour, would certainly object to any charge, however small, being placed on any of our goods entering the port, as such charges would handicap my company with regard to foreign competition, and I, therefore, wish to dissociate myself from the opinion expressed on this matter in the general statement of the London Chamber of Commerce. I consider that as free water was intended to benefit the Port of London, all goods which do not benefit the port itself, by being either landed or manufactured, might with advantage have a charge put upon them. This would only apply to transshipment goods, or to goods which were taken direct from the ship into railway waggons or lighters, and sent inland. The only rate charged on rice landed on the quay of the dock on merchant's account is 4s. 2d. per ton (with a discount of 5 per cent. in some cases) called the "management rate." This includes four weeks' rent, and various working operations, as follows:—Landing at the dock where the ship discharges, sorting externally for damage, classing sea damages, sampling, taring for average, weighing without numbering or rendering separate weights, marking weights on bags, delivery, and one month's rent. If my company's goods are merely passed over the quay and delivered into a barge, the full rate of 4s. 2d. per ton is charged, the same as if they had remained warehoused for a month, and the various labour operations described above had been expended upon the goods. My company would be thus compelled to pay for work which is often needless, in consequence of the joint committee imposing the one "Management Rate" of 4s. 2d. If this were divided up amongst the various operations, my company would be able to have such operations performed as are actually necessary, and only pay for the actual work done. In order to claim the free delivery of imported goods into their craft, my company have to lodge the necessary papers, and have their craft alongside importing vessel within 24 hours of the ship's reporting. The goods are then delivered into the craft free, sometimes over the side of the ship direct, but sometimes the shipowner (for his own convenience) has the goods landed on the quay, and thence delivered into the craft. For such delivery and landing into craft the dock company charge the shipowner 1s. 6d. per ton, in the case of rice.

8991. Is not that a charge for labour only?—I cannot tell you for what purpose it is. I know that that charge is made. If my company failed to lodge the necessary papers and have their craft alongside within 24 hours of the ship's reporting, my company could not claim free delivery; the goods would be landed on the quay, and the expenses of receiving on the quay and delivery to craft would have to be borne by my company, in which case the joint committee would charge their "Management Rate" of 4s. 2d. per ton. My company wish to point out that if their goods (rice) are landed on the quay and put into craft, on account of the shipowner, the dock company's charge for such work is 1s. 6d. per ton, whereas if the cost is borne by my company, the dock company's charge is 4s. 2d. per ton for precisely the same services.

8992. Is that the case—precisely the same services?—Yes.

8993. But you have already told us it comprises a variety of items?—I may not want those items done.

8994. But it is not for the same services?—I had a case where a ship came in and the goods were landed on captain's entry through the documents being late——

8995. You are going into rather vague statements now. Is this for the same services?—Yes, I think so, from my point of view. Continental merchants and millers would be further assisted in the very keen competition already existing by the imposition of the tax referred to, because the vessels in which they ship their goods usually unload in the river, alongside one of the large wharves (such as Brewers' Quay), and will therefore escape this levy, which only applies to goods discharged into lighters and barges from vessels unloading in the docks, whereas 99 per cent. of the ocean-going vessels in which my company's goods arrive unload in the docks. The imposition of this tax would add considerably to the cost of manufacturing goods, and put further obstacles in the way of my company competing successfully with Continental merchants and millers for the trade with the English coast ports. These Continental rivals have already a great advantage over

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us, in that they have their goods carried direct from the Continent to the English coast ports at a much lower rate of freight than we pay from London, and can get freights on through bill of lading to inland towns at a rate that it is impossible to get from London, either by rail direct or by steamer to nearest coast port and thence by rail. In framing any scheme for the control of the river, due regard should be paid to the creeks and inlets, which are apparently under no jurisdiction, and consequently never get cleaned out. The owners of property on such inlets would probably be glad enough to pay for cleansing these creeks, were they under the direction and supervision of some permanent authority.

8996. It would be convenient if you would specify which creeks and inlets you refer to?—I was referring more particularly to my own, St. Saviour's Dock. In the case of my company the St. Saviour's Dock, a creek in the Thames, is supposed to be under the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy, but all attempts to induce that body to improve its sanitary and navigable condition have failed. The appointment of a dock master to regulate the traffic of barges and vessels has to be undertaken by the owners of property on the creek, who have to pay his wages, although he is not allowed to act without the sanction of the Thames Conservancy. I am also of opinion that the restrictions with regard to men employed on barges should be removed by the abolition of the monopoly which is enjoyed by the Watermen's Company.

8997. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You would object to any tax, not merely to this proposed tax upon barges and goods in barges, but you would object to any tax upon goods coming into the river, as hindering you in your competition with foreign ports and mills?—Yes. I am speaking only of my own trade.

8998. Would that apply to the suggestion made by the Corporation for a general tax upon all goods coming into the river?—I am afraid if there was a general tax we should still have to bear it. I can remember a case when the dock companies and the wharfingers came to an agreement and put the rates for landing goods up, I think it was in 1889 after the dock strike, and we had to pay the charges ourselves; we could not recover from the consumers.

8999. There is no charge, however light, to which you would not object?—No.

9000. A charge of 1 per cent. *ad valorem* would be objectionable?—It means so much out of our pockets. As far as I am concerned you would be taxing us for the benefit of the Dock Company.

9001. Is that a general feeling amongst people in your trade?—Undoubtedly.

9002. That the goods coming into the port cannot bear any additional charge, however light?—We feel it so.

9003. How much would 1 per cent. *ad valorem* on your goods come to?—In the case of inwards and outwards or inwards only?

9004. Inwards and outwards separately?—Rice varies very much in price; it is sometimes 6s. and sometimes 18s.; so that it is rather hard to say, but I have taken a basis of 10s. a ton all round. I have worked it out at £5,000 a year.

9005. Both inwards and outwards?—Yes.

9006. How much inwards?—35,000 tons in and 15,000 tons out.

9007. And a charge like that, or any other charge would be so serious as to affect your trade very sensibly?—We think so. Our trade is not what it was by any means and it is hampered continually with all this competition from the Continent, and we find that every year there is more competition and profits get smaller and smaller.

9008. Would not a general charge have the effect of equalizing competition; that is to say, if you paid this £5,000 a year the people bringing goods from the Continent to this country would also have to pay it, and so things would be equalized?—If you could put it on all the outports as well; Bristol, Liverpool, Goole, Hull, Leith, Glasgow and so on, then we should be equal.

9009. But not unless?—Not unless.

9010. I should like you to explain a little more particularly what you said about your having a difficulty in sending goods to inland points in this country in comparison with foreign ports sending the goods to the same points because the railway company give facilities?—The railway companies in a great many cases own the steamers, or have, I believe, an interest in the steamers that run to some of these outports. They quote very low rates from Rotterdam and Amsterdam to inland parts so as to get the carrying to their railways.

9011. And they put a place like London at a disadvantage?—Yes, I can give you some figures, if you wish.

9012. Yes, I think we ought to have them?—I will start with the sea freights: our freight from London to Goole is 7s. 6d.; from Rotterdam and Hamburg it is 6s. To Hull it is 10s., from Rotterdam it is 6s., and I believe it has been reduced to 5s. 6d. quite lately.

9013. You are giving the railway rate?—I am giving at present the steamer rates to show you how we are competing, first of all with the steamers. Newcastle is 10s., against 8s. 6d. from Hamburg, less 5 per cent. I have the railway rates here. When you come to small quantities, to Leeds it is 19s. 2d. from London; while from Amsterdam it is 16s. 3d., and from Rotterdam it is 17s. 1d.

9014. That is a case where the railways come in?—Yes. In the case of Halifax it is 20s. 10d. from London, against 19s. 2d. from Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Huddersfield is 20s. 10d., against 18s. 4d. from the other two ports, so we already have at least 2s. 6d., and sometimes more, sometimes 4s. a ton against us to compete with. These are on half-ton lots.

9015. You think that arises partly from the railway companies owning steamers which go to places like Amsterdam or Hamburg, and that they give good rates to enable the traffic to come?—That is my opinion. But I believe also that most of the London lines have conventions, and Hull and Goole are competing generally.

9016. What kind of conventions?—Conventions for keeping up freights.

9017. Between London and these places?—Yes.

9018. But you are not aware of any particulars; you have not tried any case?—I know that we cannot get the rates lowered in consequence, no matter whether it is a competing line or not.

9019. How is it that the shipping freights between London and some of these northern places are higher than from Hamburg and Amsterdam to the same places; can you explain that?—No; unless it is this: I only put this forward as a suggestion, I do not put it as a statement, it is that they get better return rates from the other ports than they do from London.

9020. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Can you give us some idea of the volume of trade you do at these mills?—Speaking quite roughly, we do from 40,000 to 50,000 tons a year.

9021. That is the trade in respect of which your evidence is given primarily?—Primarily. I am speaking of so much inwards and so much outwards, but then we have a great deal more outwards which I have not put down. If we bring in we must take out, and we bring in from 35,000 to 40,000 tons a year; of course that has to go out again, so that if you double it you get 80,000 tons.

9022. About 80,000 tons is the total?—Yes, in and out.

9023. You appreciate my question. That is trade in respect of which your experience is gained?—I am only speaking of my own trade.

9024. That is the trade your evidence relates to—rice?—Yes.

9025. Have you anything else in your mind?—No.

9026. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to what you said about the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy, are you aware that the Thames Conservancy has jurisdiction over all the creeks and navigable channels of the Thames?—I understand they have jurisdiction, but they will not exercise it as far as regards getting the place cleaned out and making it fairly wholesome and decent.

9027. You do not then want an enlargement of jurisdiction, but you want some power to compel the jurisdiction to be exercised?—Yes.

9028. Is it true that wharf property has of late years

depreciated on the banks of the river Thames?—I did not say so.

9029. I ask you is that your experience?—No, I should not say it had up to the present.

9030. Was it not the fact some 4 or 5 years ago that wharf property had depreciated?—I think you will have to go further back than that.

9031. Has it now recovered whatever depreciation it experienced?—I should say at present it is recovering.

9032. We understand by the evidence that the proportion of trade which is done at the wharves is increasing year by year?—Undoubtedly I should say so.

9033. That would seem to point rather to the property becoming more valuable?—It would naturally do so.

9034. With regard to rates to Leeds and Bradford, and places in Yorkshire, I suppose Hull is the natural port of those places from the Continent?—I fancy Goole is, and thence by canal.

9035. Goole and Hull have water carriage right into Leeds, have they not?—Yes.

9036. And the railway journey from Hull to these great consuming centres is very much shorter than it is from London?—Yes.

9037. It seems likely that these East coast ports being the natural ports for these manufacturing districts will always compete on somewhat more favourable terms than London can?—Probably, but still more so if we have a tax put upon us.

9038. It is a condition of things which is to some extent geographical, is it not?—Yes.

9039. Would you suggest that the rates should be so much lowered as to enable London to compete with places like Goole for Leeds?—It would be to our advantage undoubtedly, but I am not suggesting that at all; I am only objecting to further taxation.

9040. I thought that was rather the trend of the evidence; that there was a hardship upon wharfowners in London that they could not send into Leeds as cheaply as people who send in *viâ* Goole?—You are referring to me as a wharfowner. I am speaking as a rice miller.

9041. But either way?—There is a hardship, but I daresay we shall have to compete against it as we have done in years past. My evidence was not brought forward to try and get things reduced.

9042. The same circumstances would be to the disadvantage of Goole and Hull in competing for the commodities which are consumed in London?—It may be to the disadvantage of Goole, but it would not be to the disadvantage of Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

9043. That is quite true; you mean that the freights from Rotterdam to London ought to be somewhat the same as they would be from Rotterdam to Goole?—They are about. I think they are a little higher, but very little; I have not the figures here.

9044. You think the freights are much the same to the two ports?—I should say about the same.

9045. Then there is not a great hardship there?—No, there is no great hardship if you put it that way, except that we get the competition both ways.

9046. Do you mean to say that Goole competes with the London freight?—No, I am not complaining of that. I am complaining of the continental ports.

9047. London, I suppose, will get the freight which is properly belonging to London for the neighbourhood of London?—Not necessarily.

9048. Are you talking now of the consumption of goods?—I am talking of the consumption.

9049. Do you mean that the goods will be manufactured abroad and come into London?—Undoubtedly.

9050. Instead of being manufactured in London?—Yes.

9051. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) It seems to be generally agreed that certain improvements are required in the river?—I know nothing about that.

9052. And certain improvements in the docks?—I know nothing about that.

9053. Assuming that improvement is desirable and that it would cost money, is it your opinion that the merchants should contribute something to that or not?—I can hardly give you an answer to that, for this reason: that I consider the improvements that have been necessary in the docks should be done by the docks themselves. This is only a matter of opinion; I have no figures to support it. I consider that had the docks been managed properly from the time they were started they would never have had to come and bring this matter before Parliament.

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9054. We have to deal with existing circumstances. Assuming it to be a fact that some improvements are required which would cost money, is it your opinion that merchants should contribute something to that cost or not?—Do you mean personally or as a matter of opinion generally?

9055. You are here to represent your company?—Personally I should object to it, but as a matter of opinion it might be right.

9056. That is the question I wanted to arrive at. Is your personal objection that you do not think you would be able to shift any part of the additional cost upon the consumer?—That is my own opinion.

9057. And that you would have to bear it all yourselves?—Exactly.

9058. Is it your opinion that you are unable to bear it, or merely that you dislike bearing it?—I think I am unable to bear it.

9059. What was the dividend paid by your company last year?—May I say that it is not a public company?

9060. Do you publish your accounts?—We do not.

9061. (*Chairman.*) You are a limited company?—We are a limited company.

9062. But you do not publish your accounts?—No.

9063. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I may ask it in a general form, perhaps. Is it your case that your company are unable to bear a further charge or that they dislike bearing a further charge?—We consider we are unable, because once that charge is put on we should lose a great deal of business that we are now pushing to the greatest possible extent in the way of these outports and consequently we should not only lose the amount of money that we have to pay for dues, but we should lose any profits which we should get on that trading.

9064. I think you must do yourself justice as to this. You told Sir Robert Giffen that on your calculation the charge would amount to £5,000 a year from your company. You do not put it to the Commission, do you, that you are unable to bear that charge?—Yes, decidedly.

9065. That you could not carry on a profitable business if you had to pay £5,000 a year more?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

9066. Will you say where the Continental merchants and millers who would undersell you are?—At Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Hamburg, and Bremen.

9067. Most of the rice that comes into London is ocean borne?—Most of it.

9068. You say that it could come into those ports to be discharged and ground, and then sent to an English port cheaper than it could be in London if these charges were put on?—It is done now.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9069. When you quoted rates to some of the West Riding towns from London were you quoting rates by sea between outports and thence by rail, or thence by canal?—In the case of Leeds what I was quoting was water—that is, the Calder Navigation. In the case of the others by rail from the towns mentioned.

9070. Right through by rail?—Yes.

9071. I do not know whether you are familiar with the district and whether you have the ownership of the canals of that district?—No.

9072. And whether some of them are vested in the railway companies?—No.

9073. You are suggesting a tax on transhipped goods

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or goods which are taken direct from ship into railway wagons or lighters and sent inland?—Yes.

9074. How would you discover when goods from a lighter were going inland if they were taken away to go to a wharf?—They would not necessarily go to a wharf.

9075. I am speaking of goods going to a wharf. You do not propose to charge anything going direct to a wharf—you do not inquire further as to where they are going?—That is about what it comes to. I do not care where it goes to afterwards.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

9076. So far as your personal trade is concerned, that is the 80,000 tons about which you spoke to Mr. Ellis?—Yes.

9077. But of course you are not the only rice merchant and miller?—I am the only rice miller.

9078. The rice trade is of far larger dimensions than that?—There is more trade than that.

9079. May I ask you whether the case you put before the Commission is typical of the rice trade?

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) He is the only rice miller, therefore it must be typical.

9079*a*. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I do not want to press it upon you if you cannot answer the question?—I cannot follow it—that is all.

9080. You said that if rice is landed on the quay and put into craft on account of the shipowner the charge to him is 1s. 6d. a ton?—So I understand.

9081. If these two services of landing on the quay and putting into craft, and only these two services, are performed for you, what is the charge?—4s. 2d.

9082. But you can, if you like, have further services in addition to this for that charge?—Undoubtedly.

9083. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Do you do so as a matter of fact. I suppose if you want to pay the 4s. 2d. charge on the consolidated rate you get all you can for it?—Undoubtedly.

9084. You would probably have the sampling and taring and weighing and marking done in the docks?—Yes, if we do land it there.

9085. You do not say you are in the position of paying 4s. 2d. when, in point of fact, you only get delivery and landing. You may, but you do not as a fact?—As a fact we never land a ton of rice at the docks if we can possibly help it. There was a case a little while ago when we were short of barges. We could not provide barges quickly enough to discharge the ship, and it was a case of whether several hundred tons would have to go on the quay or not. Had that gone on the quay we should have had to pay 4s. 2d., even though it was only for a day until we could get a barge there. The dock company would have shown no mercy, but had it been for the shipbroker it would have been 1s. 6d. In fact, in this case the shipbroker said: "We see you are in a hole; we will land as for our account, and you will only have to pay 1s. 6d.

9086. Have you, as a matter of fact, ever paid 4s. 2d. to anybody for these two services only?—No. Because as soon as we got to the point where we have to pay 4s. 2d. we immediately said: "If you are going to charge us 4s. 2d., we do not want these things done, but we are not going to let you make all that profit out of it, and you shall do them." But we do not want them done; they are totally unnecessary charges put upon the goods for no purpose.

9087. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) As I understand, you object to a charge which involves that peculiar method of action?—Undoubtedly.

9088. And you would like to have an opportunity of paying for those services which you require?—Undoubtedly. I can get it all done at wharves, and that is the reason I go to wharves to land it.

9089. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You say that Continental merchants and millers can unload their vessels in which their goods come either in the river or alongside one of the large wharves?—Yes.

9090. Is that done to any great extent?—Yes, there is a considerable quantity of cleaned rice which comes in to compete with us, for instance, at Brewer's Quay. I have not the figures here.

9091. Are there any wharves as large as Brewer's Quay?—Yes. The principal quantity of rice discharged is at Brewer's Quay; that is the only reason I instanced it, but there are plenty of ships discharging at other wharves.

9092. Take Brewer's Quay. Am I not right in saying that vessels of 2,000 or 3,000 tons can come alongside?—I should say so.

9093. That is done?—Yes.

9094. In that way Continental consignors would escape the charges which are proposed to be levied under the Bill of the dock company?—Undoubtedly.

9095. You would then be more seriously handicapped than you are now with Continental competition?—Undoubtedly.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) Might I say with regard to the 4s. 2d. that of course the witness now admits he has never paid it.

(*Witness.*) I have never admitted such a thing.

9096. You have never paid it without getting the services?—Without getting the services.

9097. I was only going to point out that it could only apply to 1½ per cent., because 98·6 goes over without any charge at the present time. Therefore it could only be a very small percentage that it could apply to?—There is a great deal made of this 1½ per cent. The reason that it is not landed at the docks in my opinion is this difficulty of getting on with the dock company and always having to pay the full rates for things which are not required.

9098. (*Chairman.*) But things which are done?—Not necessarily done. I have had several thousand tons of goods landed where I got the rates split up and only got the work done that I required, and consequently saved the money for unnecessary work which could just as well have been landed by the dock companies if they made only the charge for the work actually done. I know a great deal has been made of this 1½ per cent., but it is not the fault of the trade; it is the fault of the dock company.

Mr. Edwin Tate called and examined.

Mr. E. Tate.

9099. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the firm of Henry Tate and Sons, Limited?—Yes.

9100. Who are sugar refiners?—Yes.

9101. You desire to lay before us evidence with regard to the proposals of the dock companies so far as they would affect the sugar refining industry in London?—Yes. Our refinery was built at Silvertown in 1887 on the banks of the River Thames, owing to our being able to bring raw sugar alongside our works at the cost of lighterage only, there being no charge made for goods discharged in the river or in the docks. If a charge, however small, were to be made on goods delivered overside in the docks or in the river, it would mean a considerable sum to our firm, seeing that we import over 100,000 tons of raw sugar a year, and it would very seriously cripple the sugar refining industry in London, which consists of Messrs. A. Lyle and Sons, Limited, and ourselves, the only two refiners left in the Port of London. I may say that Messrs. Lyle and Sons import about 80,000 tons. We contend that inasmuch as our works were built alongside the river on account of the facilities and freedom from charges which were secured to the Port of London when the Charter was granted to the Dock Company, it would be most unfair to our interests were we now taxed with any charges. We fully appreciate the difficulties that the dock company have to contend with, and also the serious condition of the Port of London as compared with other ports, and we feel that these difficulties have been greatly aggravated by the change that has taken place in recent years in the quantity of traffic which now passes through the Port of London in transit to towns in England, and which is not warehoused or used as raw material in the port, but is transferred to barges and railway trucks for the purpose of through transit only. We feel that the Dock Company would be justly entitled in making a charge on goods delivered overside for this purpose, inasmuch as the Port of London does not benefit from such through traffic in the sense that was intended when

the original Charter was granted to the Dock Company. We hope that the earnest attention of the Commission will be drawn to the question of the monopoly which now exists in the river with regard to lightermen or watermen. We venture to suggest that this monopoly, which does not exist in any other river, should be withdrawn.

9102. Will you tell us when the firm of Henry Tate and Sons, Limited, was incorporated as a limited company?—I cannot tell you the exact date; it was about 1892.

9103. Do you publish a balance sheet?—No.

9104. Did you hear the question asked by Mr. Lyttelton of the last witness as to whether if it be the fact that money must be spent on the docks any of the cost should fall on the merchants?—Yes, I heard that question.

9105. Will you give your reply to that?—I think that the Port of London generally ought to bear that cost.

9106. Including the merchants?—Yes.

9107. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You say that you and Messrs. Lyle are now the only sugar refiners?—Yes.

9108. Were there more when you first knew the trade?—Yes; there were about 30.

9109. And they have died out?—Yes.

9110. Is the cause chiefly the foreign competition, or what is the cause?—Foreign competition, owing to bounties being given by foreign governments.

9111. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Just following up that matter, may we take it from you that the disappearance of these other sugar refiners is in any way connected with the matter into which this Commission is enquiring, namely, the facilities of the Port of London?—I do not think it is. The matter that we are interested in is comparatively so small that it could not determine whether a refinery is able to exist or not. *Mr. E. Tate* 10 June 1901

9112. You quite appreciate the force of my question?—Yes.

9113. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Would you object to a small *ad valorem* charge upon sugar carried into the Port of London if there was a similar charge upon all goods coming into the port?—I would object to it unless there was a similar charge on all the ports in the United Kingdom. Our competitors are the foreigners, the Germans and the Austrians, and they send a large proportion of their goods to the ports on the east and south coasts.

9114. Most of the ports in the United Kingdom have such charges, have they not?—That I do not know.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9115. You speak about goods delivered overside in regard to which the Port of London gets no benefit, because it is through traffic. Do you confine your suggestion to a tax upon goods which are, so to speak, delivered on a through bill of lading, and going away from London?—Yes.

9116. You do not propose to make any charge upon goods which go from the ship's side to a wharf?—No.

9117. I was under the impression that there was, at any rate, one other firm of sugar refiners in the trade, Messrs. Garton, Hill, and Co.?—Yes, you are quite right, but it is a different business altogether. They are not what we call sugar refiners.

9118. It is some branch of sugar refining?—Quite so.

Mr. Thomas Francis Blackwell called and examined.

Mr. T. F. Blackwell.

9119. You are chairman of Crosse and Blackwell, Limited?—Yes.

9120. You desire to give evidence before us as to the effect of the dock companies' proposals, if carried out, upon the trade in which you are engaged?—I do.

9121. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—My company presented a petition against the Bill introduced in to the House of Commons by the London and India Docks Joint Committee, entitled, "A Bill to repeal exemptions from rates or charges of certain craft using the docks under the management of the London and India Docks Joint Committee, and of goods discharged or received by such craft, and to empower the Joint Committee to levy rates or charges thereon." The company are oil and Italian warehousemen, having their registered offices at No. 21, Soho Square, London. They are the owners of large works, and are manufacturers and exporters in a very large way, of all manner of preserves, provisions, jams, sauces, potted meats, syrups, and other articles of domestic consumption, and in the conduct of their business are very large consumers of sugar and other colonial and foreign produce, and for the purposes of their business they have very large consignments of fruits, sugar, and colonial and foreign produce, conveyed in ships and steam vessels, which discharge their cargoes in the docks of the London and India Docks Company, and which cargoes are thence conveyed to my companys' works by lighters, barges, and other craft. My company are also very large exporters of manufactured articles and produce to the colonies and foreign parts, and such exports have to be conveyed by water from their works and premises to ships lying in the docks by lighters, barges, and other craft, and there discharged into such ships. The articles and produce so conveyed from and to my company's premises to and from the said docks, include many of the articles described in the First and Second Schedules annexed to the Bill above referred to, and on which it was proposed to levy rates not exceeding 1s. 6d. and 1s. per ton respectively. The principal export factory of my company is situate in the Belvedere Road, Lambeth, and their premises at that place abut upon the River Thames, and consist partly of a large wharf, to which goods are brought, and from which they are sent for export, as aforesaid, by lighters, barges, and other craft, from and to the said docks. These premises in Belvedere Road are leasehold, and are held from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England for a term of 999 years, at a ground rent of £1,245, and the sum of at least £40,000 was expended in building the premises and fixing the plant therein in the year 1882. This large outlay was incurred because it was considered that the premises were of special value, being on the river side. For the purposes of their business my company own a large number of lighters, barges, and other craft, which are daily employed by my company in going to and from the said docks, and conveying produce and goods of various kinds to and from my company's wharf, factory, and premises from and to the said docks for the purposes of my company's trade, and in respect of such lighters, barges, and other craft, my company has hitherto been entitled to exemption from payment of rates in accordance with the provisions of the Acts relating to the two companies referred to in the preamble of the Bill. My company has had a tabulated statement prepared giving the exact number of times the craft belonging to my company enter into the various docks each week, together with the total for the year. In the year ending the 31st December, 1899, the number of entries into the docks of the company was 919, being an average of rather more than 76 per month, and rather more than 17 per week. My company will be seriously and injuriously affected if the exemptions from rates and charges should, as was proposed by the provisions of the Bill, be repealed, and if the London and India Dock Company should be authorised, as was also proposed by the Bill, to levy rates and charges on goods discharged or received by lighters and craft using the docks, inasmuch as they would thenceforth be liable, in respect of their lighters, barges, and craft entering the docks of the two companies, and in respect of the goods discharged or received to or from on board ships or vessels lying therein to the payment of the rates and charges which the Bill sought to authorise the Dock company to impose. For the purposes of calculation I have treated the 919 entries of barges above referred to as separate barges. I have taken each barge as being of 50 tons burden, and this represents a total tonnage of 45,950 tons. At 4d. per ton per barge, the annual cost would be £765 16s. 8d. And taking the proposed charge on the contents at an average of 1s. 3d. per ton, the result would be £2,871 17s. 6d.; or together £3,637 14s. 2d. That amount of £3,637 14s. 2d. per annum which my company would have to pay, capitalised on a 5 per cent. basis represents a sum of £72,754 3s. 4d. The merchants and traders of the Port of London have ever since the establishment of docks in the River Thames been

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exempt from the payment of any rates in respect of lighterage or in respect of goods discharged or received to or from on board ships or vessels lying in the said docks, and this exemption was specially conferred for special reasons at the time powers were conferred by Parliament on the two companies, and my company submits that no circumstances have arisen since the passing of the Acts relating to the two companies referred to in the preamble of the Bill which can to any extent justify a departure from the principle of exemption laid down by the provisions of those Acts. The imposition of such charges as those which were proposed by the Bill would, in my opinion, very seriously and injuriously affect the trade of the Port of London, and would have the effect of driving a considerable portion of it to foreign and other ports, while, owing to the decrease of trade that would ensue, I am satisfied that the dock companies themselves would derive no practical benefit from the change, and in all probability their revenue would decrease as the result of the change. My own company would, as far as possible, cease to avail themselves of the docks, and adopt other means of bringing in their goods free from the enormous burden that the change proposed by the Bill would entail. In my opinion the reason for the financial difficulties of the two dock companies is partly that they have over capitalised, and have a large accumulation of dead and unremunerative capital.

9122. (*Mr. Ellis.*) As I gather, your evidence is based upon a volume of trade of 46,000 tons more or less per annum?—Exactly.

9123. It is all based upon that?—It is.

9124. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You say you might adopt other means of bringing in goods free from the burden that the charge proposed by the Bill entailed. What other means would you adopt?—It is possible to get them through other ports very often. For instance, we are able to ship to America viâ Southampton at cheaper rates than we can from London.

9125. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You say that the £3,637 14s. 2d. which your company would have to pay per annum capitalised would represent £72,754 3s. 4d., which would be unremunerative?—That is rather an unusual way of estimating the effect of a tax, is it not? Just assume that a company was paying 20 per cent., and a small *ad valorem* tax or rate was put upon it, if you pursue this method would you say that some of the capital of that company became absolutely infertile?—I do not propose to push that point; I rather repeat that this sum of £3,637 14s. 2d. is practically an addition to our rental.

9126. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do you withdraw the statements about the £72,754?—No, I do not. I only say that the £72,754 3s. 4d. is the capitalised value of that increased rental.

9127. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) If I have capital in a business which I am pursuing at a great profit I do not cease to have a profitable capital because a small burden is laid upon me?—No, but it is an additional burden.

9128. You have taken the full amount of the tax, capitalised it on a 5 per cent. basis, and then written off £72,000 as if it were absolutely dead weight in your business. I should be glad if you would refer me to some precedent for that method of treatment?—I expressed that opinion in giving my evidence, though, perhaps, I should not quite put it in that form.

9129. You may, perhaps, withdraw that?—I can withdraw the statement as to its representing a capitalised value of £72,754 which would be unremunerative, but the £3,637 per annum would have to be paid as extra rent.

9130. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are the crews of your barges under the Watermen's Company?—They are.

9131. And you are compelled to have them?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9132. When was your evidence prepared?—At the beginning of last year.

9133. You have not really, I suppose, paid much attention to it since?—No, I have not.

Mr. William Sargant called and examined.

Mr. W. Sargant.

9134. You are chairman of the London Metal Exchange?—Yes.

9135. I understand you desire to lay evidence before us with regard to the proposals of the Dock Companies in so far as they affect the metal trade?—Yes. I wish, in the first place, to explain the altered and altering conditions of the metal trade of the United Kingdom. Twenty-five or thirty years ago this country had an important position as a producer of metals. This is so no longer. We now import largely, partly for our own consumption, but chiefly to re-export, either as raw material, or manufactured, or refined in some shape or another. Other countries are close competitors for such work, hence arises the absolute necessity of keeping down charges on carriage and working. I give the following figures to prove this position:—

	Tons.
Production of Lead in the United Kingdom in 1870	73,420
Ditto - - ditto - - ditto - 1899	26,000
World's production of Lead in 1876	327,000
Ditto - - ditto - 1899	800,000
Production of Tin in the United Kingdom in 1870	10,250
Ditto - - ditto - - ditto - 1899	4,400
World's production of Tin in 1870	22,944
Ditto - - ditto - 1899	71,000
Production of Copper in the United Kingdom in 1870	7,000
Ditto - - ditto - - ditto - 1899	600
World's production of Copper in 1870	151,963
Ditto - - ditto - 1899	428,724

9136. When you talk of "metals," what do you mean?—Tin, copper, iron, lead, quicksilver, antimony, and the ores from which they are made. Those are the principal metals. I do not speak of the fine chemical metals such as uranium or platinum, or anything of that sort. The trade of the Port of London has developed, and large sums of money have been sunk in the erection of works on the Thames on the security of Acts of Parliament, under which the waters of the docks are declared free, and lighters permitted to use such water without charge or hindrance, and receive goods from the import vessels without payment of any dues whatever, and although as a matter of policy it may be fair to allow a small charge to be made on the barges sufficient to recoup the expense of docking (said by the dock company to be £50,000 or £60,000 per annum) it is manifestly most unjust to give the dock authorities such new powers as would enable them to ruin or seriously cripple trades which would never have sprung up but for the recognised freedom of the water of the docks abstracted from the River Thames, on the conditions that it is now sought to annul. The margin of profit at which the business is carried on is, owing to Continental competition, extremely small, probably ¼ to ½ per cent., and the imposition of the proposed charge would be specially onerous on metals and minerals of low value. The trade would practically be diverted to foreign countries, and thus many large industries, which at present afford employment to many thousands in London, would be destroyed.

9137. When you say ¼ to ½ per cent. do you mean a net profit on the turnover?—Yes, on the turnover. The metal trade is cut exceedingly fine. I suppose no trade is cut so fine as the metal trade. The docks state that 142,000 barges, equalling 9,000,000 tons, enter the docks every year without paying anything to the dock company. 1½d. per ton on this would bring in £50,000 to £60,000 per annum, which they say they require, whereas the docks are proposing to charge, firstly, 3d. or 4d. per ton on the registered tonnage of the barge; secondly, 1s. per ton on metals, etc., and 1s. 6d. per ton on tea, wool, light goods, etc., on the contents of the barges. Although it may be fair to charge something on the barges, it does not follow that it is right to charge on the contents, bearing in mind that the dock company does not handle the goods except as ships' agents. Lead at the

present time costs 1s. 3d. per ton lighterage to bring from the ship to the manufacturers' wharf. If the docks carry out their proposal, in addition to the 1s. 3d. per ton, there will be a charge of 3d. per ton on the registered tonnage, equalling about 6d. per ton on the contents, plus 1s. per ton on the contents of the barge. Incidentally I should like to point out that the registered tonnage of barges is generally in excess of their contents. Barges registering from 60 tons to 120 tons bring to a manufacturer's wharf parcels of 50 or 100 tons, and take away from the wharf parcels of 10, 20, 30, or 40 tons. It is therefore contended that the 3d. or 4d. per ton on the registered tonnage equals an average of 6d. per ton on the contents. The proposed charge, therefore, on the barge and its contents would amount to on metals, etc., 1s. 6d. per ton; on tea, etc., 2s. per ton. Therefore the total charge from the ship to the manufacturer's wharf would be 2s. 9d. per ton, or more than double what it is at present. Galvanised iron is a London trade, competing not only with the Continent, but with other ports in the United Kingdom. The proposed extra charges would be about 2s. 6d. per ton—an imposition quite sufficient to transfer the trade from London to other places. Tin is largely traded for re-export to America and other places. Increased handling charges would either stop it altogether or transfer it to Holland or other Continental places. We would further contend that the charge proposed on metals (1s. 6d. per ton) is disproportionately high compared to the charge (2s. per ton) on tea and light goods. If tea is landed at a wharf or dock the charges are per chest or ½ chest, and amount on an average to 50s. per ton. An increase of 1s. 6d. per ton on 4s. for metals, etc., equals 37½ per cent., whereas an increase of 2s. per ton on 50s. for tea is only 4 per cent. This tends to show that if 2s. per ton is a fair extra charge for tea, etc., 1½d. per ton would be quite enough for metals (lead, iron, etc.), if indeed any charge whatever which includes a charge on contents can be considered fair. We should like further to point out that the charges proposed on metals, imported as they are into England and re-exported, cannot stand any increase of cost owing to the competition of Antwerp and other places abroad, and that the imposition of the proposed charges would absolutely ruin this trade in London, whereas the charges on articles such as tea and wool and light goods which are consumed in the United Kingdom and not re-exported would not be felt in the same way. The docks have contended that 1-144th part of 1d. in the pound would never be felt by the consumer. The use of this argument tends to show that the dock company have drafted their Bill considering mainly light goods such as tea, wool, etc., and ignoring the effect of its incidence upon the heavy and cheap metals, such as iron, lead, lead ores, etc. The effect of this, we believe, for reasons stated below, would be to absolutely ruin these trades in London. It may be perfectly true that 1-144th part of a 1d. in the pound would not be felt on light goods, the value of which probably ranges from £50 to £200 per ton, and if you take 2s. per ton on an average value of £125 it is equal to only 1s. 7d. per cent. But with iron, lead, and minerals the case is absolutely different; their values may be stated to range from £2 10s. to £17 per ton, and if you take 1s. 6d. per ton on an average value of £10 per ton it is equal to 15s. per cent., or if, as is the case, the bulk of these metals is re-exported, the charge is incurred twice over (1s. 6d. in and 1s. 6d. out), and would therefore amount to 30s. per cent. To illustrate the effect this Bill would have upon trade it may be pointed out that to treat 15,000 tons of metal a capital of £60,000 would be required, which would earn at the present day but little over 5 per cent. per annum. £60,000 at 5 per cent. is £3,000. The 3s. rate mentioned (1s. 6d. in and 1s. 6d. out) on the tonnage equals £2,250. The point on which we want to lay special stress is that, while admitting it may be fair to the docks that they should be allowed to make charges on barge tonnage for docking barges in and out, yet there should be no charge on the contents. The proposed charges might slightly hamper the trade in comparatively expensive articles, but would be absolute ruin to the export metal trade. I may say that the statements I have made were carefully considered by our committee and sifted, and in putting them in this way it represents really the collective opinion of about 200 firms of fairly large importance all in the metal trade.

9138. Is that the majority of the firms in London?—The majority of the metal firms belong to the Exchange, and we have about two hundred firms on the Exchange.

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9139. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) As I understand it, your point is that by reason of the particular nature of the commodity with which you deal (metal) the tax would be much more heavy upon you than upon the owners of the lighter or other commodities?—Our chief point is that London is an optional port for people who sell metals. Instead of sending them to London they may send them to Holland, or they may send to Rotterdam or Amsterdam to be treated in the same way as they are treated in London. If you put a charge on in London you will simply throw the trade away to the Continent.

9140. You say that the margin is extremely narrow as between yourselves and all the competitors?—Yes, and there are so many clamorous competitors.

9141. I think I understand you upon that point. The second point, putting it quite broadly—I wish you to say if I rightly understand it—is that by reason of the particular character of your commodity you would be suffering much more severely from a tax than the owners of the lighter commodity would be?—Yes, that is our point.

9142. Do you put it that you, as a merchant in London, should be absolved from all payment in respect of improvements?—No, we have admitted that we think that the docks would be entitled to a small charge on these barges.

9143. Your point is that you would be sufficiently assessed if the tax was upon the barges and not upon the contents of the barges?—If the tax were about 1½d. per ton on the tonnage of the barges, that we consider would recoup the docks for any expenses to which they are at present put in handling the barges.

9144. In your opinion, would you be compelled by the operation of ordinary forces to bear a portion of that burden?—I do not quite follow that point.

9145. If the tax were made upon barges do you think that the barge owners could compel you to bear a portion of it?—Yes; we take it for granted that lightermen would come round to us in the long run, as it were, for anything that was imposed upon them.

9146. And to that extent you make no objection?—To that extent we make no objection. We think it is fair and equitable under the circumstances that they should be paid whatever it costs them to open the dock gates and for the men's time and that sort of thing. We think that that really was not included in the spirit of the Act of Parliament which gave barges free entrance to the docks, because the docks are put to expense as well.

9147. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Am I right in supposing that the iron that you deal with is mainly manufactured iron?—The iron that I have referred to is mainly manufactured iron. There is a little pig iron which comes, but it is a low-priced commodity—50s. or 60s. a ton—and of course 2s. 6d. on that would come heavy.

9148. But the bulk of your business that you have alluded to so far as iron is concerned, I suppose, would be manufactured iron?—Yes; the sheets of iron come in to be galvanised, and are re-exported, and there are other things of that character.

9149. With regard to lead and tin and copper, is that unmanufactured chiefly?—The copper is mainly unmanufactured, and the tin is entirely unmanufactured. It comes in in the state in which it leaves the East Indies.

9150. When you say that galvanised iron is a London trade, do you mean that that galvanised iron has been manufactured in Great Britain?—Yes.

9151. And is sent here for shipment?—No. I mean that on the riverside there are works which buy the black sheets and galvanise them and export them, and that the same work is done on the Continent. It is also done at Swansea and various other places, so that it is a question of competition.

9152. But whether galvanising is done at one place or another it is British trade?—Not entirely. There is a great deal of Continental trade as well.

9153. Do yo umean that galvanised iron comes in from the Continent?—Take this case. Suppose Australia wanted to buy 1,000 tons of galvanised iron sheets. The intending purchaser would send to Antwerp and get quotations, and he would send to London. Naturally if the London people are to get the trade, their

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charges must be as light as possible, otherwise the Continent would get the order.

9154. I think I quite grasp your meaning—that the galvanised iron, so far as London is concerned, has been made in Great Britain?—This process of galvanising is carried on in Great Britain, and there are works in the Midlands that make the black sheets, and send them up to these various works.

9155. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Galvanising is a separate industry, is it not?—Yes.

9156. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What I mean is that the galvanised iron that you talk of is a British trade that comes to London as a port of shipment. It is not galvanised iron imported from the Continent?—We do not import from the Continent, but we have to compete with the Continent in the execution of orders that are placed all over the world.

9157. You think therefore that any burden placed upon the galvanised iron trade would be a burden with respect to foreign competition?—Yes.

9158. (*Mr. Peel.*) Does the bulk of your cargoes discharge in the docks?—Yes, I suppose the bulk of them would. For instance, tin comes in from the East Indies in some of those large steamers, and the steamers come in the docks.

9159. I suppose your contention is that if a charge was placed on the goods in the barges as well as on the barges themselves that charge should, if possible, vary according to the value of the goods?—We do not go the length of proposing an *ad valorem* charge.

9160. I am asking you supposing it was suggested that a charge should be made would you prefer to have an *ad valorem* one?—No. I think it would be very troublesome and very difficult to carry out, but you can make a broad line of demarcation and say that goods that are worth 60s. a ton cannot pay the same charges as goods that are worth £200 a ton. If you were to have an *ad valorem* system the confusion would be so frightful that you could not manage the business at all.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9161. Are you a dealer?—I am a broker.

9162. And you deal with most of these things with warrants?—Yes.

9163. And you deal not only with metals imported to London but to other ports?—Yes.

9164. Is London in the ordinary acceptation of the term, a metal port?—It is a port in which there is a very large business done in metals. I suppose there is more business done in metals in London than in any other city in the United Kingdom. There is a trade done, and the imports are very large, and the exports are large.

9165. Does a large proportion of it consist of transhipment of goods?—A very large proportion.

9166. Could you give me roughly in this very heavy class of goods what proportion has been dealt with by transhipment within the limits of the Port of London?—I dare say the transhipment business is between half and two-thirds.

9167. 50 or 60 per cent. of both exports and imports?—Very likely. If you want an exact answer I cannot give it you off hand. I am only giving it you roughly.

9168. Have you considered the question of transhipment with regard to the Dock Company's proposal?—We have considered it very much.

9169. That the Dock Company's proposal was to exempt them?—We consider that the Dock Company's proposal will kill it.

9170. Kill the transhipment trade?—Yes, it will kill the transhipment business.

(*Chairman.*) Can you point out to us, Mr. Harper, any statement which the witness has made which affects the people whom you represent?

(*Mr. Harper.*) The witness is pointing out a reason why a class of goods that goes to the wharves should not be taxed. I am pointing out to the Commission that he is making a case which cannot really be substantiated, because he is under the impression that the transhipment goods which form a large part of the London business will be taxed.

(*Witness.*) I did not see anything about exemption of transhipment goods in the Bill.

(*Mr. Harper.*) I have substantially made my point, I think.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9171. I see the statement of your evidence is dated October 17th, 1900?—Yes.

9172. And I gather that, like Mr. Blackwell, you have not been attending to the matter since?—We sent this statement in, and we awaited the summons of the Commissioners to give the evidence.

9173. And you were content to abide by it?—We could do nothing else that I am aware of.

9174. Have you in point of fact ever seen the Dock Company's Bill of 1901?—No, I have not. So that if in their new Bill they modify any of these points to that extent our opposition would be abated; or if they made it worse our opposition would be increased.

Mr. Francis Charles Hill, called and examined.

Mr. F. C. Hill

9175. (*Chairman.*) You also appear before us on behalf of the London Metal Exchange?—Yes.

9176. I understand you restrict your evidence to questions touching the trade in lead?—Yes; the manufacture of lead in the Port of London. If you will allow me I will make quite a short statement. My point is simply this: the lead trade in London is unique: it is like no other trade. The lead trade has come to London simply because the waterway of the docks is free. We do not land lead at the docks, simply because we cannot afford to pay anything practically for so doing. It costs us at the present moment with our own lighters 1s. 3d. a ton from Spanish ships, Australian ships, or American ships. This is pig lead and silver lead that I am speaking of, or lead containing silver and gold. When it is chiefly silver lead we desilverise it, sell the silver, and then turn it into sheet lead, lead pipes, white lead, tea lead, thin lead, and other products of lead—litharge—and if this charge were made in some cases it would come to about 5s. a ton in and out, and in lead ores, which only contain about 50 per cent. of lead 7s. 6d. a ton in and out, and in lead ores, which only contain about 50 per cent. of lead 7s. 6d. a ton. We should simply move our works to Antwerp. We are at the present moment declining to take lead ores from Australia, and they are going to other European smelting works.

9177. When you say "our works," you are giving evidence on behalf of the London Metal Exchange, I understand?—Yes, but I also represent Locke, Lancaster, and W. W. and R. Johnson and Sons, Limited, who manufacture about 35,000 or 40,000 tons of lead per annum in four different places. I am director and secretary. I am also managing director of the London Smelting Company, who erected works some two years ago for treating between 15,000 and 20,000 tons of lead ore per annum, none of which can possibly afford a rate of anything like 2s. 6d. or 5s. or 7s. 6d. a ton. We see the justice of the docks wanting to charge on the barges themselves, and are perfectly willing to pay it. We think it is quite right that they should be recouped for anything they do, but we cannot understand why they should have a right to charge on the contents of the barge. If they do charge, we shall have to have this stuff dealt with in Antwerp, where the facilities are greater, I believe, than anywhere else. My evidence is simply against the excessive rate proposed to be charged on an article which cannot bear it.

9178. Is that all you desire to say?—Yes.

9179. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What is the average value of lead?—£12 a ton. To-day's price is £12 7s. 6d.

9180. And it is sometimes a great deal more, is it not?—Within the last six months it has been as high as £18, but it is 18 years since it touched that price before. You may take it that lead ranges from £10 a ton to £16, and that £13 is a very fair average price.

9181. What is the price of lead ore that contains silver and gold?—About the same. The value of lead

ore is about £7, and the silver in it is another £7, so you get about £14 a ton. The gold ores are much more costly, but they are very few and far between.

9182. And this article, you say, cannot bear a charge of 5s. or 7s. 6d. a ton?—No. On lead ores I make it out that it would be 7s. 6d. a ton, and on lead itself 2s. 6d.

9183. What would the charges in Antwerp be?—I do not know. I only know that we lose lead which goes to a great manufacturing place in Antwerp, for 6d. a ton. They will take it 6d. a ton below us, so that we are very near the departure line.

9184. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Where is the lead manufactured in London chiefly used?—The white lead is used in London and in Australia. The sheet lead is exported to India, China, Japan, Australia, and some small quantities to South America, and it is used in England on English houses. The same remark would apply to lead pipes.

9185. Could you give us at all what proportion out of the total trade in manufactured lead is sent away?—There are three or four branches of it. With regard to pig lead itself, I should say about one-half possibly is exported, or perhaps not quite so much; I should think about a third of the white lead is exported, and of sheet and piping, about a half.

9186. Then a very large amount of the whole trade is manufactured here and re-exported?—Yes, it is, and that is why I am afraid we should lose it.

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9187. If your views are right, not only would you lose it, but the docks would lose it, too?—The docks would lose it, certainly, but the docks have never had this trade in lead, not from any unwillingness of ours to give it to them, but we cannot afford a 4s. rate to land it. I had to pay 4s. a ton on lead. I do not know what they did with the lead, but they landed it, and I had to go and get it, and pay 4s. a ton for it.

9188. You think, therefore, that the imposition of this amount of extra rate would drive the trade away?—I am positive that it would drive the lead ore trade away, which we have just made provision for; and it would drive away a very large proportion of silver leads imported for conversion into what are known as market leads. That would go to Antwerp, no doubt.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9189. The same remark that Mr. Sargant made I gather you accept, namely, that this evidence of yours was prepared on October 17th last year?—Yes.

9190. And that you have not attended to the matter since?—Yes. I have read all the evidence up to about Christmas time, but I have not read the Bill you have referred to of 1901.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9191. Would a small impost of 2d. or 3d. on goods, in place of a lighterage rate, affect you?—Do you mean a general rate on anything that came into the river?

9192. Yes?—No, not a rate of 2d. or 3d.

Mr. Ernest George Leary called, and examined.

9193. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the firm of C. Leary and Company?—Yes.

9194. You have been nominated by the London branch of the Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom to offer evidence before us with special reference to the mahogany wood trade?—Yes.

9195. Will you be good enough to give us your evidence?—My firm have for the last 60 years carried on business as wood brokers. My evidence is confined to the subject of mahogany logs, of which some 30,000 tons, representing an average value of about £225,000, are annually imported into London. This timber is stored in the West India Docks, and for the labour in handling it the authorities controlling those docks charge the consignee a consolidated rate of 8s. 6d. per ton. For similar work in Liverpool the consignee is charged about half this rate, in Glasgow about 6s. 6d., and in Hamburg about 4s. 6d. per ton. We have notice from steamship companies that in addition to the 8s. 6d. per ton they will, in certain cases, charge the consignee extra for lifting logs weighing over one ton. This is in consequence of the dock company's lifting machinery being in such cases inadequate. A great portion of the dock company's machinery for handling mahogany is infirm and out of date, the supply of machinery also being insufficient for the trade. The storage accommodation at the West India Docks is inadequate for the size of the business, and consequently the work of landing the mahogany and preparing it for sale is frequently much delayed. If London is to hold her own as a mahogany importing centre, it is, in my opinion, necessary that the storage ground should be in the hands of a public body with the interest of the trade of London at heart, instead of in the hands of a private company whose first care is for its shareholders. It is impossible to get at evidence showing the profits made by the dock company on this mahogany business, but comparing their charges with those elsewhere the profits should be unreasonably large. I submit that the removal of existing restrictions as to persons available as lightermen would facilitate lighterage in London, and so help the mahogany trade.

9196. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I gather that your complaint is want of facility for the trade?—That and the charges, on which I understand I am not allowed to say anything, is the principal objection.

9197. You say that in your opinion it is necessary that the storage ground should be in the hands of a public body. Is the storage ground insufficient?—Yes.

Mr. E. C. Leary.

9198. Is that why you think the trade is conducted expensively. I do not quite see what difference it is going to make to your trade?—The main thing is this. We are competing with Liverpool. In Liverpool mahogany can be handled for about half the cost, and so we are knocked out correspondingly.

9199. (*Chairman.*) We are quite willing to hear anything you have to say with reference to the incidence of any particular charge in your trade?—I do not quite understand what I am allowed to say, and what I am not allowed to say. I understood that the basis of the whole inquiry was the charges in London.

9200. Have you anything to tell us as to the incidence of any charge hurting your business?—I mean to say that these charges are driving away the trade of London, because mahogany can be handled cheaper elsewhere. We are losing our business here, and it is being developed in other towns. In Liverpool they have a public trust, and I think that is the reason on the whole why they are able to handle the goods far more cheaply. I think if we had the same kind of body here, we should have the same charge.

9201. Why do you think so? Will you give us your reasons?—Because I think the company here make a profit out of proportion.

9202. When you say "the Company," whom do you mean?—The India Dock Company here are the Company handling the mahogany. I think they make a profit out of proportion. I can send a cargo to Liverpool and have it handled at almost exactly half the charge; therefore I say that the extra profit here goes into the hands of the Company, and that they make too much out of it.

9203. Have you any experience of Liverpool personally?—Yes.

9204. And you say you do it cheaper in Liverpool than here?—Yes, at about half the price.

9205. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are these the dock charges in the case of both Companies?—No, the Dock Company's charge here is a consolidated rate of 8s. 6d. a ton. Up in Liverpool the ground belongs to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. They let out the ground to the brokers, who do their own work, and they are able to do work at about half the expense and still make a very good thing out of it.

9206. Have you ever proposed to the Dock Company that they should let the ground to you, and let you do

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the business yourselves?—Yes, and they have not received it favourably.

Cross-examined by Mr. Lewis Coward.

9207. I do not quite follow whether you complain of the want of appliances with regard to your timber?—Yes, that is part of my complaint.

9208. With reference to the Millwall Docks, have you seen the new appliances that are now at work?—No. I am only concerned for the mahogany trade here, and that trade centres in the West India Dock.

9209. And you do nothing in the Millwall Dock?—I do not say I do nothing, but the mahogany trade does not do anything. I am only giving evidence on the mahogany trade now. Other people will give evidence with regard to the Millwall trade.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9210. You say that the London system some way or another is driving the mahogany trade to Liverpool?—Yes.

9211. Where does mahogany come from?—All over the world: Honduras, Mexico, Cuba, Africa, Panama—anywhere in the tropics practically.

9212. You may not be able to answer the question, but is it not a fact that the stores of mahogany in London at the present time are very large?—Yes.

9213. About as large as they have ever been within your recollection?—I should say as large.

9214. And the Liverpool trade in mahogany has increased very largely?—Yes.

9215. With African mahogany?—No, with mahogany generally.

9216. It has increased with African mahogany?—Yes, it has increased with African mahogany.

9217. The African mahogany trade has largely increased?—Yes.

9218. And that goes to Liverpool by Mr. A. L. Jones' boats?—Part of it does.

9219 (*Mr. Ellis.*) Do I understand that you wish to represent to us that the mahogany trade is being endangered in the Port of London by the charges that exist at present?—I should say it is being restricted. I think that is the fairer way to put it.

9220. You would not represent it as a declining trade, but a non-growing trade; is that so?—As a very slightly growing trade compared with other places where it is growing rapidly.

9221. You employ the term "restricted"?—Yes.

9222. It is being restricted by the charges?—Yes.

9223. And any further charges you would represent would endanger it?—I should say they would still further restrict it.

9224. But I gather that your evidence is confined, as you have told us, to the subject of mahogany logs to the extent of some 30,000 tons per annum?—Yes.

9225. Your firm, I presume, does not deal with the whole of that?—No, only with a part of it.

9226. But you are authorised to speak for the whole?—Yes.

Mr. GEORGE TALBOT BURROWS COBBETT called and examined.

Mr. G. T. B. Cobbett.

9227. (*Chairman.*) You are proprietor of the firm of Cobbett and Company, who are importers of hardwood from American ports?—Yes.

9228. You have been nominated by the London Branch of the Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom to lay evidence before us with reference to the American hardwood trade?—Yes.

9229. Will you be good enough to give us that evidence?—I have been engaged in this trade for the past 30 years, and import some thousands of tons annually. The vessels engaged in carrying this hardwood chiefly unload in the docks under the control of the London and India Docks Company, and in the Millwall Docks. The steamers from American ports engaged in this trade, are discharged under what is known as the "London" clause. By the provision of this "London" clause in bills of lading, I am compelled to pay 6s. 9d. to 7s. per standard on the North Carolina pine for discharging the goods from the ship and delivery to craft. These charges are a recent imposition forced on consignees in the year 1887 by the concerted action of the various Atlantic transport lines, in inserting the "London" clause. The merchants on this side are compelled to accept this clause, and are thus deprived of the rights of free delivery, provided for by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, Chapter 60. When this clause was first introduced the dock companies performed the work of unloading ships, but shortly after the London and India Docks Joint Committee abandoned this work in certain docks, and it is now performed by the shipowners in those docks. Nearly all the wood from United States ports, unloading in the docks of the London and India Dock Company, is unloaded by the shipowners, who usually land the goods on the quay, sort them there, deliver them to barges, or to the dock company for delivery to land carriage. For the purpose of sorting the goods and delivering to lighters, the shipowners hire the quay from the dock company. Merchants desirous of collecting their goods from the ship by water, have to make proper application, and also have their barges alongside the steamer within 72 hours of the ship's report. If such an application is not made, and/or if barges are not alongside ship within 72 hours of ship's report, the dock company take possession of the goods, and charge their heavy consolidated rate of 9s. to 11s. per load of 50 cubic feet. In order to escape the burden of the Dock Company's Consolidated Rate many importers duly make application with their craft within 72 hours of steamer's report. The craft are frequently detained in the docks some days before they can obtain delivery of goods. The Dock Company do not give notice as to the time when wood arriving by these American liners will be ready for delivery to craft. Large numbers of barges are thus sent into the docks and detained there for lengthy periods. This is a source of considerable expense to merchants who have to pay demurrage on these craft, while lying idle in the docks. It is asserted that the number of barges in the docks hinder the free movement of ships, and generally handicap the work of the London and India Docks Company. I am of the opinion that the number of barges lying in the docks would be considerably less if the London and India Docks Company or the steamship company were to facilitate overside delivery by giving some notice as to when goods arriving by American liners will be ready, instead of requiring them to be in the dock within 72 hours of the steamer's report, from which time they have to lie in the docks, awaiting the delivery of the goods. During this time they are an expense to merchants, and must considerably add to the number of craft lying about in the docks forming the alleged impediments to the movement of ships. Our lightermen will not quote for work to include risk of demurrage, but charge 10s. per craft per day extra for each day's detention. In consequence of this detention my firm frequently find it less expensive to take delivery by land carriage and pay the Dock Company's quay-rate, or to store in the Dock Company's warehouses and pay the Dock Company's heavy consolidated rate, than to pay a long bill for demurrage on craft. Assuming that the report of this Commission will decide whether or no the London and India Docks Company introduce a similar Bill, I wish to submit that if they obtain and exercise the powers of making charges on such barges and their contents, it will greatly add to the already considerable expense of obtaining goods from the importing vessel by water, and will further assist the London and India Docks Company, to obtain the storage of such goods under the consolidated rates already referred to. I have received numerous complaints from my customers complaining of the bad system prevailing in the Port of London, referring to the length of time barges are delayed in getting their cargo, by which they suffer loss. As an instance I have here a letter of November 1st, 1900, from Messrs. F. A. Christie and Sons, Timber Importers, Steam Saw Mills, Ipswich:—"Messrs. Cobbett and Co., Dear Sirs. "In reply to your letter of the 31st ulto. we received "only a short notice of the steamer's arrival, which "necessitated a special journey to London and a hard "day's tramp to fix a ready barge, for which we had

"under the circumstances to pay an excessive freight. "The barge waited about a fortnight before she got any "cargo, a portion of the stuff was badly damaged by "being in error placed on the quay under a waterspout, "some of the lines were short of the invoiced quantity, "and altogether we reckoned that £25 would not cover "us for the demurrage paid and these additional "charges. "Although this is our worst experience of "London it is not a solitary instance by any means, "and we have determined never to use London if it is "possible to do without the goods, or unless impossible "to get stuff anywhere else.—Yours truly, F. A. "Christie and Sons." Then I have also a letter from Messrs. Henry Tolputt and Co., Limited, timber merchants, Steam Saw Mills, Folkestone, of November 14th 1900. "Messrs. Cobbett and Co. Dear Sirs,—Reply- "ing to your letter of the 31st October, we were con- "signees of two parcels of whitewood and Carolina "pine, per s.s. 'Dania,' which we wished to take away "by our sailing barges, the 'Excelsior' and 'George "Smeed.' The barges arrived in Victoria Docks on or "before December 13th. The former barge got a cargo "after a few days delay, but the 'George Smeed' was "unable to get any of our goods until January 1st, and "finished loading January 3rd with part cargo. The "masters of the sailing barges said that all the trouble "would have been saved if the steamer had discharged "overside into their sailing barges, instead of landing "timber on the quay. It appears that the whole "cargo was mixed up landing on the quay, and flour "and other timber was put on top of our goods. The "masters and mates of our barges also say that some "of our goods were put into lighters and sent to Til- "bury Docks. We had to pay the 'George Smeed' £15 "demurrage, and after a lot of trouble we recovered "about 100 pieces of whitewood and Carolina pine "which we were short. These pieces, we might men- "tion, should have been brought by the 'George "'Smeed,' and there was loss of dead freight. Apolo- "gising for not having answered your letter before, and "trusting the information will be satisfactory to you, "yours truly, Henry Tolputt and Co., Ltd." While the dock companies complain that the docks are crowded by barges the consignees complain that they have to send barges into the docks before they are wanted, that these barges are unnecessarily detained there, and in the opinion of consignees the crowding of the docks is largely caused by the dock company's own action in compelling consignees to send their barges into the docks days before delivery of their wood can be given. If the dock company's quay charges on wood were not so heavy, and if good facilities existed for delivery in railway trucks at a low rate direct from the quays, a great deal of hardwood would be taken that way instead of being removed in barges.

9230. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You say that requiring the barges to be alongside within 72 hours produces a congestion of barges in the docks, and causes expense to the consignees?—Yes.

9231. What do you propose as an alternative. Do you suggest that the dock company should give some notice as to when goods arriving by American liners would be ready?—Yes.

9232. What do you propose as an alternative to the 72 hours' notice?—I should propose that they should write a letter to the consignee informing him that the goods are ready for delivery, and that he should send in his craft and that he should have 72 hours from the time he receives such notice.

9233. How would the dock company know when the particular cargo was coming out of the ship?—The dock company know when that same particular cargo, if it is for land carriage, is out of the ship.

9234. Is not that put on the quay?—The American liners discharge all timber on the quay.

9235-6. I thought you were alluding to that which goes overside?—No; no timber goes overside. The bill of lading says "the ship has the option of placing the within-mentioned goods on the quays." They exercise no option, but they always do it. We can get no overside delivery.

9237. Have you any suggestion to make as to the amount of notice?—I think we might have notice.

9238. From the time when the goods are on the quay?—From the time when the goods are ready for delivery. They occasionally keep goods for perhaps 14 or 21 days on the quay, with your barge waiting outside on demurrage, before you can get the goods.

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9239. Is that because they have to be sorted, or why do they keep the barges waiting?—Occasionally another steamer comes in and discharges on the same quay, and your goods are ungetatable, whereas they might have delivered them overside. But instead of putting them overside they often go to useless and unnecessary labour, and place goods on the quay when you have your barge alongside the steamer. It seems an absurd way, but they do it.

9240. Then you say that insisting that the barges should be alongside or in the dock within 72 hours places a burden on the consignee, because the barges are often kept waiting a long time; and at the same time it produces a congestion of the waterway of the dock, because the barges are there doing nothing?—Yes. I think I heard you ask a previous witness whether he was not aware that there were sufficient facilities in the dock. We have, within the last fortnight, made application to the Millwall Dock Company and to the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, to have certain timber piled under cover in those docks, but in neither case can we obtain the assurance that they will place such timber under cover, on account of their having no space available for it.

9241. (*Mr. Ellis.*) A previous witness spoke to us about mahogany. Does your evidence relate to any particular timber?—Not to mahogany, but generally to American lumber, that is, all sorts of American woods—United States woods.

9242. What is Carolina pine?—That is generally included in the term "hardwood."

9243. Of course, in this country, we do not classify it as "hardwood"?—No; it has never been quite decided which is which.

9244. You say, generally, American timber?—Yes.

9245. You referred to certain complaints, and you read a letter from Messrs. Henry Tolputt and Company, of Folkestone, dated November 14th, 1900. They refer to some barges which arrived in Victoria Dock on or before December 13th. I suppose that would be December 13th, 1899?—Yes.

9246. Was that a letter written to you in reply to a request for instances of detention?—I think it was.

9247. Then, taking the letter from Messrs. Christie and Sons, I see that letter does not particularise the names of the barges or the dates. It gives very little information except that the supposed loss was £25?—Yes.

9248. Can you supply us at all with the particulars which appear to be omitted?—I can get you the particulars, but I have not them with me.

9249. On the facts of this detention have you made any complaint to the Dock Committee?—We, no doubt, had considerable correspondence with the superintendent of the Victoria Docks.

9250. We may take it that at various times you have made complaints?—Yes, we have complained at various times—many times.

9251. And these two letters you wish to put in as illustrations?—Yes.

9252. Did you receive any explanation from the dock companies at any time of the facts dealt with in these particular letters?—No, nothing that I can recollect of a satisfactory nature.

9253. And these are the only two letters that you bring before us?—These are the only two I bring before you.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9254. You have told us that all your goods come under the "London clause" of the North American bill of lading?—Yes, practically all.

9255. I see, with reference to these two complaints which you have put in in your evidence, you say you have received complaints from customers?—Yes.

9256. These complaints that you have put in are written in answer to requests from you to the customer to formulate the complaint, were they?—No, not to formulate the complaint, but in order that their complaint might be brought before the Commission.

9257. You wrote and asked them for the complaint for you to lay it before the Commission?—Yes. I had

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had a great deal of previous trouble with these gentlemen as to who was to pay these charges.

9258. So you do not put them forward as your own complaints, but complaints from your customers which you wrote for and obtained?—These two particular ones, but I can bring you plenty of my own.

9259. As regards one vessel mentioned, the "Dania," she is a Johnston liner, I think, is she not?—Yes.

9260. And bringing hardwood in this way, there are an enormous number of different marks?—There are a certain number of different marks.

9261. A very large number indeed?—You might say 25 in 25 different consignments.

9262. And they come out of the ship all mixed up anyhow?—I do not know that. They sometimes do.

9263. Different lengths, and different marks?—They are different lengths and different marks. The lengths have nothing to do with sorting them. They deliver them by mark, not by length, nor thickness, nor width.

9264. But the number of different lengths have to be sorted out for each bill, have they not?—No.

9265. Never?—Not in my recollection for my business.

9266. Do you mean to say that a man does not buy the timber by length—so much of so many lengths?—There are transactions of that sort, but they have never come under my notice in deliveries from the Johnston line.

9267. In these cases the ship takes cargo out of the hold and puts it on the quay for the purpose of sorting?—They take it out of the hold and put it on the quay. I do not know why.

9268. The ship does that?—I presume so.

9269. But you are coming here to give your evidence. Do you not know that the ship does every part of the sorting itself on the quay in these cases you have been speaking of?—That is so, I have been told. I believe so, but who employs the men I could not say.

9270. You come as an expert on the subject, but it is difficult to know the limits of your practical knowledge.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Surely my friend has received a perfectly fair answer from the witness on this point: that he has been informed of these facts; that he cannot know it, but he believes it to be true.

(*Chairman.*) I think that is quite sufficient.

9271. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) Have you had experience in discharging ships?—I have not discharged a ship myself for the last 20 years. I have previous to that.

9272. You have seen it done, I suppose?—Over and over again.

9273. If the ship does the discharging and puts the goods on the quay, and sorts them there, and sends the goods away from the quay, will you tell me what opportunity the Dock Company has of knowing when any particular parcel will be ready for discharge?—Because if the goods are for delivery by land carriage the Dock Company give you notice directly those goods are ready for delivery; whilst if they are for barges, and you have not your barge in time, the Dock Company comes round and inquires whether those goods have been cleared and if your barge is not there, they put them on full consolidated rates. They know immediately, because within five minutes of the time they put you on the full rate.

9274. Within five minutes of the time?—Yes.

9275. You know that fact from your own personal experience, this time, do you?—In our own personal experience we have argued the matter of a few minutes.

9276. Now remember what you want. You are now telling us about something that takes place if the goods are not cleared. You are suggesting that the Dock Company are in a position to give you notice before or at the time the goods are ready for delivery. How can they ascertain that. Let me ask you one question first. Does the shipowner himself know when the goods are coming up out of the hold; in what order they are coming up?—I do not know what the shipowner knows.

Cross-examined by Mr. Loehnis.

9277. You said you had made application to the Surrey Commercial Docks for shed room for your goods under cover?—Yes.

9278. A few days ago?—Yes.

9279. When was the cover required?—Within about a week. I am making no complaint of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

9280. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Has your evidence been about Millwall Docks?—I mentioned that the Millwall Dock Company could not give us room owing to their having so much stock they cannot find room for more.

9281. (*Mr. Loehnis.*) Is it not a fact that the undercover trade has increased very considerably in the last few years?—Yes, undoubtedly.

9282. And the shed accommodation which was sufficient a few years ago, owing to the sudden increase in the trade, has not grown in the same proportion?—That may be so.

9283. You know that the Surrey Commercial Docks have been building a considerable quantity of sheds lately?—Yes.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

9284. You said you had made complaints in respect of your own business to the dock companies of the delay which has taken place in the collection of your traffic?—Over and over again.

9285. Have you any particulars of such complaint here that you can put before the Commission?—I think I could give you specific instances in the course of two or three minutes.

9286. Have you any here?—Yes. I have them here.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

9287. Have you now got the particulars you were speaking of?—I have obtained a few particulars. Might I mention that the learned counsel for the Dock Company who was cross-examining me, expressed his astonishment that I did not know who unloaded the ships. I have here a letter from the Johnston Line, which makes plain why I stated that. It is a letter of the 15th December, 1899: "Dear Sirs,—Replying to "your favour of 9th inst., respecting pine lumber, ex "'Semantha,' we much regret any delay that occurred "in this delivery, but would point out that the ship is "not responsible for this." We never know who is responsible, and that is why I was unable to say definitely. "The method of delivery was as per usual, "and there was no undue delay in loading your craft. "With regard to the alleged shortage, we find we hold "receipts for full quantity, but if you will ascertain "from your buyers particulars of the alleged shortage "we will make further investigation. Further, we "would remark that the lumber was not buried under "sacks of flour."—Yours faithfully, William Johnston "and Co., Limited." That was after very great delay.

9288. Now you are going to give us specific instances?—Yes. I give you a specific instance with regard to the "Dania." I should also like to mention that I understood from the learned counsel for the dock company that he was under the impression that I had invited complaints from the firm of Henry Tolputt and Co. I have the original correspondence that occurred long before then. Here is a letter from Messrs. Henry Tolputt and Co., Limited, of Folkestone, dated January 6th, 1900. They say: "Dear Sirs,—We have not yet received our goods"—those were ex the "Dania." "Meanwhile we return drafts "with the needful subject to the invoices being found "correct." Then on December 13th, 1899, they wrote this letter: "Dear Sirs,—We have two sailing barges "in Victoria Dock, and no chance of getting the Caro-"lina pine this week. This will entail demurrage. "Has steamer arrived?" The steamer had been there for some days. They thought we had misinformed them. Then on December 12th they say: "Our sail-"ing barges 'Excelsior' and 'George Smeed' are in "Victoria Docks, and will take our goods ex 'Dania.'" That means they would take them when they could get them, which was a very long time. That shows that I was not inviting them to make complaints.

9289. The object of putting this in is to show that the letter you gave as an illustration of a complaint

is not the result of an inquiry which you made with a view of producing evidence, but is a continuation of correspondence which began in January of that year?—Quite so.

9290. And that was a correspondence which related to a consignment in which your firm were interested?—Yes, we were interested in it.

9291. Now I think you have some evidence to give with regard to particular consignments?—Yes, with regard to the "Dania."

9292. That is the consignment referred to in the letter of November 14th, 1900?—Yes.

9293. Have you any other instance you can put before the Commission?—I have a copy of a letter which we wrote to the Superintendent of the Victoria Docks on the 5th January, 1901:—"Dear Sir,—The ss. "'Monterey' arrived in London about December 13th, "and lightermen duly applied for 26 logs of ash, which "they were unable to obtain. On the 2nd January you "sent us a telegram, No. 115, as follows:—'Twenty-"six logs ex 'Monterey' are ready for delivery. Please "send your representative to me immediately.' Yes-"terday a representative from the South Devon Wharf "Company called here and stated they could not get "delivery of the logs, and would have nothing further "to do with the matter. We replied that if they made "immediate application for the logs they could get "them, as we had now advice from you that they were "ready for delivery. To this they now reply as fol-"lows:—'This is not the case, as it was only January "4th that the dock company stated they could not "deliver—could only find four of the logs. They first "stated they were ready, and then found they were not. "As we have had this in hand for a month we think "you should personally interfere.' We should be glad "if you would kindly give us an explanation of this "extraordinary state of affairs."

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9294. I do not want to take you over a large number of cases, but I will ask you this; are those cases unique, or do instances of that sort of thing happen from time to time?—They happen constantly.

Mr. ALBERT SPICER called and examined.

Mr. A. Spicer

9295. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us to give evidence with reference to the effect which the proposals of the Dock Company will have upon merchants and manufacturers owning or occupying property on the banks of the River Thames for the purpose of carrying on their own business, and not for the storage of the goods of others for hire?—Yes. I appear here in two capacities: one as representing the private Wharfowners' Committee.

9296. We will take that first?—In view of the appointment of your Commission, the London Chamber of Commerce convened a meeting of merchants and manufacturers owning, or occupying property on the banks of the River Thames for the purpose of carrying on their own business, and not for the storage of the goods of others for hire. This meeting was held at the offices of the London Chamber of Commerce on the 25th September, 1900, and a Committeee was appointed, to consult and take action in order to represent the interests of owners of private wharves before the Commission. This Committee held meetings on the following dates: 8th and 22nd October and 7th December, 1900, and during December sent a circular to certain merchants and manufacturers which was as follows:—"December, 1900. Royal Commission on the Port of London. Gentlemen, With further reference to my circulars of the 4th, 19th and 29th of September last, I have again to draw your attention to the fact that the above Commission is now sitting for the reception of evidence; and that a general meeting of merchants and manufacturers owning property on the banks of the River Thames for the purposes of their own business, was held at the offices of this Chamber on the 25th September last, when a Committee was appointed, consisting of the following gentlemen:—Thos. F. Blackwell, Esq. (Chairman), Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell, Ltd., 21, Soho Square, W. and Soho Wharf, Belvedere Road, Lambeth, S.E.; J. Innes Rogers, Esq., Messrs. Travers' Wharf, and 10 and 11, Cannon Street, and Travers' Wharf, and 10 and 11, Bankside, S.E.; Dr. J. K. Crow, Messrs. Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark, 7, Caledonian Road, N., and Storers' Wharf, Poplar, E.; Albert C. Hill, Esq., Messrs. Pinchin, Johnson and Co., Pinchin's Wharf, Ratcliff, E.; Joseph John Bowley, Esq., Messrs. Bowley and Sons, Wellington Works, Wellington Road, Battersea, S.W.; and David Clark, Esq., Messrs. George Hooper and Co., Ltd., 4, Eastcheap, E.C., to consult as to the best means of representing their interests before the Royal Commission. This Committee has held three meetings and now wish to draw your attention to the fact, that they do not represent the public wharfingers, that is the owners of public riverside wharves and warehouses receiving the property of others for hire. It appears to this Committeee that the interests of merchants, firms, etc., owning riverside property for the convenience of their business are not in all respects identical with the interests of the public wharfingers, and this Committee begs to draw your attention to the steps that they propose to take for the preservation and improvement of your interests as merchants or manufacturers and invites the expression of your support. I need hardly say that they will welcome any suggestions that you may choose to offer. You will recollect that the appointment of the Royal Commission originated in an attempt made by the London and India Docks Joint Committee to obtain powers from Parliament to enable them to impose a tax upon barges and their contents entering the docks whether for imports or for export goods. The amount of this tax was to be 4d. per ton upon the registered tonnage of the barges and a further tax upon the contents thereof which was to be for some goods 1s. 6d. per ton and on the others 1s. per ton. This Bill was negatived on the second reading on the understanding that the present Royal Commission would be appointed, but within the last week or two public notice has been given by the London and India Docks Joint Committee of their intention to re-introduce this Bill during the present Session. Although the Commission are considering matters embracing a much wider area (see terms of reference enclosed) than this question of a tax on barges, still it will be one of the chief matters of consideration, and my Committee wish to point out the urgent necessity of concerted action on the part of merchants and manufacturers owning riverside property, in order to prevent the imposition of a charge of the kind, the effect of which would be disastrous. My committee would point out that riverside premises and warehouses are at present much more valuable than those situated elsewhere, mainly for the reason that goods can be collected from and delivered to them for and from vessels lying in the docks, by merely paying the cost of the lighterage, thus saving the heavy dock dues and cartage. The effect of the imposition of a tax on lighters and their contents would be to place them on almost the same level as premises situated in other parts of London, and my committee believe that this would cause an enormous depreciation in the value of riverside property. My committee also propose to suggest that the Commissioners should inquire into the methods adopted by the Thames Conservancy in granting permission for structural alterations on riverside premises or their foreshores, and the system of charges and rents for such changes. I am instructed by my committee to ask you to express your approval of the steps they have taken in defence of the private waterside interests of the river, by appending your signature to the enclosed form, and also to express your opinion of the general situation, either by answering the appended list of questions, or by mentioning any other matters that you would wish to be laid before the Commissioners. —Yours faithfully, Secretary."

This circular roughly described the provisions of the proposal, "London and India Docks Joint Committee Bill, 1900," and mentioned the published intention of the London and India Docks Company to lodge a similar Bill this session. My Committee felt they could not represent this important riverside interest before your Commission without an expression of confidence from the private wharfowners, consequently such expression of confidence was invited by circular, and the appended signatures (49 in all) were obtained upon the following form:—I/we, as merchants and/or manufacturers, owning or occupying riverside premises, for our own use, and not as public wharf-

Mr. A. Spicer.

10 June 1901.

ingers, hereby express our approval of the action that the committee of the London Chamber of Commerce are taking to represent our interests before the Royal Commission on the Port of London.

Signature .....

Address .....

Date .....

To the Secretary, London Chamber of Commerce (Incorporated), 10, Eastcheap, E.C. This form was signed by firms as follows:—Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark; George Armstrong and Co.; F. and J. H. Stirling; John Fraser and Son; J. Bennet Lawes and Co.; John Leanton and Sons; Machonachie Bros.; Locke, Lancaster, and W. W. and R. Johnson; Alex. Duckham and Co.; John Knight and Sons; Duggan Neil and McColm; Burrell and Co.; McDougall and Co.; Snowdon, Sons, and Co.; Fletcher, Sons, and Fearnall; Ed. le Bas and Co.; Brown, Lennox and Co.; O. T. S. Parry; Thomas Smith and Co., Limited; Matthew Shaw and Co.; Dran, Ransome and Co.; C. C. Tuff; Bullivant and Co.; White, Tomkins and Courage; Anglo-Continental (Ohlendorff's) Guano Works; W. Moore, Limited; C. and C. Tuff; John Williams and Co.; Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers (1900) Limited; Clarke, Nicholls and Coombes; White, Palmer and Co., Limited; Manganese Brass and Bronze Co., Limited; S. Bowley and Son; Archibald R. Dawnay and Sons, Limited; T. and W. Farmiloe, Limited; Harrod's Stores, Limited; Colthurst and Harding; Charles Price and Co.; Cubitt Town Wharves Saw Mills; United Alkali Company; Roberts, Adlard and Co.; Lennox, Reynolds, and Fife; Hood and Moore's Stores; C. Barry and Co.; Carbutt and Co., Limited; E. Underwood and Sons; East India Products Co., Limited; J. L. Wade and Co., Limited; Frederick Braby and Co., Limited; Hovis Bread Flour Co., Limited.

I therefore claim to offer evidence on behalf of these merchants and manufacturers, owning property on the banks of the River Thames, as before described. The statement of my evidence has been submitted to certain of these merchants and manufacturers, and was approved of by 48 of them in the following form:—I/we, as merchants/manufacturers, owning and/or occupying premises on the banks of the River Thames, for purposes other than the storage of the goods of others for hire, hereby express our approval of the evidence to be offered by Mr. Albert Spicer on behalf of the private wharfingers committee of the London Chamber of Commerce before the Royal Commission on the Port of London.

Signature .....

Address .....

Date .....

To the Secretary, London Chamber of Commerce (Incorporated), 10, Eastcheap, E.C. This form was signed by firms as follows:—Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark; Burrell and Co.; John Fraser and Son; J. Bennet Lawes and Co.; Ed. le Bas and Co.; Brown, Lennox and Co.; O. T. S. Parry; Thomas Smith and Co., Ltd.; Matthew Shaw and Co.; Colthurst and Harding; Charles Price and Co.; Crosse and Blackwell, Ltd.; Duggan Neil and McColm; McDougall and Co.; Snowdon, Sons and Co.; John Leanton and Sons; Machonochie Bros.; Locke, Lancaster and W. W. and R. Johnson; Alex. Duckham and Co.; John Knight and Sons; Dean Ransome and Co.; C. C. Tuff; Cubitt Town Wharves Saw Mills; Burney and Co., Ltd.; Pinchin Johnson and Co.; White, Tomkins and Courage; Anglo-Continental (Ohlendorff's) Guano Works; Wm. Moore, Ltd.; Lennox, Reynolds and Fife; Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers (1900), Ltd.; Clarke, Nicholls and Coombes; White, Palmer and Co., Ltd.; Manganese Bronze and Brass Co., Ltd.; East India Products Co., Ltd.; J. L. Wade and Co., Ltd.; Fredk. Braby and Co., Ltd.; Hovis Bread Flour Co., Ltd.; George Hooper and Co., London, Ltd.; United Alkali Co.; Roberts, Adlard and Co.; John Williams and Co.; C. Barry and Co.; Carbutt and Co., Ltd.; S. Bowley and Son; Archibald R. Dawnay and Sons, Ltd.; T. and W. Farmiloe, Ltd.; Harrod's Stores, Ltd.; J. Travers and Sons, Ltd.

If these powers, sought by the London and India Docks Joint Committee in the Bill before referred to are granted to and exercised by the London and India Docks Company the effect will be to destroy certain trades that only exist by means of the free dock and river water rights, in conjunction with the occupation of waterside premises. These premises have all been built or occupied for their present purposes since the passing of the first Dock Act, and have a higher rateable value than inland premises by reason of the saving in dock charges and carriage effected by the owners thereof. If the powers hereinbefore referred to are granted and exercised by the London and India Dock Company, these waterside premises would probably depreciate in value to an amount equivalent to the capitalised value of the annual charge on the tonnage of contents of the barges taking goods to and from such private warehouses to the docks. In addition to this the injury done to British trade will be enormous and out of all proportion to the actual amount of the revenue that would be raised by this tax, large though the amount would be. I submit that it is necessary to the trade of the port that these lighters and craft should carry out the important work of collecting goods from ships in the docks. It would be impossible for ships to be unloaded if the bulk of the goods imported into London were left to the dock company to deliver without the aid of the lighters and craft.

9297. Is it proposed to do without them?—No, it is proposed to leave the lighters in.

9298. And to levy a toll?—Yes. We say make the charge in some other way. The locks are opened by the dock company several times in one tide, to give exit and entry to these necessary adjuncts to the trade of the Port of London; for the purpose of facilitating the exit and entry of ships at high tide, which would otherwise be hindered by such craft. The restriction with regard to men employed on barges, within certain limits of the River Thames, should be removed by the abolition of the monopoly which is enjoyed by the Watermen's Company.

9299. You now wish to offer evidence as representing the firm of James Spicer and Sons, on behalf of the paper trade section of the London Chamber of Commerce?—Yes. I am partner in the firm of James Spicer and Sons, who carry on the business of wholesale stationers and manufacturers of envelopes, cards, etc., with complete warehouses in the towns of London, Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Melbourne, and Sydney (Australia), and Maritzburg (South Africa). The exports and imports of paper and raw material for paper making amounted, in the year 1865, to 100,000 tons per annum, while in the year 1899 they had increased to 1,000,000 tons. The imports of paper into the United Kingdom in the year 1899 were 265,270 tons of the value of £3,723,094. The imports of paper into the Port of London in the year 1899 were 137,030 tons, of the value of £1,698,321. Then the imports of paper-making materials into the United Kingdom in the year 1899 were 659,926 tons, of the value of £3,078,729; and the imports of paper-making materials into the Port of London in the year 1899 were 132,456 tons, of the value of £614,626. I give those figures because in the paper trade, apart from the rag trade, we import the paper-making materials. Therefore the imports of the paper-making materials give a very fair indication practically of the quantity of paper produced.

9300. Will you tell us where you get these figures from?—I get them from the Board of Trade Returns.

9301. And they are official?—Yes, they are official. The exports of paper from the United Kingdom in the year 1899 were 46,201 tons, of the value of £1,423,924; and the exports of paper from the Port of London in the year 1899 were 27,304 tons, of the value of £818,133. The value of exports of stationery from the United Kingdom in the year 1899 was £1,016,335; and the value of exports of stationery from the Port of London in the year 1899 was £558,971. The Board of Trade do not give the quantities in connection with stationery; they only give the value. So far as the paper trade is concerned London is a favourite port, by reason of its transhipment facilities, consequent upon the right of free delivery overside, and also of the free use of dock water. London is a very expensive port for other than transhipment goods, such as goods brought into the Port for home districts, or rather London districts and provincial districts served by London. Such goods have to be either landed at the docks and delivered to land conveyance or lightered from ships' side to a wharf, and there landed and delivered to land conveyance. In order to escape these heavy charges of the Dock Company and the public wharfowners my firm own premises on the banks of the River Thames. My firm have invested large

See 9325.

sums of money in building such premises, relying on the clause in the various Dock Acts, which gives free access to barges and lighters entering the docks for the purpose of delivering and receiving goods to and from vessels loading and unloading therein. If these powers are granted to and exercised by them, my firm will suffer a heavy loss owing to the probable depreciation in value of the premises situated on the banks of the River Thames before mentioned, part of which are used by my firm for the purpose of their own business, and the other part let off to another firm for a bonded warehouse. In addition to this my firm will have to pay a very large amount per annum for this tax, as, except for very small parcels, the Dock Company's quay's rates are prohibitive. A large part of the export paper trade of this country is done in comparatively small quantities, as paper is one of those articles that follow other articles, such as food, clothing and other necessaries; consequently it is very often associated with other branches of commerce in its earlier stages. London has been the distributing centre of a great deal of this trade, but competition with paper manufacturers on the Continent of Europe and America is now very keen. If the existing lighterage arrangements are disturbed and the London and India Docks Company obtain and exercise the powers sought by them, the paper trade will be still further handicapped in their competition with foreign manufactures. My firm being paper merchants, we are very often able, when compelled by competition, to make use of paper manufacturers on the Continents of Europe and America, and then distribute their goods to different parts of the world. This trade, however, is not of equal advantage to the country that it would be if the paper could be made here, and such trade again is much more uncertain, as gradually the manufacturers in the different countries from which we draw those supplies are anxious to do their own exporting direct, without the use of British merchants as intermediaries; consequently it is all important that the Port of London, both as regards its waterways and its quay and dock accommodation, should be so good as to be attractive to every class of vessel. A carman has to go to the Dock Company's office in the Docks to get his papers dealt with, and as the shed or warehouse from which he has to collect his goods is frequently situated a considerable distance from the Company's office, a serious loss of time occurs. I think some system should be devised whereby servants at the sheds should be in better communication with the offices. Delivery of goods from the sheds is very slowly carried out by the Dock Company. My firm's vans often have to wait many hours for delivery, clearly showing, in my opinion, that the Dock Company's system is bad and far behind the requirements of the present day. I am of the opinion that it is very important that the largest steamers should be able to come up the river without hindrance, and be able to discharge their cargo in the Port of London as expeditiously and economically as at any other port. To offer the utmost facilities to shipping is, to my mind, the most important. London being essentially a water carriage port, it is important that the present lighterage arrangements should be undisturbed, although, in my opinion, a low quay rate would attract more goods to make use of land carriage, and therefore lessen the number of barges and lighters in the docks. I agree with the proposals of the London Chamber of Commerce as to a dock and harbour trust, and I believe that, in order to administer the port, it is necessary that the authorities should direct their energies, not to the effort to make interest on capital, but rather to stimulate commerce in the best and most economical way. We think the time has now come when there should be a removal of all restrictions in connection with Thames lightermen, it being unreasonable that the great trade of the Port of London should be endangered by being in the hands of a close Corporation.

9302. Have you anything to complain of with reference to the incidence of any proposed rate on your trade?—What we say is that it will tend to handicap the business.

9303. You say it will tend to handicap it?—It will handicap it. The paper trade in this country is now in very keen competition.

9304. With where?—America, Norway, Sweden, and Germany. When I tell you that the whole of our paper-making material is imported either from Norway, Sweden, Germany, Canada, or America, you will see it is natural that where they produce the raw materials they are also tempted to put up paper mills alongside the mills for producing the materials. Wood, which is now the great raw material, apart from esparto for better papers, is brought over here in a manufactured condition; it is converted from the pure wood into the wood pulp, and in that condition it is brought into this country, and the whole of our paper trade in this country is dependent upon getting the raw material not only at the lowest possible cost, but with the smallest amount of charges upon it. Every shilling a ton that is allowed to be placed upon it handicaps the trade and makes it better worth the while of those who are producing the wood pulp to put up mills alongside those wood pulp manufactories and produce paper as well.

9305. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is there a very large manufacture of paper in Norway?—Yes, and it is increasing.

9306. Do you get wood pulp from Norway?—Yes.

9307. But they are taking to making the paper themselves now?—They are making the paper themselves in increasing quantities every year.

9308. I have been looking at the figures which you have given. I should like to ask you whether it would be a fair statement to say that on an average the price of paper exported from the United Kingdom is about £30 a ton. You have given 46,000 tons at a value of £1,423,000?—You must bear in mind that these figures are Board of Trade figures.

9309. But I wish to have your opinion as an expert in the trade as to whether that was a fair representation or not?—I do not think it is far out, for this reason: that the figures there represent all the better qualities. The lower qualities are very largely transhipped.

9310. The paper which you import comes in on a value of about £10 per ton?—That is quite right. As I say, those are not my figures, but the export of our papers includes all the writing materials, for instance; paper goes from one penny and a penny farthing a pound up to 1s. 6d. a pound. The paper used by Cabinet Ministers for their writing purposes I suppose would come out at 1s. 3d. a pound; it is used by others as well—all the hand-made papers. The export of paper has come to mean that we are exporting mainly the better sorts.

9311. Would it be a fair representation to make that the paper making materials which you import cost from £4 10s. to £5 per ton?—It is very largely wood pulp and esparto. That would be about right I take it for esparto and the sulphates, so that taken on an average I do not expect it is far out. It is not the mechanical wood. You have the three articles; you have the mechanical wood; you have the sulphates and you have the esparto. The £30 which you state would be perfectly fair for esparto and I take it somewhere about that for the sulphates.

9312. The £30 was an inference of mine from the total value imported and the total value stated here. I wish to have your opinion as an expert in the trade as to whether that is a fair figure?—I do think it is a fair figure. I do not think it is very far out when you take the raw materials.

9313. Would it be a true representation to say that on the average the raw material worth from £4 10s. to £5 per ton is converted in manufacture to an article worth about £30 per ton, or what is the relation between the two?—The Port of London is not the largest port for the importation of paper-making material.

9314. But I was taking the total import into the United Kingdom?—But you are omitting the whole of the cheap paper; I do not think, if I may say so, that it is quite a fair comparison.

9315. That is just what I wish to arrive at?—The great export trade in news is all cheap paper and that is very largely dealt with in the transhipment items.

9316. What I wish really to get at is some idea of the value of the manufacture of paper as distinguished from the raw material in this country—how much value is put into it by the manufacturing processes which it goes through?—Take esparto at, say, £5 per ton. Esparto paper is sold, of course, according to whether it is mixed with sulphates at 2½d., 2¾d., or 3d. per pound.

9317. How much a ton?—That comes out at about £30 a ton.

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9318. That is just the average value of the goods exported?—You go right away up from one penny a pound to 1s. a pound in gradations.

9319. Is there as much weight in the manufactured article as a rule as in the raw material. Do you convert the raw material weight for weight?—No. With wood pulp it is so, but that is a manufactured article as the manufacturer gets it. I am not an expert paper manufacturer, and therefore I give my answers on these matters subject to correction, but I have always been told that in converting a ton of esparto you get about one half.

9320. In any case the trade is a very important one, and represents a large employment of labour and capital in the United Kingdom?—Certainly; you see that by the figures. The whole import and export trade in 1865 was 100,000 tons, and for last year it was over one million tons.

9321. And the London share of the export trade is very large indeed?—Yes, as I have mentioned in my evidence, it is a sort of collecting, and London is the centre; it goes off in small quantities to a great many countries; therefore it is all important that London should be as attractive as possible to ships from every part of the world and going to every part of the world.

9322. On account of its position as a general distributing centre?—Yes. Paper is one of the last things that people use. They want clothing and food, but paper is the last of civilised wants, and it is the first thing that people cut off when they are hard up.

9323. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I want to ask you a question or two about the difference between transhipment and the other aspect of the port. You have used the expression that London is a favourite port?—Speaking for myself as an individual, I should be prepared to use the word "favourite," but I think that perhaps speaking as a representative of trade it would be better to say "good."

9324. You wish to infer that as far as transhipment is concerned, the things are satisfactory?—Yes.

9325. But for other than transhipment purposes would you wish us to infer the charges are already too high?—They are quite high enough, and I should wish to lay stress upon this, that the Port of London does not appear to be quite as attractive to shipowners as it used to be.

9326. I am coming to that in a moment, but will you keep strictly to paper for a moment, the sphere of your own individual evidence?—I do not consider it as good as some other ports.

9327. Does that opinion arise not only from the point of view of charges, but from the point of view of want of facility in the trade?—We do not consider the facilities at the London Docks quite as good as we do, for instance, at Hull. We get goods discharged more quickly.

9328. You wish us to infer that it is not quite up to date in that respect?—That is so.

9329. Most of your evidence is based upon this Bill, which, of course you are aware, is dead?—I know it is.

9330. You do not wish to leave us with the impression that your evidence is confined to a dead Bill?—No, most decidedly not. We want something done to make London the most attractive port. We realise that New York and Antwerp, and then in a less degree Hamburg and Amsterdam, are somehow or other coming into favour, and we know that the more they come into favour the more it will damage the general export trade of London, a great deal of which (apart from my trade) is done in small quantities, and for which this has been the great centre. We do not wish it to get into the minds of the rest of the world, as some people are beginning to think already, that London does not stand where it did a few years ago. I do not think it does. We are being hit all round, by America especially, and by Germany. Many other countries have been willing to look to England to be their exporters; they are not willing to look to England to-day. They are anxious to do their trade themselves I was in America the year before last: the facilities they are giving to their manufacturers to accumulate knowledge which we here have built up and have acquired for ourselves at our own cost after a great many years' experience, the American Government is providing practically gratis for their people. All this is tending to make the export trade of London much more difficult; consequently, I for one come and ask that this important Commission should do all it can to insist that London should be made as good as it is possible to make it.

9331. You wish to convey to us the desire that in some way or other something should be done to ensure that the docks of the Port of London should be so administered that commerce should be stimulated?—That is so. May I go a step further, and say what I should like to see this Commission doing, looking at it from a broad point of view? I should like to see this Commission say to the three great bodies, the City of London, the London County Council, and the London Chamber of Commerce: "Now go and meet together, and do not come out of your room until you are prepared to put before us a scheme for the future working of London." They could do it. They have the information, and it is simply cruel that for the sake of petty jealousies they should come with three different schemes, and ask you to thrash them out instead of thrashing them out before they come to you.

9332. Now I come to a practical question. You are a very considerable ratepayer, I presume, in London?—We are very considerable.

9333. You have already committed yourself to the proposition that there should be a Trust created. That Trust would, of course, have to borrow money?—Undoubtedly.

9334. On which it would have to pay interest?—Yes.

9335. You would have to meet certain expenditure?—Yes.

9336. Supposing there was any hiatus between the amount of its revenue and the amount of its expenditure, putting into the latter word interest or borrowed money, from what source would you fill the hiatus?—I believe it would be perfectly legitimate to make the whole of London pay for it. London would reap enormous advantages.

9337. Pay for it in what way do you mean?—By a tax on London; we should all get the benefit of it.

9338. I will ask you not to use the word "tax," if you please?—A rate, if you please, on London.

9339. You, as a considerable ratepayer, are quite prepared to bear your share?—Distinctly. If you will let me keep my trade, I am perfectly prepared to pay the rates.

9340. And improve the trade?—And improve the trade.

9341. And in your mind is recourse to the rates in the last resort a better method than going to the Chancellor of the Exchequer?—Distinctly. If you will make London a really good port, we shall not object to the rates. We know it must be paid for, and it must be assessed fairly on the London ratepayers, and we shall all gain by it.

9342. And you think that that opinion (which comes with great weight from you) is shared by a large portion of those among whom you mix?—I think it would be by those engaged in business of any size, who have had the opportunity of watching the progress of events, and of seeing what is happening in their respective trades.

9343. Do you think you can speak for the commercial mind of the City of London?—I should not like to say that, because I have never had an opportunity of discussing it.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

9344. You say London is a very expensive port for other than transhipment goods, such as goods brought into port for home districts, or rather London districts, and provincial districts served by London. I want to ask whether, supposing some such charge as the dock companies propose were to be put upon your goods, you would be able to recover it from the consumers, or whether it would fall upon the consumers in the case of goods which are consumed in the London district, and the provincial districts served by London?—Of course if everybody had to pay it in London, so far as regards our English customers, unless we had fresh competition to meet from abroad, we should be able to get it from them. But the great danger in our mind is the trade with abroad. Looking at the present condition of the paper trade, and the fact that we are dependent upon abroad for every ounce of raw material, it is important not to put further facilities in the way of competition from that side.

9345. I was looking at it for the moment purely from the point of view of the consumer in the London district who is not a trader, and as I understand you to say, it would be in your power to recover to some extent such a charge from that consumer?—Except so far as we are prevented from recovering by competition from abroad. Of course these manufacturers from abroad go all over the country and sell against us. Naturally they would have to pay this as well, so that as regards the home consumer I think both of us would be able to recover it from him. But I want to lay special stress upon that. It is the peculiar position of the paper trade in connection with the foreign manufacturer.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9346. Do you think that your trade would be hurt by a small tonnage rate on all goods entering the port?—I think it would still further handicap the trade.

9347. 2d., 3d., or 4d. a ton on paper?—But you have not talked about 2d., 3d., or 4d. a ton; you have talked about 1s. to 1s. 6d.

9348. I have not talked about 1s. or 1s. 6d. myself, if you will excuse me?—I maintain that anything would be a mistake at the present time.

9349. I am talking now of something levied in that way by a tonnage rate for the improvement of the waterways of the port?—I do not believe in that way.

9350. Would you sooner have a rate?—Much. I want the thing taken out of the management of the dock companies.

Mr. GEORGE GOODSIR called and examined.

9351. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us in order to give evidence as to the import trade in frozen meat?—Yes.

9352. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say?—I am a partner in the firm of William Weddel and Co., 16, St. Helen's Place, London, E.C. I have been engaged in the frozen meat trade since its commencement in the year 1880. My firm imports about 25 per cent. of the total import of frozen meat into the Port of London. The frozen meat trade began with a small experimental shipment of about 20 tons, received at the Port of London in the year 1880, but trade has rapidly grown until the imports into the United Kingdom amounted last year to 4,800,000 carcases of mutton, 1,600,000 carcases of lamb, 711,000 quarters of beef, weighing in all 209,000 tons. The value of that is about £6,000,000; about three-quarters of it comes to London, say 150,000 tons. There are now 150 steamers specially fitted for the transport of frozen meat, of which 120 trade between the Australasian Colonies and London, the remaining 30 trading between the River Plate ports and ports in the United Kingdom (chiefly Liverpool). During the growth of the frozen meat trade in the past 20 years no additional dock accommodation has been provided in London for this special trade with the exception that arrangements have been made for a few of the steamers from Australia to discharge at Tilbury Dock.

9353. Do you mean to tell us that practically no additional accommodation has been made during the last 20 years?—I think I can say that none has. The result has been that during recent years, at the height of the season, there has been very frequently a block of steamers awaiting discharge in the Royal Albert Docks, or delayed in discharge, partly from the lack of barges and partly from the lack of storage. At the commencement of the trade the London and St. Katharine Dock Company provided all the necessary cold storage accommodation, but the rapid growth of the trade found the dock company's accommodation insufficient, and a number of stores were built for and adapted to the needs of the trade by others, both on the river side and in the neighbourhood of Smithfield Market. The London and India Docks Joint Committee ultimately built and fitted a warehouse with cold storage accommodation at the latter centre, in order to compete with the warehouses erected by others. The apathy of the London and St. Katharine Dock Company, as evinced by their failure to appreciate the importance of, and to provide suitable warehouse accommodation for, this new industry, was the cause of the erection of these competing cold stores, which, at the present time, secure two-thirds of the frozen meat imports of the Port of London. The whole of the warehouses specially fitted for this trade in the Port of London are capable of holding at one time 1,600,000 carcases. Of these stores fifteen are situated within one mile from Smithfield Market. The warehouses, specially fitted for this trade under the control of the London and India Docks Joint Committee, are capable of holding at one time, 508,000 carcases. I believe that the bulk of this trade could have been retained by the London and St. Katharine Dock Company. The want of sufficient cold storage accommodation at the docks, and the consequent adoption of the storage offered by the other warehouses, has greatly magnified the difficulties of discharge. It involves delivery from the ship into numerous lighters, which tends to impede the movements of steamers in the docks. The perishable nature of frozen meat demands the promptest possible discharge and transit to the cold store, and the ideal method would be for the steamer to discharge straight into stores alongside the ship, as it is now partially done in London, partially in Liverpool, and will be regularly done in Southampton when the new store there is finished. The chief and almost the only cold store owned by the London and India Docks Joint Committee (which I must say I also consider to be the best managed store for the storage of meat) is situated in an inconvenient spot for the discharge of the ships. It is situated just between the Royal Albert Docks and the Royal Victoria Docks, at what is termed the "Canal," but if steamers come alongside there to discharge into the store, it is found impracticable for barges to come alongside to receive their portion of the cargo, because the presence of these barges alongside the ship interferes with navigation between the two docks. An attempt was recently made to discharge steamers inside the Royal Albert Docks, at the point nearest to the store; but it was found that the depth of water at that portion of the dock was not sufficient to allow of the frozen meat steamers coming alongside. The scale of charges for the storage of frozen meat is much heavier in London than Liverpool, Manchester or Glasgow, notwithstanding that the trade at these outports is more intermittent than in London, and therefore much less likely to result in profit to storekeepers. The difference is chiefly one of principle. The position is practically that the London charges are 10 per cent. more than the charges at any other port in the United Kingdom. The current scale of charges for storage of frozen meat in London may or may not be remunerative to the proprietors of the stores. It is not possible for any outsider to form a reliable opinion on this point; the proprietors of the stores either do not issue a balance-sheet at all, or else their balance sheet does not contain any separate return of the receipts and expenditure connected with the storage of frozen meat, but I believe that cold storage is one of the most profitable departments of the dock companies' business. It has always been a matter of surprise to merchants why they had not captured more of it. With regard to minor matters, such as the control of men working at the discharge of a perishable article like meat, the rate of working from the steamers, protection from weather, efficiency of the dock companies' railway wagons, and difficulties about berthing steamers, the management of the London dock companies has all along failed to meet the requirements of the trade.

9354. (*Mr. Peel.*) I suppose there is quite sufficient storage accommodation now in London, taking the private owners and the dock storehouses together?—At the present moment London is not two days ahead of arrivals of frozen meat. We are working close up to the capacity.

9355. Your deliveries are made very rapidly?—Fairly quickly, but that margin is not sufficient.

9356. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) I presume this very large increase in frozen meat has decreased the amount of live cattle coming from abroad?—No; it has not affected it at all.

9357. Not at all?—No; it has established a new trade.

9358. Therefore the demand for meat must have enormously increased?—Yes.

Mr. G. Goodsir.

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Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

9359. Are you able to say whether this deficiency in receiving frozen meat in London is shown by any difference in price at Liverpool, Manchester, or Glasgow?—A difference in the price of what?

9360. Are the wholesale prices ruling for frozen meat in Liverpool, Manchester, or Glasgow lower than they are in London?—They are, but not from any reason connected with discharge.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9361. There are a number of cold storage wharves on the river, are there not?—Yes.

9362. I suppose the cargoes in the docks are barged to them?—Yes.

9363. Are they also barged to the uptown warehouses?—Barged and carted.

9364. Could you give me any idea as to the relative cost of barging and carting cargoes up, say, from the Albert Docks?—To the trade there is no difference, because the dock company practically include their cartage in their management rate, and the other warehouse keepers include their lighterage and cartage in their management rate. It is the same to the merchant in both cases.

9365. That is a management rate?—Yes.

9366. You cannot separate it at all?—No.

Mr. JOHN KENT CROW called and examined.

Mr. J. K. Crow.

9367. (*Chairman.*) You are nominated by the Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee of the London Chamber of Commerce to offer evidence before us with special reference to the varnish and colour trade?—Yes.

9368. Will you be good enough to give us your evidence?—I am a Director and the General Manager of the firm of Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark, and a member of the Committee formed by the London Chamber of Commerce to represent the interests of the owners of private wharves, that is to say, merchants and manufacturers owning premises, on the banks of the River Thames (and canals within the Metropolitan district), for the purposes of their own business, and not for the purpose of storing the goods of others for hire. Previous to the year 1892 the premises owned or occupied by my firm were all situated inland, but finding themselves handicapped in their export trade by the difficulties attached to an inland position, my firm purchased the premises known as Storer's Wharf, Poplar, relying on the old-established rights of free entry and exit of barges to and from vessels lying in the docks. These premises are nearly three acres in extent and have a river frontage of 300 feet, enabling several barges and vessels to be moored alongside at one time. Since the purchase and occupation of these premises, my firm has expended considerable sums of money on the property; the net rateable value has indeed been increased from £953 per annum to £1,322 per annum, at which it now stands, showing that we have increased the value of the property by nearly 50 per cent.

During the last 12 months my firm have delivered and collected goods to and from vessels lying in the docks amounting to a weight of 8,000 tons. The levy which the London and India Dock Company propose would in our case amount to a loss of over £800 per annum, estimated on our last year's water traffic with the docks—8,000 tons. This £800 per annum would be a dead charge on our business, as we should be unable to recoup ourselves by raising prices of goods, owing to competition with other ports and the prices of foreign manufacturers. The loss to my firm would be represented by the capitalised value of the money necessary to raise £800 per annum, calculated on the basis of 3½ per cent. this would total to the value of £24,000 or £25,000. No corresponding advantage whatever would accrue to my firm to compensate us for the loss, and in addition the value of our premises would be correspondingly decreased, and reduced to a level in value with inland works. The oil and colour trade in London would be still further handicapped in the severe competition already existing between merchants and manufacturers in London and merchants and manufacturers in the Ports of Liverpool, Glasgow and Hamburg if these extra charges on water borne goods are imposed. Owing to this competition from other centres, my firm are bound to supply certain lines of goods at prices which leave only a very small margin of profit. These are nevertheless necessary adjuncts of our trade, and are sold in conjunction with other lines of goods. If these charges on water-borne goods are imposed, my firm will be compelled to lose money on certain lines of goods in order to retain their customers for their general trade against the competition of other ports. I consider this proposed charge as contrary to the historic freedom of the port, and that in any case powers to enforce such a charge should not be entrusted to a Corporation working for its own profit. The rest of my evidence is purely my own personal opinion. I consider that the systematic and repeated attempts of the dock company to enforce such charges, which are contrary both to their charter and to the established freedom of the port, constitute an element of disturbance and uncertainty to those engaged in commercial pursuits in London. I am of opinion that this is distinctly prejudicial to the trade of the Port of London, and should be terminated. I am of the opinion that the Port of London should be administered by a public trust, solely for the benefit of national commerce; that sufficient dues should be charged to properly maintain the conditions of commerce; and that any surplus revenue should be applied to the reduction or surrender of such dues, and not be given as profit to shareholders, or applied to the relief of local rates.

9369. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You refer to the competition of merchants and manufacturers in the ports of Liverpool and Glasgow?—Yes.

9370. Take Liverpool. Are you aware that in Liverpool all goods, whether they go into the docks or not, pay dues?—Yes, I am aware of that.

9371. And therefore in that case if you pay no dues in London you are working at a considerable advantage over Liverpool?—It is a slight advantage. I think there is an advantage of about 2s. a ton between us, or 1s. 6d., I am not quite sure.

9372. But you admit the fact that you are working at a considerable advantage over Liverpool?—Yes.

9373. And therefore there would be room for more competition?—The point that I wish to draw your attention to is the fact that there is very great competition in the oil and colour trade, and when any port has an advantage through its location over another that port will use it for cutting the prices.

(Adjourned to Wednesday next, June 12, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

Wednesday, 12th June, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTLETON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D. F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS apeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Sir HOMEWOOD CRAWFORD recalled, and further examined.

9374. (*Chairman.*) I understand you wish to hand in a return of the number of municipal voters in the City of London?—Yes, I promised that I would hand in a return of the number of municipal voters in each ward of the City of London, together with the assessable value of each ward. The total number of municipal voters is 29,907, and the total value upon which consolidated and sewer rates are levied by the Corporation is £4,898,105. The return gives the details of the several wards.

(*The witness handed in a return of the Number of Municipal Voters in each Ward of the City of London together with the Assessable Value of each Ward, 1901. See Appendix, 25th Day, No. 1.*)

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9374a. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) These are the voters who elect the Corporation of London, are they?—These are the voters who elect the members of the Court of Common Council.

9375. (*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I do not know whether your Lordship will allow me to make an appeal to my learned friend, Mr. Whitehead. I understand that my friend proposes now to call before this Commission twelve more witnesses. I quite understand that a great number of gentlemen want to be heard for their own particular trades, but I would appeal to my friend whether it is carrying it any further. We know, of course, that everybody who is going to be subject to the tax that we propose will object. That may be taken, without going into details, in each case. My friend Mr. Whitehead is far too good an advocate not to know that merely calling a number of witnesses to say the same thing does not carry the case any further. Of course, I quite understand that the Commission cannot shut out any evidence, and that is why I make the appeal to my friend Mr. Whitehead to cut it as short as he can. It is a very long inquiry.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) The reasons for this appeal of my friend, Mr. Balfour Browne, I fail to understand. I am not conducting the inquiry. The inquiry is in the hands of your Lordship and the Commissioners, and as I understand it your Lordship and the Commissioners are calling the witnesses. I represent the Chamber of Commerce. With regard to the substance of what my friend says, the point is this. There is a great variety of trades in the Port of London. I am not aware that we have called before the Commission any evidence that is unnecessary. Each of these trades desires to be heard before the Commission so that the Commission may understand what the condition of each trade is, and what the effects of the proposal may be upon it. The conditions of the corn trade and the grain trade are different from the conditions of the chemical trade, and so forth. It is, after all, with regard to the trading interest that the volume of the complaints which come from London is an important feature. What the traders representing the Chamber of Commerce desire to bring home to the minds of the Commissioners is the great amount of feeling that there is with regard to this proposal. I do not know how I can bring that before the Commission except by putting witnesses before you at the table. As I have said before, the whole matter is in your Lordship's hands, and if you do not desire me to summon witnesses, of course the Chamber of Commerce will acquiesce.

(*Chairman.*) We need not assure you, Mr. Whitehead, that we are anxious not to shut out any evidence which is brought before us by so important a body as the

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London Chamber of Commerce; at the same time, I think it is only fair to add that the statements that we have heard from these various traders as to their disinclination to help towards improvements which may be suggested in the Port of London have only a negative effect upon our minds.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Of course, your Lordship will understand that this has been entirely sprung upon me. My clients are not in the room, and I have not had any opportunity of discussing this matter with them. The observation which has fallen from your Lordship puts me in a very difficult position at the moment. I will communicate with my clients, and we will do all that we can to carry out the wishes of the Commission.

(*Chairman.*) The Commissioners will retire for a few moments and discuss the matter.

(*The Commissioners retired.*)

(*Chairman.*) The Commissioners have decided to proceed with the evidence of the witnesses on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce as previously arranged. With reference to my remarks this morning, I wish to observe that evidence to the effect that a trade opposes any contribution by itself to improvements of the port is merely negative, and is therefore not of assistance to the Commissioners in their task. The Commissioners, I would add, are ready to hear full evidence as to the conditions under which various trades are carried on in the Port of London. They suggest that as far as possible representative witnesses should be called for each trade and any duplication of evidence avoided.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I am obliged to your Lordship. I think your Lordship will find that the evidence of the Chamber of Commerce is framed on those lines. I do not mean to say that now and then there may not be an observation which may come within the evidence you have excluded, but I think the general lines of the evidence about to be given are exactly those which your Lordship has foreshadowed.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I think we should assist the Commission, at any rate, by cross-examining as little as possible.

Mr. David Falconer called and examined.

Mr. D. Falconer.

9376. (*Chairman.*) You are a partner in the firm of Falconer and Company, and you are a member of the Committee of the London Jute Association?—Yes.

9377. You have been nominated by the London Jute Association to lay evidence before this Commission with regard to the jute trade?—Yes.

9378. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say?—The jute trade came into importance about forty years ago, and has continued to grow steadily. It is estimated that the annual consumption in Europe alone is about 2,900,000 bales of 400lbs. weight each. For many years a large percentage of the imports came to London. This is no longer the case; most of the business has gone to other ports. The system of heavy dock and warehouse charges in London has been one cause of this diversion of trade from the Port of London. If the charges in London are increased by a tax on lighters or by increased dock charges, the Port of London will lose what remains of the trade. I will hand in a table showing the jute imports into London for the past eleven years.

Jute Imports into London from Calcutta and Chittagong for eleven years.

1890	750,260	bales.
1891	665,731	,,
1892	410,062	,,
1893	529,538	,,
1894	486,159	,,
1895	541,639	,,
1896	614,718	,,
1897	605,376	,,
1898	553,730	,,
1899	347,095	,,
1900	466,925	,,

9379. Are there any remarks you wish to make on that table?—No.

9380. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You say that most of the business has gone to other ports. What other ports do you mean?—Dundee, Hamburg, Dunkirk, and latterly Tréport and some Mediterranean ports.

9381. Has the jute business in Dundee increased?—No, it has not increased for twenty years.

9382. Therefore you mean that the jute business generally has suffered through foreign competition?—In Great Britain.

9383. Taking Great Britain as a whole?—Yes, certainly.

9384. Is it a fact that the jute trade has grown very largely in India?—Very, it is very important.

9385. Is that a manufacturing business?—Yes, both spinning and weaving.

9386. Has that had any effect upon the diminution of the imports into London?—It has no doubt been a great cause of a less supply coming to Europe, because India is now manufacturing and supplying a great many of the Colonial markets direct. But the reduction in London has arisen a good deal from the fact that the charges here were so heavy when they were increased some twenty years ago as to divert what came to London to be sent to smaller Continental ports. In consequence of these heavy charges that were increased some time ago and still remain, they now take small cargoes across to Dunkirk and Tréport and some of those smaller places that always came *viâ* London some twenty or twenty-five years ago.

9387. What I want to get at is, whether the great increase of the manufacture of jute in India partly accounts for the facts you have given us?—The increased trade in India is only an increase of the trade generally. I can give you figures as far back as 1867 which show almost throughout, with the exception of the last two years, an increase notwithstanding the enormous production in India which has been required for local uses and for other places. The imports into Europe commencing in 1867 totalled 1,800,000 bales, while in 1897-8 they reached 3,500,000 bales. The last three seasons have been less, the crops have not been so good; they averaged 2,500,000 bales. This year they will reach about 3,000,000; last year was a bad year with only 2,100,000 bales imported into Europe.

9388. Is that manufactured jute?—No, that is raw material in bales of about 400lb.

9389. The great mills that one sees on the Hoogley are for the manufacture of jute, are they not?—Both for spinning and manufacturing. They make it into bags and cloth.

9390. So far as it is manufactured in India it would be imported not in the way you lay before us now, in bales, but in the shape of manufactured goods?—Yes, but there is only a small percentage of that which comes to Great Britain.

9391. Is it consumed in India?—It is largely consumed in India, and it is shipped to South America and also California, and the Cape, and Australia, and other places. The consumption in Calcutta alone is estimated this year to reach 2,500,000 bales against roughly 2,900,900 bales for the whole of Europe.

9392. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You say that the system of heavy dock and warehouse charges in London has been one cause of this diversion of trade from the Port of London, what are the other causes that you have in your mind?—Naturally people began to see that it is cheaper for them if they can possibly get it direct.

9393. That is the same; that is only showing the same thing in another way. When you say that the heavy charges are one cause you have in your mind, have you not, some other cause?—Undoubtedly, that is to say, the people wish to take their supply the cheapest way they can.

9394. If you have no other cause in your mind, of course I take your answer?—I have no other cause than that which I have given.

9395. (*Mr. Peel.*) I suppose other fibres have during the last twenty years been substituted in the manufactures in which jute was largely used?—No; there is no other fibre which can be substituted for jute, because there is no other fibre so cheap. It is the cheapest fibre that exists.

9396. None of these fibres come from the West Indian Islands?—No, you get jute on an average at £12 a ton; you could get no other fibre at the price. That is why you get your bags so cheap. Of course they do not last, but they do for the purpose. There is no other fibre so cheap, therefore it cannot afford a big tax.

9397. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I suppose there is no jute manufactory in London and the neighbourhood?—Yes, there is one mill at Stratford.

9398. It is not a large one, is it?—No, possibly consuming 80 to 90 tons a week.

9399. I suppose some of the raw material that came to London went on to Dundee and other places?—Yes, and it does well at certain seasons of the year when they cannot get full cargoes, but as a rule Dundee imports direct.

9400. And it is generally a transhipment trade, is it not?—Yes.

9401. That is to say, the goods are taken overside from the ships in the docks or the river and put on to coasting vessels to go to Dundee?—Yes.

9402. What charges are there upon that trade in London?—Only lighterage. You send your lighter alongside the import steamer and deliver it to the coasting vessels.

9403. There are no dock charges upon the goods?—Not payable by the buyers of the goods. The buyer sends his lighter in alongside, the import steamer collects his goods and takes them to the export steamer.

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9404. Your statement is that the trade has been diverted by the heavy charges for lighterage. Is that so?—No. Originally, many years ago, it was the custom to warehouse very largely and supply from the warehouses; that is to say, before steamers became so numerous as they are now, and a great deal of the trade was carried by sailing vessels. They arrived very much about the same time and the goods were warehoused. I am speaking now of 20 to 25 years ago. The charges for warehousing became so heavy that people avoided warehousing in London, preferring to send goods to other ports if they could get there direct. Therefore the trade was diverted from London because you could get cheaper warehousing room elsewhere.

9405. Still that change, such as it was, took place before the beginning of this table that you have submitted to us, which commences in 1890?—I had not really the figures beside me to go back further.

9406. The diminution which we see here must have arisen from other causes and not from that change which you speak of, because that change which you have been telling us of took place about 20 years ago or so?—It began then, but it has increased.

9407. I suppose a great deal of the change has been the substitution of steamers for sailing ships, which are rather inimical to warehousing, I suppose, because the supply is more continuous?—Yes. Buyers can rely upon getting the jute more continuously.

9408. So that that is one of the causes of the change?—Certainly.

9409. And the question of the dock charges is one that belongs to a period of 20 years ago?—It was the first to give the trade what we call a blow. Any further increase we should consider our death-blow.

Mr. GEORGE BIRRELL called and examined.

9410. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us in order to give evidence with regard to the Covent Garden Branch of the green fruit trade?—Yes.

Mr. G. Birrell.

9411. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say?—The green fruit trade in London is carried on by 8 brokers in Covent Garden, of which I am one, and also by 4 firms in the City. Fully 75 per cent. of the foreign fruit steamers, bringing such fruit as oranges, lemons, onions, melons, pomegranates, grapes, etc., discharge at Fresh Wharf and Nicholson's Wharves, Lower Thames Street. These wharves are quite unsuitable wharves for the trade, which should be carried on at the docks. The Thames Street side approaches to these wharves are inaccessible for hours together owing to the block caused by the early morning fish traffic, and later on in the day by the fruit traffic. These wharves may be convenient for the City firms whose warehouses are situated within a few yards of the wharves, and whose goods are carried by porters direct from the quay side over the short distance through the streets to the warehouses. I am of the opinion that these two trades, that is, the fish and foreign green fruit trade should not be worked in the same small area. Brokers in Covent Garden have to collect their goods by van, and it is a common occurrence for vans to be kept waiting one, two, three or four hours without being allowed to get near the approaches to the wharves. The congestion is made worse in the summer months by the large amount of foot passenger traffic passing over Fresh Wharf to the pleasure boats to Margate, Ramsgate, etc. I have had my vans kept outside Fresh Wharf gates from early morning until mid-day before they were allowed to even go on to the wharf. I may say that for some time past now, rather than be put to inconvenience and loss of time by having my fruit landed by these wharfingers and delivered to my vans and carried by land, I have at considerable trouble to myself had my fruit put overside into barges and taken from the vessels lying at Fresh and Nicholson's Wharves to a wharf on the other side of the river in order to enable me to get an earlier delivery. Another bad feature of the system of the working of these London Bridge wharves, and which further adds to the delay in delivery, is that through the desire of the wharfingers to secure as many steamers as possible, and to discharge their cargoes promptly, they often bulk marks together, but take no corresponding means to expedite delivery. This indiscriminate landing of cargoes and bulking of the marks is detrimental to the proper conduct of the trade, and adds further to the delay in delivery. I could instance many cases in which my vans have been kept on these wharves for many hours; sometimes, in the Malta potato season, until 1 o'clock in the morning. I am of the opinion that the bulk of this green fruit trade should be done by the dock company, and that it would be quite easy for the dock company to make such arrangements as would enable them to obtain and keep this growing trade. The docks complain at the present moment of so much cargo going overside into barges, which pay them no dues, but I am strongly of the opinion that a great deal more of the cargoes would be landed were better delivery given by extended dock working hours with greater economy in dock charges. I desire to detail certain points that are within my knowledge of the bad system prevailing in all the London Docks. The present working hours in the London Docks are from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, when an interval of half an hour, and sometimes one hour, for dinner occurs, with resumption of work at 1 o'clock until 5 o'clock p.m., in all seven to seven and a half working hours per day. I am of opinion that these hours are absurdly short, and should be extended to twelve working hours; say from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., deliveries to be made without any intermission for breakfast or dinner. This could easily be arranged, and is rendered really necessary on account of the long distance vans have to travel to and from the docks. There is a great deal of formality to be gone through before a carman can take goods out of the docks. Much of this is in my opinion quite unnecessary, and the process is hampered with an amount of red tapeism that is altogether out of place in a commercial institution. I refer particularly to carmen's passes, of which one only should be necessary. In my own experience carmen have had to walk a distance of two miles to get their different passes signed, and as at some docks they have to get as many as five or six passes signed before they

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can get out of the dock gates, there is an enormous waste of time, which is, of course, an expense to merchants; the whole procedure being enough to mystify the average carmen. Another delay is caused by the necessity for waiting for the Customs clerk to clear the goods. It frequently happens that a carman has to wait some hours for this gentleman, as he will only clear goods when on his "rounds." There ought to be arrangements made by which Customs clerks can be on the spot, to clear goods on landing from ships. In the evidence offered by Mr. James Fleming, Surveyor General, Board of Customs, on November 8th he states that "all kinds of goods free or dutiable may be discharged from an importing vessel between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., without the shipowner or merchant becoming liable to pay for the attendance of the Customs officers." I would merely remark that this does not in the least remedy the delivery to the merchants. I take great exception to the dock system of trollying and trucking packages, which means a lot of extra labour, and is quite unnecessary. At the London Bridge wharves there is no sign of such trucking to be seen; all fruit is taken out of the steward's hold by hooks, landed on the quays, and then put on the porters' backs, the packages being then carried away by the porters. To show that it is not necessary for such delays to take place I wish to mention my experience of the manner in which fruit steamers are handled at Cardiff.

See 387; 393

9412. Do you know this of your own knowledge?—Yes, I went down there. A fruit steamer arriving at 4 p.m. did not wait until the next morning to commence discharge (as would be the case in the London docks), but started working at once, and by continuous working through the night the cargo was all landed by 4 a.m. The fruit was then catalogued, sold by public auction, and delivered by 4 p.m., so that within 24 hours the thing was done with. At Southampton the fruit steamers are discharged in a like prompt manner. When the New York steamers arrive, even as late as mid-day on Thursday, the fruit is landed, put on railway trucks, taken to Nine Elms—a distance of 80 miles—and delivered in Covent Garden sometimes as early as 6 o'clock the next morning, within 18 hours from the time of the steamer's arrival at Southampton. I should like to refer to a remark made by Mr. C. J. C. Scott in his evidence on November 8th to the effect that the London Docks had not fallen behind the times, and that they accommodated all the ships afloat, and of no ship could it be said that it could not go to the Port of London for want of dock accommodation. I cannot dispute that statement, neither do I see the point of it, as it is of no use taking steamers to the docks if the deliveries cannot be properly carried out. The space possessed by the London Docks should be used to advantage, and there is no reason why steamers should go to Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, or other places, to discharge with such vast accommodation in London, practically not being used. The payment of dock labourers at 6d. per hour should be done away with entirely, and a system of piece work substituted generally, and for the green fruit trade a package or tonnage rate. Men paid by the hour simply loiter about in groups, and you see sometimes four or five men surrounding one package where one man could have done the work. The present pay of 3s. 6d. to 4s. per day cannot possibly attract anything but the most inferior kind of labourer. I roughly estimate the quantity of foreign fruits landing in the London Docks and London Bridge wharves to run into something like 10,000 to 12,000 tons weekly, so that if the trade increases as it has done, and I expect it to continue so to do each year, it is absolutely necessary that efficient preparations be made to facilitate the necessary deliveries.

See 647.

9413. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You have mentioned that in some cases five or six passes are required by the carmen to get out of the dock gates?—That is so.

9414. Will you specify the docks?—The Albert Docks and the Victoria Docks. By the time the carman gets his vans loaded and gets the ship's clerk's pass and back to the ship and goes out of the dock gates he has had to get five or six passes.

9415. Is that the place where he has sometimes to walk two miles for his passes?—That is the place.

9416. Are there any other docks in the same position?—Victoria Dock is as bad as the Albert Docks. The East India Dock and St. Katharine Dock are not so bad; but they are all bad; it is a question of degree.

9417. You refer chiefly to the Albert and Victoria Docks?—Yes.

9418. (*Mr. Peel.*) Why do you say that the wharves are so unsuitable?—They are so congested; there is so small a space; you cannot get your vans there; you are kept trotting about all day long to get near the wharves. I have had vans come down there and not be able to get a single package, and the men have been told to come the next day, and so on.

9419. You want to get the docks for the larger space?—Exactly, and with extended dock working hours; at present they are quite inadequate.

9420. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose it is extremely difficult to shift the centre of trade in London?—There would be no trouble to shift it. A great deal of that fruit trade goes to the docks already.

9421. Still all that can get to those wharves near London Bridge endeavours to do so; is not that so?—That is so.

9422. And efforts have been made to diminish the fish trade in the neighbourhood, but they have not been very successful, I believe?—That is so.

9423. The fish market at Shadwell has not been a great success, has it?—No, but I contend that they ought not to have the two trades running in so small a space; one blocks up the other entirely. It is an ordinary occurrence for vans to be kept trotting up and down Thames Street all day long, and to occasionally be summoned. That is not business.

9424. If Billingsgate was to remain where it is, and the green fruit trade were all anxious to get up to London Bridge, I do not see how you could avoid some congestion there?—I do not think they are so very anxious to retain the London fruit trade there. It was so some time ago, but now the condition of the trade is altered.

9425. Your business is almost all done by vans, I suppose?—Entirely.

9426. In what docks do you suggest the fruit trade should be carried on?—In one of the close handy docks, the London Dock, or the East India Dock, or the St. Katharine Dock, avoiding as far as possible the Albert and Victoria Docks as being too far away.

9427. You are anxious to avoid long van transit as far as possible?—Exactly; at present we spend four or five hours a day going to and fro.

9428. You say goods are delivered at Southampton; are they delivered by railway vans?—Yes.

9429. You do not have to send your vans to Nine Elms?—We do occasionally, but it is quite optional.

9430. Is any movement being made for the construction of any wharves on the Thames suitable for your trade in competition with Fresh Wharf and Nicholson's?—At Middleton's Wharf they are moving rather rapidly and giving more facilities.

9431. We may take it that the arrangement must be always more complicated in docks than at wharves?—We have one Custom House officer in one dock, and he cannot do more than one man can do.

9432. I mean with regard to passes?—At wharves a man gets one pass and it is done with; why should not that apply equally in the docks. The average carman is not a man of great education who knows where to go.

9433. Is not that almost a necessity in a dock dealing with all kinds of merchandise as contrasted with a wharf that is specially set apart for one particular trade?—Where these fruit steamers discharge it is only fruit they are taking in hand in one steamer; it is not a mixed cargo; it is entirely fruit from Spain, Italy, or the Mediterranean.

9434. But there is a great deal of other merchandise which is also in the docks which may be smuggled out with the fruit?—I do not see why one pass should not be given to the man and then let him go straight away with it.

9435. But does he not traverse the docks perhaps for a mile or two?—He has to leave his cart at the risk of being knocked about by locomotives and come a mile or two back; I say that is a scandal.

9436. Is there not a real difficulty in a large dock where there is a variety of merchandise and where any

amount of smuggling might go on—a difficulty which does not belong to a wharf?—Do you refer to smuggling by a carman?

9437. Yes?—On his person or in his van or what?

9438. In his waggon. Would it not be quite possible for him to smuggle tobacco, for instance?—I believe there is such an operation as "wiping a man down" if he is supposed to have tobacco about his person at the dock gates.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9439. Do you claim to represent the green fruit trade?—I do.

9440. Are you nominated by the trade?—By the Chamber of Commerce.

9441. I ask you specifically by the green fruit trade?—No.

9442. You are in fact a broker in the green fruit trade who is nominated by a section of the Chamber of Commerce?—That is so.

9443. As a matter of fact you have never hit it particularly well with the proprietors of Fresh Wharf, have you?—I have hit it off still less well with the docks.

9444. As a matter of fact I think you have very recently been in litigation with Fresh Wharf?—I have been in litigation with docks and wharves all my life. That is why I am here.

9445. Bad as you say Fresh Wharf and Nicholson's Wharf are, as a matter of fact I think you try to take delivery overside and take it to another wharf?—I do now every package.

9446. At the present time?—Yes.

9447. Do you find it a cheaper way than taking it through Fresh Wharf?—I do.

9448. To what extent?—25 to 30 per cent.

9449. May I ask where you take it?—To South Eastern Wharf.

9450. Is that a railway wharf?—No, a Thames wharf; Messrs. Baxter and Hoare's.

9451. Just by the railway is it?—Yes, by the Borough Market.

9452. Do you cart from there?—Yes, to Covent Garden.

9453. Is that underneath the Cannon Street Railway Bridge?—Yes, the other side.

9454. You say you now find it 25 per cent. cheaper?—I do.

9455. Taking it wholesale?—Yes.

9456. From Fresh Wharf?—Yes, and Nicholson's Wharf too.

9457. On craft from the green fruit wharves?—That is so.

9458. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) If you discharge overside at Fresh Wharf do you then pay any wharfage dues?—No. *Mr. G. Birrell.* 12 June 1901.

9459. Do you make fast to Fresh Wharf and take part of your cargo there and part overside?—No, the cargo comes alongside in the steamer and there it has to discharge on to the quay and to barges for the convenience of the wharf. The wharf discharges into barges at the quay. That is a matter of convenience.

9460. I would like to understand that a little more. Does a vessel come alongside Fresh Wharf?—Yes.

9461. Then is the cargo taken out on to Fresh Wharf?—Yes.

9462. Then put into barges?—Into our barges.

9463. And taken away to your other wharf?—South Eastern Wharf.

9464. Without any charge by Fresh Wharf?—That is so.

9465. (*Chairman.*) You tell us that the green fruit trade is carried on by 8 brokers in Covent Garden and 4 firms in the City. Did you consult the 8 brokers or 4 firms in the City before you compiled the evidence which you have put before us?—The 4 firms I have not because you have a witness here for them.

9466. The eight brokers in Covent Garden?—Yes.

9467. Have you reason to think they share your views?—They do entirely.

9468. All of them?—All of them.

9469. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I do not quite understand about these gratuitous services rendered by Fresh Wharf. You say you have been in litigaton with Fresh Wharf?—I have had litigation on various matters—general irregularities.

9470. I only want to know your reason. It seems rather remarkable that they should give you access to Fresh Wharf gratuitously under any circumstances?—It is a choice of evils.

9471. It seems still more remarkable that they should do so if you have been in litigation with them. Perhaps you can give us the key to the mystery?—The question of charges is entirely the beginning and end of it. They charge us 5d. per case for landing cases of onions, and I contend that is a gross abuse of the privilege of wharfingers.

9472. That is not the question. Can you give me any explanation why you are able to get those services from Fresh Wharf for nothing?—According to the bill of lading the steamer is bound to deliver overside. The reason that Fresh Wharf do this work gratuitously is that they have no choice; the terms of the bill of lading make them do that.

9473. I do not understand you; will you just develop that?—It is simply that the terms of the bill of lading allow the merchant to take delivery overside at no expense to himself. If the wharfinger does that, he does it for his own convenience, getting his profit from the ship and not from the merchant.

Mr. Harry Michael Isaacs called and examined.

9474. (*Chairman.*) You have been nominated by the Green Fruit and Vegetable Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce to give evidence before us on the subject of the City branch of the green fruit trade?—Yes. *Mr. H. M. Isaacs.*

9475. Will you be kind enough to tell us what you have to say?—I am managing-director of the firm of M. Isaacs and Sons, Limited, and am also Chairman of the Green Fruit and Vegetable Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce. The London import trade of green fruit is carried on by four firms of fruit brokers in the City, of which my firm is one, and also by some firms in the London markets. The chief imports of green fruit come from Mediterranean ports; but a considerable quantity, chiefly apples, comes from the United States, Canada, and Tasmania. The average imports of green fruit into London amount to about 450,000 to 500,000 tons, with a value of about £4,000,000 to £5,000,000. Green fruit is usually imported into London in small steamers ranging from 600 to 1,000 tons burthen. The majority of the steamers discharge their cargoes at private wharves, Fresh Wharf and Nicholson's Wharf having the bulk of the trade. The work of discharging at these wharves is satisfactory. An improvement has taken place during recent years, owing to the acquisition of improved appliances. I consider the work compares very favourably with that of Liverpool. Some fruit steamers discharge in the docks. The work is done satisfactorily, but it would be better if the working hours were extended. While the charges at private wharves and docks are about the same, the position of the private wharves is more convenient for the trade. The warehouses of the principal receivers in the City of Mediterranean fruit are situated close to the discharging wharves, and the goods are mostly carried by porters direct from the ship into the receivers' warehouses, so that, although the steamers discharge at the wharves, it is the exception for the wharves to warehouse the goods. As regards Atlantic and Tasmanian steamers, these occasionally discharge at Tilbury Docks, and the delay and difficulty in obtaining prompt delivery of these goods is great. It is not the rule for fruit by Mediterranean steamers to be lightered. It is nearly always landed at the place of discharge, whether it be at the wharves or docks. My firm are

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also chartered owners of a large number of steamers employed in the fruit trade, and their experience is that the discharge in London compares favourably with the discharge in other ports of which they have experience. We find also that the expenses on the steamers are less, as will be seen by a *pro forma* account taken from the actual expenses incurred by a steamer, which I will hand in.

(*The witness handed in a Comparative Account of a Steamer, 391 tons net register, 14 feet 6 inches draught, discharging 6,000 cases of oranges at the Ports of London and Liverpool. See Appendix, 25th Day, No. 2.*)

On a steamer of 391 tons register (Norwegian s.s. "Cito"), which has been running on our account for some three years, the difference in charges is nearly £24 per voyage. In spite of this big difference in expenses of steamers, we find a disadvantage in having steamers to London against most other ports, owing to the difficulty in getting outward cargo without shifting to a coal port, also the dearness of bunkers as compared with most other ports. Liverpool and London are the two chief centres for the import of fruit. The freight to Liverpool from all ports where comparison is possible is 15 to 25 per cent. cheaper than London. The trade is one that necessitates work at high pressure, goods being of a perishable nature. The arrival of steamers is uncertain and irregular, and arrangements have to be made and sometimes changed at the last moment. The responsible heads of private wharves are easily approached, and negotiations are simple and prompt. Competition among the wharves has considerably improved their efficiency in the last few years.

9476. Have you any remarks to make upon the table?—No.

9477. Have you any personal experience of discharging at Southampton or Cardiff?—Yes.

9478. Did you hear the evidence of the last witness, Mr. Birrell?—I could not hear it very plainly.

9479. How, in your experience, does the discharging at London compare with the discharging at Southampton or Cardiff?—The experience that we have, where we can compare, is in the case of steamers coming in from the Atlantic discharging their cargoes. They are put direct on to the rails and brought through. The discharging takes place, I suppose, in about the same time. It is a question of prompt delivery on to the railway trucks.

9480. As regards promptness of delivery, how would you compare London with Southampton and Cardiff?—I should say it is prompter in Southampton and Cardiff, but the cases are rather different. Similar cases could not arise here.

9481. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do your fruit steamers carry whole cargoes?—Yes; that is, nearly all fruit—some minerals.

9482. I suppose the inconvenience with regard to outward cargoes from London is one that is difficult to cure?—There is no outward cargo to Mediterranean ports.

9483. How about coal?—Ninety-nine of our steamers out of 100 have to take coal out. We generally provide them with sufficient if we think they are coming to London to take them round to the coal port.

9484. Then they go out light to the coal port?—They go round light.

9485. You are not in favour of your trade doing much at the docks?—No. We are quite satisfied. We think that the docks might do better.

9486. (*Mr. Peel.*) You have nothing to complain of about the length of the working hours at the wharves?—No. We work whatever hours we like at the wharves, and we have no inconvenience. We have occasionally at the docks.

9487. Do you find any difficulty in the bulking of the marks which we have heard spoken of?—I am afraid I did not hear what the witness said. We take all the goods that belong to us direct into our own warehouses.

9488. You charter your own steamers?—We have steamers, but we take that portion of the goods that belongs to us direct out of the steamers. The ship comes alongside the wharf, and the goods are carried direct from the ship into our warehouses. Generally nine-tenths of the cargo is dealt with in that way.

9489. You do not see much difficulty in the mixing of the marks?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

9490. What size do your steamers run to?—600 to 1,000 tons.

9491. Would that be about the average?—That is about the average. They must be small steamers for the fruit trade.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9492. Southampton is a railway port and I take it that the Atlantic steamers that bring fruit bring small parcels, not complete cargoes?—Not complete cargoes, but they bring rather large parcels.

9493. And the railway company, having control of the port, put pressure on the railway?—Yes.

9494. The time of leaving the ship's hold at Southampton and delivery to you, is rather less than the time of leaving the ship's hold at London and delivery to you. Is that what you mean?—I cannot compare the ports at all.

9495. The processes are not entirely analogous?—No.

Re-examined by Mr. Whitehead.

9496. Do you take delivery of any fruit at all in the docks?—I do not quite understand the question.

9497. Do you get your fruit or vegetables through the docks at all?—No. Whatever comes into the docks we land there. We send our own staff down, and it is sorted and prepared for sale, and sold for delivery from the docks.

9498. Which do you find the most convenient course of business? To do your business through the docks or the wharves?—We prefer the wharves. We have our own warehouses there.

Mr. Thomas Elborough, called and examined.

Mr. T. Elborough.

9499. (*Chairman.*) You are the managing director of Lawes' Chemical Manure Company, Limited?—Yes.

9500. You are nominated by the chemical trade section of the London Chamber of Commerce to give evidence before us with regard to the chemical trade?—Yes. I should like to say that I appear also as Chairman of the London Chemical Manufacturers' Association, which comprises the principal members of the trade in the Port of London.

9501. Will you kindly give us your evidence?—If the powers sought by the London and India Docks Joint Committee to enable them to impose the charges stated on lighters, barges and their contents entering and leaving the docks are granted to and enforced by them, the consequences to my company and to other manufacturers of chemical manures having works upon the Thames will be very serious, and the inevitable result would be to divert a considerable portion of the present export trade to the Continent. For some time past we have had the utmost difficulty in retaining the trade, and in order to do so, our prices have been reduced to a minimum, our principal competitors being the Belgian makers, who have the advantage of lower rates of lighterage and freights. In London we have to pay 1s. 6d. per ton lighterage at present, which rate will, we are informed by our lightermen, have to be increased as the result of the strike, whilst in Antwerp the rate is only 80 centimes and in Hamburg only one mark. In the case of my company, the additional charges would amount to about £1,500 per annum, the whole of which would have to be borne by us as we have to compete with makers at other ports both in the United Kingdom and the Continent, and could not therefore levy any of these charges on the consumers. There is another point to which I would call attention, namely, that we have frequently to send 20 ton lots into docks in large lighters capable of carrying 80 tons; and to pay 4d. on the register of the barge as well as 1s. 6d. on the contents would be simply prohibitory;

our goods are frequently shut out from one vessel, and the lighter has to convey them to another vessel in another dock, so that in these cases double charges would be incurred, and as at present our margin of profit has been reduced to a minimum even where we have not to sell at actual cost, which we are constantly doing in order to retain the trade in certain markets, the result of the imposition of any additional charge must inevitably be to drive away a large portion of the trade from the Thames. We occupy waterside premises, which have been erected at great cost, and the value of these would be seriously diminished if these additional charges were imposed, as we could not afford to convey the goods to our premises and store them there, and would have to send cargoes to other ports where the charges are less, and distribute them from there.

9502. Now will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say with regard to the rights of the Watermen's Company?—We strongly feel the necessity for abolishing the exclusive rights of the Watermen's Company, which have resulted in our having to pay such high rates, and have caused us the greatest inconvenience and loss during the recent strike, master lightermen being unable to employ men who had not a licence, and we contend that whilst no prejudice would be caused by the abolition of the exclusive right, as masters would not, for their own sakes, entrust their valuable property to other than competent men, it would be a great advantage, and we should not be, as at present, at the mercy of a limited body of men. I am of the opinion that the present bad financial position of the docks is largely due to their past management. Their system has been to impose heavy charges, instead of adopting the best means for effecting economies by improved appliances and otherwise, and making the charges reasonable. To give one instance, for want of proper storage facilities the docks frequently engage lighters and make warehouses of these, a very expensive mode of working, and another cause for the difficulty merchants experience in obtaining lighters, and the high rate they have to pay for them. Railway communication with the docks, where it exists, is inadequate, and in the majority of cases, there is none at all. I am certainly in favour of a change in the management of the London Docks, but can express no opinion with regard to the constitution of the managing body.

9503. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is your trade chiefly an export trade, or are you largely connected with imports as well?—We are connected with both, but our trade is largely an export trade. We import fertilisers, such as natural guano, from Peru and Damaraland.

9504. You are apprehensive about the charges proposed as affecting your export trade mainly?—As affecting our export trade mainly. Of course, with regard to the importation of this guano, if the charges in London, which are already higher than the charges in other ports, were further increased, the natural tendency would be for us to divert as many cargoes as we could to other ports, and distribute from there.

9505. Does your manufacture go on in the Port of London itself. Is it a local manufacture?—Yes, on the Thames.

9506. Does it give large employment for labour?—We employ, on an average, about 400 men.

9507. And the other firms whom you represent employ—how many?—I am not quite prepared to answer that question, but there are one or two firms that employ nearly, if not quite, as many men as we employ ourselves.

9508. And is there any indirect employment of labour by people not directly under you who supply you with stuff?—Such as lightermen, do you mean?

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9509. Where does the manufacture begin?—We have to import materials for the manufacture of chemical fertilisers from various parts of the world. Those are taken to our factory and dealt with there. They go through various processes according to the nature of them.

9510. Have you any raw material from this country, or is it all imported?—The great bulk of it is imported. We have some raw material from this country, such as sulphate of ammonia, which is produced here; but phosphates, which form the great bulk of our trade, are all imported.

9511. Then the number of workmen represented by your trade in this country is about 400 employed by your firm alone, and there is not much indirect employment besides?—No; I think not.

9512. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) For the materials that you bring into the Port of London for your use and also for your exports, do you generally use the docks, or otherwise?—We use the docks to a considerable extent, and at other times we discharge from buoys in the stream.

9513. When you say you use the docks do you mean you discharge overside into lighters?—Yes.

9514. You said just now in answer to Sir Robert Giffen that the charges in the Port of London were already much heavier than at other ports?—Yes, that is so.

9515. How do you account for that, when your goods come into this port free of charge. There are no charges on the goods?—I was referring then to the landing and warehousing of goods; not to delivery overside.

9516. Not as regards the Port of London?—No, not as regards the Port of London.

9517. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Where is your wharf?—At Barking Creek.

9518. Have you factories at other ports—Hull, Plymouth, or Liverpool?—No; we have no factories there.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9519. Was the statement of your evidence made out with reference to the Bill of 1900?—It was.

9520. Not with reference to the Bill of 1901?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

9521. When you say your goods are frequently shut out from one vessel, and the lighter has to convey them to another vessel in another dock, why are they shut out?—I should often be very glad if I knew why they are shut out. All that I know is that we arrange with the shipowners to send the lighters alongside a certain vessel. The next we hear is that they have not been able to find room for some reason or another and we have to remove them to some other vessel.

9522. You mean it is a defect of the lighterage arrangements of the dock, do you?—No, I did not mean to imply that. I am simply wanting to say what the effect would be if we had to pay on the register of the barge in the dock, and then from no fault of our own had to move that lighter into another dock and pay again on the register of the barge.

Mr. JAMES POWELL called and examined.

9523. (*Chairman.*) You have been nominated by the Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee of the London Chamber of Commerce to give evidence before us with special reference to the hide and leather trade?—Yes.

9524. You are a partner in the firm of T. J. and T. Powell, who have carried on the business of hide and leather merchants in London for the past 101 years?—Yes.

9525. Your own experience extends over 26 years?—Yes.

9526. Will you kindly give us your evidence?—I am Chairman of the Leather and Hide Section of the London Chamber of Commerce. The South American hide trade formerly centred in London has been for some years past entirely lost to that port, being now carried on by foreign ports, notably Antwerp. The sole reason of this diversion of trade was the high dock charges ruling in London.

Mr. J. Powell.

See 9559.

9527. I take it that your evidence is to the effect that there is in your opinion no possibility of recovering this trade to the Port of London unless and until a Dock Trust is formed to take the place of the dock companies?—Yes. The loss of this trade is not a merely local disadvantage, being driven to British outports, but is an Imperial loss—a dead loss to British commerce, having entirely gone abroad. The Chamber

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of Commerce made representations to the officials of the Joint Committee, and they listened to what we had to say.

9528. Did you make the representations, or the London Chamber of Commerce?—The London Chamber of Commerce.

9529. Can you give us details as to the representations. Can you give us the date when they were made?—They were carried on for some time.

9530. Have you any correspondence referring to it?—No, the London Chamber of Commerce have the correspondence.

9531. We want to have evidence as to your particular trade?—The present production of hides in South America that are exported to Europe is about nine millions. They used to come chiefly to London, and now I do not think 900 come to London. They have been driven away chiefly by the very high charges and the want of management in the London Docks. The hide trade requires special experts and special facilities for carrying on the business. There ought to be room for a floating stock of 200,000 properly assorted hides. That is the way the business is done in Antwerp now, and if the Joint Committee want to get that trade back they might arrange for those facilities, and let the large hide importers like Liebigs and others know it. Then I think they may recover a portion of it, otherwise I do not think there is any possibility of getting it back.

9532. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) It is facilities that you particularly want?—Yes; expert sorters.

9533. Will you explain a little more fully the nature of the facilities which you say you do not at present receive?—The dock company want to be able to tell large importers like Liebigs and other people that they will do the business at the same rate as Antwerp, and then they want to appoint a sufficient number of expert sorters who would sort the hides into steers, cows, bulls, etc., of different weights, and make facilities for their being inspected.

9534. When the business was done in London had you any such facilities at the docks?—No; it was done in an old-fashioned way. I should think it has been lost nearly twenty years. It was gradually lost. But that is the system at Antwerp. They have special sorters there who understand the work, and there are large ranges of wharves there. Sometimes there are 200,000 stock there. The dock companies want the room, the capacity and space.

9535. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is Antwerp the chief competitor with London in your trade?—Antwerp, Havre, Hamburg, Bremen, Marseilles.

9536. Do your remarks apply to other ports with regard to the matter of facilities equally with Antwerp?—Yes.

9537. And you say London stands alone in not granting these facilities?—Yes.

9538. Do you put it that the physical conditions of the London Docks prevent their giving facilities, or is it due to any other matter?—I should have thought that it could be arranged. My view is that it could be arranged even now, but, of course, to get a lost trade back requires a great amount of energy.

9539. Then you think that Antwerp not only outbids London in the matter of charges, but also in the facilities afforded?—Yes; one quite as much as the other.

9540. (*Mr. Peel.*) Where do you mainly import your hides from?—The River Plate and Rio Grande. We do not import them ourselves. I merely speak for the trade.

9541. That is the South American trade?—Yes.

9542. And that particular branch of the trade has been lost?—Yes.

9543. But where do the hides come from?—Buenos Ayres, River Plate and Rio Grande chiefly.

9544. That is South America. I understood you to say that that branch of the trade had been lost?—They are sent now to Antwerp.

9545. But there is a large import into London from other places?—Yes.

9546. Do you know why this specific branch of the trade has been lost, and the others have gone on?—It is because this is a very large trade. It must be systematised much more than the others. For instance, there might be 13,000 Penang buffaloes offering at one time, but that is a mere bagatelle compared with this South American trade. It requires systematising.

9547. Does your remark apply to Hamburg?—Yes.

9548. And the French ports?—Yes, to Havre.

9549. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Does any other port in Great Britain receive these South American hides direct?—Only a few; not the great bulk of the trade.

9550. And are many of these hides exported again from Antwerp to London?—Not many to London; to places like Barnstaple, Bristol, Hull; also to Liverpool, and by the Manchester Ship Canal to Warrington.

9551. From Antwerp?—Yes. That is what used to be done from London. They were sent by small trading steamers.

9552. And virtually London gets none from Antwerp?—Some proportion, but not many.

9553. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Is anything done to the hides at Antwerp beyond sorting and classifying?—Re-salting and warehousing.

9554. Then it is merely distribution?—Yes. It gets all those charges which London could get if it were laid out for the trade in the same way.

9555. Is it not the case that a large part of the wool trade also comes from Continental ports?—I believe it is.

9556. Is there not some reason connected with the subsidised shipping lines on the Continent?—Unquestionably.

9557. That is to say, that the Continental ports have lines of steamers running to South America which are subsidised, and they take away some of the trade?—Yes. They give them a bounty if they come direct there, but they will not give them a bounty if they come through London.

9558. So that it is not altogether a question of facilities?—No.

9559. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I see that in the statement of your evidence, after speaking of the loss of this trade, you say the "sole reason"?—That is a mistake. It ought to be "chief reason." See 9526.

9560. Did you draft this statement yourself?—No, I did not draft it.

9561. Who did draft it?—The Chamber of Commerce.

9562. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I think you could clear up a point which arose in the evidence of Mr. Scott. I was asking him a question with regard to leather. It is Question 6552. "You say that there is a difference in the rate of insurance as between the wharf and the dock." And he answered "Yes." Then I asked him in the next question: "Do you mean to say that that item of insurance would account for a difference between 9s. 9d. and 5s. 6d.?—(A) No, certainly not; but the 9s. 9d. rate includes delivery in Tooley Street, for which we pay 5s. cartage." There is a difference in charge as between the wharf and the dock?—Yes. See 11657–67.

9563. Are the services performed at the dock the same, or different?—Precisely the same. They take them from the steamer, and deliver them into our warehouse or anywhere.

9564. But Mr. Scott makes some allowance for the item of cartage. He says: "The 9s. 9d. rate includes delivery in Tooley Street, for which we pay 5s. cartage"?—Both the private wharf and the docks would have to cart it, and there is no necessity in this world for them to pay more than 2s. cartage from Mint Street to Tooley Street. It shows a most extraordinary want of business capacity to pay 5s. cartage from Mint Street to Tooley Street.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9565. With regard to the question of charges, which you have just mentioned, you say you compare charges with those from Mint Street to Tooley Street?—Yes, 2s. is ample. I could get a thousand carmen to do it to-day.

9566. The Dock Company have to get it to Mint Street, have they not?—Yes; they charge 9s. 9d.

9567. What does the 9s. 9d. include?—It includes taking the cargo from the steamer to the warehouse.

9568. From the steamer, wherever it is?—Yes.

9569. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I have enquired, with regard to the preparation of your statement of evidence. I understand that you wrote to the Chamber of Commerce, giving them the facts upon which your statement was based?—Yes, entirely; it is practically the same thing.

9570. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Owing to the exclusion of the question of the rates, it is quite fair for you to say that, but the bulk of the evidence you have given to-day has been with regard to facilities?—Yes, with regard to facilities.

9571. The matter of facilities is wholly omitted from your statement, which was drawn up by the Chamber of Commerce. What I want to know is, whether you, in your letter to the Chamber of Commerce, said anything about facilities, or whether you merely concentrated your attention upon charges?—They are so bound up with one another that you cannot separate them. We asked the Dock Company whether they would allow us to send a circular, saying that they would provide these facilities for the same charges.

9572. That is not quite the question. The questions are, of course, bound up together; but in this official document that we have before us, stamped with the Chamber of Commerce stamp, we have what purports to be your statement of evidence?—Yes.

9573. And in it there is not a word about facilities. Now, the first question I should like to ask you is whether you saw this statement at all before it was handed in to the Commission?—Yes.

9574-5. Then why did you omit all reference to facilities from it?—I did not know how much was wanted. I thought the shorter it was the better. We had that over and over so much with the Dock Companies that I supposed they would have that in their archives.

(*Mr. Lyttleton.*) The statement of a witness's evidence goes upon the notes, as a rule, subject to exclusions, and if it to be taken as worth anything it ought to have the sanction of the witness, and it ought not be absolutely different from that which the witness has in his mind, or at any rate, very much less than he has in his mind. *Mr. J. Powell.* 12 June 1901

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) It would be much more valuable to have the witness's own views as expressed in the letter which he wrote in the first instance.

9576. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) This statement was prepared on the footing of a letter which you wrote to the Chamber of Commerce?—Yes.

9577. And when it had been prepared it was submitted to you, and you saw it?—Yes.

9578. When was that?—I could not remember the date at the moment.

9579. Was it last year?—I think it was.

9580. Since then the line of evidence which has been dealt with by this Commission has been somewhat modified?—Yes.

9581. And in view of that modification you offered evidence with regard to the question of facilities?—Yes.

9582. You do not withdraw, as I understand, anything from your proof as originally prepared on your instructions?—Beyond the alteration of the word "sole" into "chief."

(*Mr. Harper.*) May I ask the witness a question?

(*Chairman.*) Yes.

9583. (*Mr. Harper.*) Are you speaking of representations made to the dock companies?—Yes.

9584. Were those representations with regard to facilities?—Yes, facilities and charges.

9585. And you did not set out in detail in your statement what the representations were. Were they the facilities which you have been describing to the Commission?—Yes, the representatives of the hide brokers met the Joint Committee.

9586. Were you one of them?—No, I was not.

9587. The representation had reference to the facilities you have been describing to-day?—Yes; it was my fault that the facilities were left out.

Mr. GEORGE ROUSE called, and examined.

9588. (*Chairman.*) You are a partner in the firm of R. J. Rouse and Company?—I am.

9589. You have been nominated by the Cotton Brokers' Association to give evidence before this Commission?—Yes.

9590. And by the coffee brokers' section of the General Produce Brokers' Association?—Yes.

9591. We have here a statement of the evidence which you propose to give; have you read it?—Yes.

9592. Did you write it?—I did; that is to say, I did not typewrite it.

9593. You drafted it?—Yes.

9594. You say you represent the Cotton Brokers' Association and the coffee brokers' section of the General Produce Brokers' Association?—Yes. I am vice-chairman of the Cotton Brokers' Association, and I am chairman of the coffee brokers' section of the General Produce Brokers' Association. I am past-chairman of the London Produce Brokers' Association.

9595. I observe that you wish to refer to certain agreements, are they agreements that you know of personally?—Yes. Mr. Scott, in his evidence at Question 5676 says these agreements between the docks and the wharves do not prevent free competition.

9596. Are the agreements to which you refer the agreements which are mentioned at Question 5675?—Yes.

9597. On that understanding will you please proceed with your evidence?—I desire to offer evidence with respect to the high dock and warehouse charges on certain articles of produce in the Port of London. I illustrate this by a table, which I will hand in, showing the rates charged at London, Hamburg, Bremen, Havre, and Antwerp, on imported coffee and cotton, for the services of landing, working, weighing, delivery, and for rent. See 11668–735.

(*The witness handed in a Comparative Table of Official Port Charges on Coffee and Cotton at London, Hamburg, Bremen, Havre, and Antwerp. See Appendix, 25th Day, No. 3.*) *Mr. G. Rouse.*

I wish to say that in consequence of the keeping up of these ancient charges certain trades have been driven away from the Port of London, and I put in this table of charges in order to show what a tremendous difference there is between London and these other ports.

9598. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are these charges that you have paid yourself?—Yes.

9599. Both in London and other places?—Yes.

9600. That you have paid yourself recently?—Yes; I will not say within the last month or two, but they are the actual charges. The absence of competition is the result of certain agreements between the dock company and the wharfingers to maintain the high level of warehouse charges. It may be true that there are certain wharfingers who are not concerned in these agreements, and who would compete with the dock company, but I am of opinion that these outside wharfingers are not those who have suitable accommodation and the required experience for warehousing and working valuable produce. In London we have a Cotton Committee for wharves so that cotton could only be sent to certain wharves; and with coffee it is the same; the trade would not buy from outside wharves. These high charges cannot but bear adversely upon the trade of the Port of London, although I have no doubt that there are some instances in which the trade has not been so affected up to the present time in consequence of the strong financial position of the London markets and other causes. I am of the opinion that to enter into these agreements has been very unwise policy on the part of the docks. I believe that a large proportion of the goods arriving in vessels discharging in the docks are taken away by barges, and that these goods, unless taken by merchants and manufacturers possessing private warehouses, must pass into the care

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of the wharfingers. By these agreements the wharfingers are allowed to charge less than the dock companies, and in spite of the fact that the merchants have to pay a higher insurance at the wharves these are generally preferred to the docks. I am of the opinion that these agreements have had a very adverse effect upon the dock company's business, and that their last 30 years' policy of combining with their competitors has been an entire mistake. A dock company has natural advantages for securing warehousing business which their competitors do not possess—the effect of their policy has been to throw the balance on the other side. I also believe that if low quay rates were quoted upon all goods, for merely passing them over the dock quay to land conveyance, it would largely encourage the general tendency to take goods away in this manner and so add to the revenue of the docks. Now may I go into the question of charges. I will just mention that we have represented many times to the dock companies that they have driven away the cotton trade from London and are driving it away.

9601. Are you referring to the table which you have put in?—I thought you would like to see the way in which the cotton trade has been driven away from London. I can hand in a yearly table of statistics to show how the imports into London have fallen off and how the exports have fallen in consequence of the high scale of charge. In 1889 (that is the year referred to by Mr. Scott as being the date of some agreements) the imports into London were 285,515 bales, and the exports 259,030, and the deliveries to the home trade 33,720. This has fallen gradually until in 1899 the imports into London were 66,998, the deliveries to export were 65,768, and there were only 900 for home consumption. In 1900 it was only 60,107 import, deliveries to export 50,316, and nothing for home consumption. The table for the years 1886-1900 is as follows:—

	Imports.	Exports.	Home Trade.
1886	250,381	230,820	95,720
1887	294,607	—	—
1888	223,990	235,200	19,510
1889	285,515	259,030	33,720
1890	178,874	157,410	36,610
1891	108,791	116,110	3,020
1892	119,445	119,650	2,030
1893	106,699	103,471	877
1894	111,027	109,067	1,200
1895	76,328	76,273	2,170
1896	87,849	82,747	3,640
1897	63,502	91,285	6,250
1898	49,937	52,857	1,300
1899	66,998	65,768	900
1900	60,107	50,316	—

I should just like to say what the charges for cotton are between London and Hamburg, because we have represented that in consequence of the low warehousing charges people are actually warehousing cotton in Hamburg and offering it here for sale, so that the warehousing trade is driven away by these charges.

9602. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Where does the cotton come from which comes to London?—Chiefly from India. There is a certain amount of American cotton passing through, but it is merely transhipment. The consequence of these charges has been that the actual quantity of cotton has been tremendously diminished in London. The trade does not come here at all, or else simply passes through.

9603. In comparison with Liverpool, it never has been a very large trade?—No, because Liverpool is close to the manufacturing districts. The actual quantity of East Indian cotton used in Oldham at the present moment does not amount to 100,000 bales a year. The trade has gone on to American cotton in England.

9604. But do not the steamers that come from India regularly now, bring cotton to London?—Yes; but it passes through over the ship's side; and not only that, but a great deal goes direct now. London has lost the warehousing trade.

9605. That is to say, the steamers from continental ports going direct to India have increased of late years?—Yes.

9606. And that would naturally take some of the trade away from London, apart from other causes?—Yes, it does as a matter of fact.

9607. And that may have happened apart altogether from the question of the relative amount of dock charges. There was this cause at work?—As a previous witness has said, that was the first blow. I once went to the dock people when Mr. Barber was Chairman of the Association and asked them to reduce the delivery charge by water, which was then four shillings a ton and 1s. 9d. for delivery to land conveyance, and they would not listen to it. They said they could not lower the charges because they had this agreement with the wharves. The consequence was that the people took it all overside.

9608. The consequence is that neither docks nor the wharves have the business now?—That is so.

9609. With reference to this comparison of charges I observe that you omit Liverpool?—I was not asked to put in Liverpool. I would have put in Liverpool with pleasure.

9610. Are you quite sure that in all cases you have compared like with like?—Yes.

9611. That you have not omitted anything in dealing with the foreign ports which perhaps ought to be considered?—I do not think so; I think it is right.

9612. For instance with reference to the French port of Havre, is there not a question which arises very often there, namely the question of ship brokerage, which imposes heavy charges upon the freight?—That is all included in the landing charges. The charge is compared with the actual charge in London.

9613. Are you quite sure of that?—Yes.

9614. Because I happen to be aware that there has been a great deal of correspondence at the Foreign Office with the French Government on the subject of these ship brokerage charges and that they had affected the freight very much in French ports?—What I mean is these charges here are simply charge for charge all the way through.

9615. The trade of the French port is affected by this particular charge that is outside of anything else which must be paid for by the trade in some form or other; so that if you have a landing charge that is nominally less, yet there are other charges in connection with the work which may have to be met either by the shipowner or by yourselves and which do affect the trade. I wish to know if you are quite sure that that comparison is correct?—Yes, I think it is perfect as far as I know. I do not know anything about the charge, because that would be borne by the ship.

9616. But that would affect the question of freight and other things?—To Havre, the stuff is carried in direct steamers.

9617. If the question of freight is affected, that becomes a charge upon the goods, and although nominally this particular charge may be less, yet it may not be better to do business at the port of Havre because there are other things to be considered?—All things being equal, these are the actual charges that you pay.

9618. But the question we have to investigate is whether other things are equal or not before we can express an opinion?—You want to know whether the port charges at Havre are dearer than in London?

9619. Besides this question of comparison of particular items of the cost of doing things, you have to compare the whole of the business, and this is an incomplete statement?—I will get you the actual amount if you wish.

9620. It is for you to submit the evidence, but I may call your attention to this point, that it is not necessarily a complete statement?—I believed it was a complete statement charge for charge.

9621. (*Chairman.*) Will you tell us where the figures in the table come from?—They come from various account sales.

9622. Of your own firm?—Yes.

9623. Are they all taken within practically the same time?—Yes.

9624. They all refer to operations of a year, for instance?—Yes.

9625. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are they all your own?—I would not absolutely say everything, but they are my own.

9626. (*Chairman.*) Do they all refer to operations that have been carried on by your firm?—Yes.

(*Chairman.*) If we accept this table, Mr. Whitehead, it puts us in a position of some difficulty, because we feel it is impossible for us to check every item which is put before us. Merely asking questions would take such an enormous time that we think we can hardly trouble you to listen to us while we do so.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Of course, we are entirely in your Lordship's hands in the matter, but Mr. Rouse is here, and these, as I understand, are figures, whatever may be their value, of operations which he himself has made. What the value of the evidence may be would be a matter for argument hereafter, but I would ask your Lordship to receive it subject to any comment that may be made hereafter. It is direct personal evidence upon this limited point, namely, the charges for landing, weighing, sampling, and rent at the different ports.

9627. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Will you tell me the exact way in which you made it up. Your firm pays certain charges, and you receive certain demands for the charges?—Yes.

9628. Are these copies of those demands?—These are actually worked out by our people and by other export firms, and they have all been checked.

9629. Then I gather they are not all your own firm's operations?—To a certain extent they are.

9630. But we must have some precision about it. They are not all your own firm's, in the first place. These embrace the experience, according to you, of certain other firms?—Yes, of everybody—the regular charges.

9631. Where did you get them from. This is put before us, and you said just now they were all your own firm's operations?—Yes, exactly.

9632. Now it turns out they are not; they are not your own firm's, but they are someone else's. That is so, is it not?—Yes.

9633. What other firms?—Firms like Hayn, Roman and Co., and others.

9634. Is that the only other one?—I could name you a lot of them.

9635. In other words, this is not your own experience, but it is a collection of experiences from certain other people who are not called?

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I am very loth to intervene in the course of examination, but I think, Sir, you are under a misapprehension. I am told that this is the fact; that these figures refer to transactions in which Mr. Rouse's firm have been engaged and also other firms, the charges being the same to all persons at the different ports, and that he has had his calculations checked by the other firms so as to make quite certain that the figures put before the Commission are accurate. He has been personally interested in all these transactions; that is what I understand to be the fact.

9636. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Is that so, Mr. Rouse?—That is so; we have had the transactions. If you ask whether I am particularly interested in every one particular thing here I should say not. But we have had these transactions; we have had the account sales, and these are the charges, and we have had these things checked by various firms.

9637. Let us take one example: Take the charge for delivery. Do you know what the service of delivery embraces in Hamburg for instance?—Yes, putting on board railway waggons.

9638. Do you know that from your own knowledge?—Yes.

9639. Have you been there?—No.

9640. Then how do you know that delivery embraces that?—Because we are charged in account sales.

9641. The only knowledge that you have is that you are charged a certain figure for delivery?—Yes.

9642. That is the only knowledge?—That is the only knowledge.

9643. You have never enquired what "delivery" means at Hamburg?—We know what it means; it means put free on board waggons

9644. Have you ever enquired what "delivery" means at Hamburg. I put this to you for this reason. You have 5s. per ton in London for delivery?—Yes.

9645. Then you come down to 9¾d. at Hamburg and 5d. at Antwerp?—Yes. Antwerp is the lowest port.

9646. It occurs to one that there must be some reason for that sudden extraordinary disparity; and Sir Robert Giffen was pointing out a similar matter at Havre?—Yes.

9647. Now have you ever enquired specifically from any person entitled to give you information what that charge of 5d. at Antwerp and what that charge of 9¾d. at Hamburg in fact embraces?—The charge embraces the delivery of the goods.

9648. Have you made any enquiry upon the matter at all?—I do not exactly understand what you mean.

9649. I understand that you have simply taken "delivery" to mean what you as an English merchant think it does mean?—Yes.

9650. And that is the only source of your information?—Yes.

9651. You have not gone and made inquiries as to whether in fact your belief of what "delivery" means is correct or not?—The delivery must be a delivery whatever happens.

9652. I quite understand you?—The docks here charge so much for delivery per ton into the vans whatever it may be.

9653. You assume it must be exactly the same thing at Hamburg because it has the same name?—Yes, I do.

9654. (*Chairman.*) You told me that these figures on this table are extracts from the account sales of your own firm?—Most of them.

9655. Not all?—Not all of them.

9656. Where do the other figures come from?—From Hayn, Roman and Co., and other firms here who are large people in the coffee trade.

9657. (*Sir John Wolfe Barry.*) Do I understand that your impression is that at Antwerp the charge is 5d. per ton for delivery into railway waggons?—Yes.

9658. What is your impression of the charge of 5s. per ton land conveyance in London. What does that include?—That includes putting it into the land conveyance. The docks put it into a cart or barge.

9659. Would that be into a railway truck?—Yes, or barge which is run up alongside the warehouse.

9660. Or into a waggon?—Yes.

9661. A road waggon or a railway waggon?—Yes.

9662. Then you wish us to understand that the charge is 5s. in London as compared with 5d. in Antwerp for the same services?—Yes.

9663. And also you say that the charge in London is 6s. 8d. per ton for water conveyance?—Yes.

9664. What is that charge for?—That is for dropping it out of the window into a barge. Docks charge more for delivery by water than they do for delivery by land.

9665. You mean taking the coffee out of the ship or out of the warehouse and putting it into a barge?—Yes

9666. They charge 6s. 8d. for that?—Yes.

9667. The table that you put in says that the charge is for water conveyance and for land conveyance. It does not say into a waggon or into a barge?—A land conveyance is a railway waggon or a cart.

9668. You use the word "conveyance" as meaning a vehicle?—Yes.

9669. Just as you talk of a cab being a conveyance?—Yes.

9670. Not the conveyance of things to their destination?—No.

9671. Then this table is meant to be entirely independent of the cost of conveying the coffee after it has been put by the dock company into what you call the conveyance?—Yes, it has nothing to do with the carriage.

9672. It has nothing to do with the transit?—No

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Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9673. Do you, of your own knowledge, know which wharves are outside those agreements to which you have referred?—No.

9674. Then I entirely fail to understand how you can express an opinion that these outside wharves are not those which have sufficient accommodation and facilities?—I have explained that certain wharves would not be allowed to have cotton.

9675. That is to say you would not allow them?—No.

9676. Then it is your own fault that you select wharves and keep to them?—There is a regular wharf committee to decide whether cotton can be warehoused at certain wharves.

9677. You yourself select where you will send the cotton?—Yes.

9678. You have not considered the outside wharves and do not know what facilities may be possessed by them, because you do not know which are the outside wharves?—I would not send cotton to a fish wharf, for instance, or to a green-fruit wharf.

9679. Take coffee. Do you know which are the particular wharves outside any agreements relating to coffee?—No; I can tell you which are in it.

9680. Then by exclusion you know which are outside it?—There are hundreds of wharves in London; I do not quite understand what you mean. The trade would not buy from an outside wharf.

9681. Is the cotton trade a large one in London?—It has been diminished by the dock company's charges.

9682. Is it a large one? There is no consumption in the neighbourhood of London, is there?—Only one small mill.

9683. It has all to go to Lancashire?—No, it goes mostly to the continent.

9684. May I take it that a good proportion of that means transhipment?—Yes, chiefly.

9685. And the quantity actually imported into London that goes into warehouses is relatively very small?—Very small.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

9686. With regard to this question of delivery to vans, can you tell me why more is charged for delivery to barges than for delivery to vans?—It is a thing I have never been able to understand.

9687. You do not know?—No. Perhaps the dock companies can explain it.

Mr. ALEXANDER FARQUHARSON called and examined

Mr. A. Farquharson.

9688. You are a partner in the firm of Farquharson Brothers and Co., who carry on business as timber importers in London?—Yes.

9689. You have been nominated by the London section of the Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom to lay evidence before us, particularly with regard to the soft wood trade?—I have.

9690. Will you please proceed with your evidence?—May I be allowed to say that every word of my evidence has been written by my own hand, and I speak only from my own personal experience as a timber importer. The members of the London section of the Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom represent a trade of considerable magnitude. This will be seen from the following figures:—The value of the import of timber and woods of all kinds into the United Kingdom in the year 1899 was £25,676,988. The value of the import of timber and woods of all kinds into London in the year 1899 was £6,971,944. The timber trade of London has for some years suffered great inconvenience from the inability of the existing dock companies to handle conveniently and economically the large import as represented by the above figures. I desire to draw attention to some of the facts connected with this inconvenient accommodation and the consequent hindrance to trade, damaging alike to the merchants and to the best interest of the Port of London. I also desire to submit certain facts which, in my opinion, are to a large extent the cause of the congested state of traffic, and consequent loss and inconvenience, and also to present to you some details of costs at the Port of London. The Baltic, White Sea, and Canadian imports, representing the deal batten and board trades, are centred almost entirely in the Surrey Commercial Docks. Concentration is in itself a desirable thing, provided it exists along with other facilities still more essential to the economic working of the trade. In my opinion these essentials are: first, quick despatch; second, relative lowness of charge. I shall endeavour to prove that in both of these respects the timber trade of London is very badly served. For the reasons which I will submit quick despatch has for years been an impossibility, and cheapness is unattainable. What do I mean by quick despatch? Those facilities which should exist for the immediate berthing of ships as they arrive, the reception of the cargo as quickly as it is discharged, and, most important of all, the immediate piling and storage of the goods directly the vessel is unloaded, so as to enable the importer to get quick delivery of his goods. From the method of working at the docks I submit that it is hardly possible to get this in London.

9691. When you say "the docks," do you exclusively refer to the Surrey Commercial Docks?—I am talking of the Surrey Commercial Docks, where the trade that I represent is centred. The import timber trade is a season trade—that is to say, it can only take place from the time of the opening of navigation till the time it closes, a period generally extending from early May to the end of December. The import of the year must take place within these months, hence it is that, in the hurry to get goods over before the season closes there is often a glut of arrivals. This has been very noticeable within the last few years, particularly so in the autumn of 1899 and 1900. At that time the steamers arrived faster than the Dock Company could find quay berths for them, and although the Dock Company did their best to relieve the pressure by providing barges for the steamers to discharge cargo into where they were unable to provide quay room, they were not always able to find craft, and the results were:—great delay in discharging and consequent loss of time to the ship which the shipowner sought to recover from the importer in heavy demurrage claims; the docks crowded with barges, almost unnavigable because of these barges; the goods exposed for a great length of time to the chances of the weather; a loss of condition, and consequent deterioration in value; the rent charge (sometimes as much as 4½d. per standard per week) going on all the while for the greater portion of the goods whilst so exposed. The heavy shortages owing to goods being lost off the barges in transit from the ship to the place of storage, and the intermixing of parcels that sometimes took place on the quays. In the end the Dock Company was obliged to refuse to receive steamers on arrival, and they had to lie at Gravesend waiting their turn to come up. What is the cause of this congestion, and who is to blame for it? I have heard it gravely stated by a dock director that the importer is responsible for it. If the importer would only import his goods in smaller vessels; if he would only arrange to spread his imports all over the season, and not crowd them in towards its close if, in fact, he would study the convenience of the Dock Company, and not his own, then all would be well. But such a condition of things is impossible, business must be conducted in such a way and at such times and seasons as are most suitable for it, and this the importer, and not the Dock Company, is best fitted to judge. In my opinion, the cause of the congestion must be sought somewhere else. I contend that the Dock Company, whether they know it or not, are not only the cause of this want of despatch, but are, themselves, the only persons responsible for it. Their antiquated method of working is, I think, at the root of the trouble. Thirty-three years ago, when I first came to London, timber was imported in sailing vessels, which discharged themselves leisurely by hand, taking from one week to four or five, according to their size, to deliver their cargo, which again was received by hand and put away as fast as it was received. Here we had a state of things where the merchant's goods were piled almost as quickly as they were delivered by the ship.

The receiving of the cargo and its being put away went on almost simultaneously; there was no interval, no break, in the continuity of the operation. The goods did not lie about on the quay till the Dock Company could find time and find men to put them away. With the advent of steam, some 10 years later, a change began. The vessels became increasingly larger, and the discharging of the cargo was done by steam power instead of by hand. A steamer could thus discharge in a day as much as a sailer could do in a week. It is manifest that the receiving and putting away of a cargo by hand cannot keep pace with its discharge by steam, and when vessels begin to arrive in any number in the docks the Dock Company finds itself unable to keep up with the deliverable power of the steamer and the whole of the machinery for the prompt and systematic piling of the cargo breaks down completely. Though the carrying and discharge of timber are almost entirely done now by steam, and have been so for the last 25 years, the Dock Company in that time has done nothing adequate to cope with this changed condition of things, although they have extended their docks. I mean nothing in the direction of rapid removal of the goods from off the quays to the piling ground in the rear. They still employ hand labour for this purpose, as in the days of sailers, and it is evident that unless some means are adopted for the clearance of the quays, as rapidly, or almost as rapidly, as they are covered with cargo, the present congested state of the docks, with all the delay, inconvenience and expense which this entails, must occur whenever the busy season returns. Now let me contrast the average rate of delivery by steam power with the average rate of piling by hand power. As I have said, it is this inherent inability of the latter to work in anything like the same ratio of speed with the former that is the source of the trouble. The average rate of discharge of a steamer may be taken at from 110 to 120 standards per day; a standard is 165 cubic feet. I will put in a table with reference to the rate of discharge of steamers, also a table showing the average time taken to sort and pile timber.

(*The witness handed in a Table showing the average number of Standards discharged per day from certain timber steamers in the Surrey Commercial Docks in the years 1899 and 1900. See Appendix, 25th Day, No. 4.*)

(*The witness also handed in a Table showing the average time taken to sort and pile timber from certain steamers in the Surrey Commercial Docks during the year 1900. See Appendix, 25th Day, No. 5.*)

It will be seen that on goods imported by my firm in 1900 the average time taken to sort out and pile 110 to 120 standards under cover by manual labour was five to six days, and for goods piled in the open, four to five days. I have no reason to believe that my firm's experience is exceptional in any way from that of the trade generally. A special committee appointed by the dock company admits the average period of delay in obtaining delivery of wood goods to be five and a half weeks for floorings and four and a half weeks for deals and battens. (See "Timber," October 13th, 1900.)

9692. Is that a newspaper report?—It is a report of the Committee appointed by the Dock Company. "Timber" is a trade journal. You will see how this compares with the figures I have given, where it took an average of nine to ten weeks to pile my firm's cargoes. But to take the Dock Company's own figures, their average date of preparing a cargo ready for delivery is from four and a half to five and a half weeks. Is it not unreasonable that it should be so, that in London, the capital of the country, the largest receiving and distributing centre of the wood trade in the world, where, if anywhere, one might expect the best methods, the most up-to-date appliances and equipment for receiving, handling and storing timber of any port in the Kingdom, in London you have the same antiquated methods in use to-day that existed 30 years ago? In an age of steam, of rush and hurry and bustle, the handling of timber has never changed, and men still carry the cargo upon their backs, deal by deal, piece by piece, as it was done in the days of the patriarchs. A wealthy corporation like the Surrey Commercial Docks might reasonably have been expected to show enterprise in the direction of employing machinery to transport timber. They have not done so, but have left it to a smaller and poorer competitor like the Millwall Dock Company, which handles only a very minor portion of the wood import of London, to step in and secure the patent rights in this country and be the first to introduce machinery to the attention of the trade. In the case of the Surrey Commercial Docks, monopoly seems to have stifled enterprise. But this lack of enterprise on the part of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company is not the only disadvantage the trade suffers from. I am of the opinion that the Dock Company might do more to keep down charges and to handle goods quickly with the means at their disposal than they do at present. I refer to their method of engaging labour.

9693. Do you know this, as a fact?—In my experience as a timber merchant I have learnt it.

9694. You have been told so?—Yes, I have been told so.

9695. Do you state it as a fact?—It is a fact. I believe it is their practice in this respect to sublet to a contractor or contractors who distribute the work to be done amongst the different teams at work on the various cargoes, each team working for itself under its own captain or "boss." This employment of labour at second hand, besides adding to the cost, prevents the dock company from coming into immediate contact with the men, while the men themselves have no direct interest in the speedy handling and storing of the goods. The result is that the men, being their own masters, work when it suits them and leave off when it suits them, and, from their point of view, their interests are best served by not hurrying over the operation of piling, but by making the season's import last over the year if they can, so as to have no period, or as short a period as possible, of slackness in between. During 1900 I believe the dock company in common with other large employers lost the services of many of their men through the war, but I never heard what steps had been taken, if any, to fill their places, and the trade suffered from an insufficient supply of dock labour because of this. It is worthy of note here that no steamers were stopped for want of men, but this may be because the stevedores paid more money to get them. As regards the Surrey Commercial Docks, London is greatly hampered and is put in an unfair position for doing a country trade by the fact that the railways do not have direct access to the quays for their trucks. Goods arriving by steamer for country customers, unless in large quantities and under separate bills of lading, must be landed and piling charges incurred before delivery can be given, instead of going direct from the steamer or from the quay to the truck, and thence to their destination. Whereas in 1889 rent was charged only from date of landing return, that is, from the date when the cargo is completely put away and is ready for delivery, it is now charged from the date of ship's breaking bulk, on all goods landed under cover, and on all battens and scantlings whether piled in the open or under cover. This is a most radical change, one which has worked unfairly to the trade, and one which the trade has protested against by deputation before the Board of the Surrey Commercial Docks, but without success. I will hand in a copy of the memorial, and other documents showing the negotiations with the Surrey Commercial Docks Company.

(*The witness handed in documents showing the negotiations with the Surrey Commercial Docks Company, respecting the new charges instituted on the 1st January, 1899, for handling, storing, and distributing wood goods in the Surrey Commercial Docks. See Appendix, 25th Day, No. 6.*)

I take the opportunity here of stating that I have always found the dock officials most courteous and conciliatory, and within the limits of their system most obliging, but the trade feels that it is unfair that it should be paying undercover rent for goods, perhaps lying exposed in barges or on the quay, and, may be, suffering from the inclemency of the weather. They feel it unjust that they should be paying rent in some cases before the goods are out of the ship, and in all cases before the goods are ready for delivery. The gravity of this change in the time of dating the rent from can be conceived by the fact that last year it cost my firm over a thousand pounds for rent alone from date of breaking bulk to date of landing return. I will hand in a table showing the loss through shortage.

(*The witness handed in a Table showing the charge for rent and the loss through shortage on certain cargoes of timber discharged in the Surrey Commercial Docks. See Appendix, 25th Day, No. 7.*)

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Last year my firm had three cargoes, namely, the "Baltic," the "Lady Salisbury," and the "Eol," where the goods lay on the quay from two to four months before ever being touched by the dock company. But this is not all. While the goods are lying idle as far as the importer is concerned, but lucrative for the dock company, the interest on cost is also accumulating. There is still another source of loss to the importers. I want also to refer to the almost invariable shortage of cargoes at the Surrey Commercial Docks.

9696. Will you tell us how this shortage arises?—That is a question I am unable to answer. I only know it does arise. With the barges knocking about in the transport of timber some may go into the docks. At any rate, there is a loss.

9697. Who do you suggest are to blame for the shortages?—I suggest that the people who have control of the barges are to blame for the shortages: that would be the dock company. In this respect, last year was by far the heaviest of any year I remember. In former years if a cargo showed a shortage on the dock company's landing return the loss was generally divided between the ship and the merchants. Now, and for some time back, owing, I suppose, to the increasing seriousness in these shortages, and the increasing delay in making the returns, the shipowner has declined this rough and ready way of adjusting differences, and has taken to tallying the goods out of the ship for himself, refusing to take the dock company's return as conclusive, with this curious result, that the importer pays freight on one tally (the shipowners') and receives his goods on another (the dock amounting in value to £247 4s. 4d. The strangest part is the measure of the importer's loss, and how very serious this may be is shown in Appendix No. 7, where nine cargoes imported by my firm show a total shortage amounting in value to £247 4s. 4d. The strangest part of all is eight cargoes out of the nine were tallied overside by the ship, and showed no shortage at the time. This is a very serious leakage, which the importer is called upon to bear, owing to the refusal of the dock company to take a responsible tally of the cargo over the ship's rail on behalf of themselves, the ship, and the merchant. The dock company alleges that it is impossible to take an accurate tally in this way, and I am very far from saying it is easy, but they decline to try, and the importer meantime has no recourse against the ship for shortage if the ship has kept a tally. (See the case of Hecksher and Son v. J. G. Drummond and Co., tried in the City of London Court, before Mr. Pitt-Lewis, K.C. (Deputy-Judge), on the 6th December, 1898, and reported in the "Shipping Gazette" of the 13th December of that year. It is referred to in Volume 12 of "Maritime Notes and Queries," published by Spottiswoode and Co., page 154.) But there is still another way in which the importer is made to suffer through these excessive delays in getting delivery of his goods, and though it cannot very well be set out in figures, it is nevertheless very real and very onerous. I refer to the financial position. While the goods are lying idle on the quays of the dock company the draft in payment of them is maturing, and the importer finds himself called upon to pay for cargo after cargo before he can get possession of his goods, and before he can get payment of that portion which may be already sold. These goods when they are deliverable are in many cases deteriorated in quality and lessened in value by their long exposure, and they can only be sold with an allowance to the purchaser because of this, and in not a few instances, and that generally with the most expensive, the purchaser refuses to take the goods because of their loss of condition. I think I have said enough to show that London is both a slow and an expensive port to land and store timber in. The importer is penalised on account of these delays:—(1) In the freight, for some shipowners decline to come to London in the busy season; (2) In the charges (which are very heavy); (3) In the pecuniary strain (which is sometimes intolerable). There is only one avenue of relief which is open to the timber merchant, and he has not been slow to take advantage of it. I allude to the "to arrive" overside business. The practice of selling goods for overside delivery to buyers' craft is already large and is increasing. I believe last year about a third of the annual import was taken delivery of in this way. The higher the charges and the greater the delays the more will this branch of the trade grow and extend. The buyer who can afford to buy in this wholesale way gets his goods cheaper, quicker, and in better condition. The merchant can afford to take a smaller ratio of profit, as he gets a quicker return for his capital, and he has the great advantage of knowing beforehand what his goods are going to cost him. All this would be hindered—possibly stopped—if the Dock Company were empowered to refuse free delivery or to tax craft using their docks. From their point of view it may be a natural thing to wish to do, though a company which pays 5 or 6 per cent. on its ordinary shares besides (it is said) improving property out of revenue, cannot allege pecuniary necessity as a reason; but I put it to the directors as fair-minded men, since they have proved themselves unable in recent years to cope satisfactorily with that portion of the import which has been given into their care; since they have seen their quays choked and all their available craft laden for months with the goods they have had the handling of; since they have seen the deliveries paralysed and the trade dislocated by delays, what would have been the condition of the docks and what would have been the losses of the timber trade in 1900 had they had the complete control, and the sole handling of the entire timber imports of London? I think that the Dock Company instead of begrudging ought to be thankful for the overside deliveries. But for them the state of affairs would have been unbearable. I hope I have succeeded in showing that the Surrey Commercial Dock Company while it adheres to its present method of handling wood cargoes will never be able to give the importer quick delivery of his goods, and also that the importer, who is not responsible, is nevertheless made to bear, in addition to the delay, the expense and loss which it entails. It seems to me that at the Port of London, there is ample need of a public body which shall make the furtherance of the interests of the Port itself, and not the production of dividends, its chiefest care, and that while these interests are left in the keeping of private corporations, as at present, should the occasion arise when public and private interests conflict, it will be the former and not the latter which will suffer.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

9698. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You say that from the method of the working at the docks you submit it is hardly possible to get quick dispatch in London?—That is so.

9699. Do you mean there is no cure for that at all and the trade must go away from London?—Unless that cure is to be found in mechanical appliances.

9700. Then the whole of your proposal is that mechanical appliances should be supplied by the Surrey Commercial Docks Company?—That would improve the condition of affairs, I believe, very materially.

9701. And that is the only solution that you can suggest?—I do not suggest that the timber trade is leaving the Port of London.

9702. But that is the only solution that you can suggest if this is the condition of things?—That is the only solution that occurs to me.

9703. The application of machinery for unloading or transporting timber is very new, is it not?—I believe it is.

9704. It is quite in its infancy?—I believe it has been tried in some ports of Sweden, though, of course, personally I cannot give any reference to them. I believe it has been tried there with success.

9705. But so far as Great Britain is concerned it is at present quite on trial?—As far as I have any knowledge it is on trial.

9706. Do you know the great timber ports of Hull and Hartlepool?—I do not.

9707. Then may I say, subject to your correction, that it has not been used there at the present time?—I cannot tell you.

9708. The only place where it has been used at present is at the Millwall Docks?—So far as I know it is at the Millwall Docks.

9709. It was tried there for the first time two or three weeks ago?—I have here the report of the trial of the apparatus. I will read it if you wish.

9710. All I want to gather is that it is quite a new thing?—I believe it is.

9711. And it is not altogether, may I say, free from difficulties on account of the question of sorting?—I cannot tell.

9712. But the question of sorting timber is a very important one, I suppose, when timber is thrown out rapidly from large ships on to the quay?—The question of sorting, of course, arises directly you begin to put the timber on the piling ground.

9713. Therefore in considering the machinery that has to be employed one must take note of the question of sorting, and it must be so adapted that it will not interfere with sorting?—It must be so adapted that the timber can ultimately be sorted.

9714. Am I not right in saying that since timber has been imported largely in steamships the timber trade has largely altered at all the docks?—Altered in what way do you mean?

9715. In this way, that a steamer requires that the cargo should be unloaded with greater rapidity to avoid demurrage?—It does.

9716. And, consequently, in order to meet that difficulty the timber is unloaded more or less pell-mell on the quay, so as to get quick despatch for the ship to get away?—Yes, for the unloading of the steamer.

9717. That is a condition of things which is pressed upon all timber ports, is it not?—It must press where steam is used.

9718. The condition of things which has been experienced in London has been largely due to timber coming in steamships instead of in sailing vessels?—It arises in that way undoubtedly.

9719. You say you do not know Hull or Hartlepool?—I have no experience. My firm do not import timber to any other port than London. I speak only of my own experience in anything I have said here.

9720. Then if we find that there is the same condition of things with regard to the difficulty at the other great timber ports, London is not peculiar in the difficulty that is experienced from the alteration from sailing vessels to steamers?—I should say not.

9721. And the result is, is it not, that larger quay space is required, so that steamers can go alongside and discharge their cargo with rapidity?—Larger quay space is desirable, but if that quay space be kept occupied with cargo for a great length of time, no amount of quay space in itself would overcome the difficulty that I speak of.

9722. But supposing the detention on the quay is reduced to a minimum, then a much larger quay space is still required for traffic conveyed by steamers than for traffic conveyed by sailing vessels?—I do not quite follow your question.

9723. I mean the demand for rapid discharge of the steamer is a demand which did not arise in the time of sailing vessels?—Not so much, undoubtedly.

9724. The Surrey Commercial Dock is largely increasing its dock capacity, is it not?—Yes, I have said so.

9725. It opened some portion of its dock one or two years ago?—Yes; a few years ago it opened a large new part, and more will be opened.

9726. At present the company is spending a large sum of money in extending its dock; that would be all in the right direction?—It would be.

9727. Is there not a railway at the Commercial Dock?—Practically there is no direct railway communication with the dock. It is in close juxtaposition, but not absolutely running along the quays.

9728. I do not know that the railway company has any access to the Surrey Commercial Dock?—It has, I think, access to one particular yard, but to the docks as a system it has no access.

9729. I see it is in close juxtaposition, but not absolutely running along the quays?—One railway is.

9730. Do you think that a large quantity of timber would go away by railway if the railways were extended?—Yes, I should think it would tend that way.

9731. The bulk of the timber from the Surrey Commercial Docks is carted, is it not?—Yes.

9732. To different parts of London?—Yes.

9733. Do you happen to know how much of it goes eventually on to a railway?—I cannot tell.

9734. Do you think any large proportion does?—I should think a very considerable portion must go on the railway.

9735. You cannot tell us how much?—No, I cannot tell.

9736. If no large proportion goes by railway you would not get very much advantage by extending the railway lines into the dock?—If no large proportion went by railway; but I cannot answer as to that.

9737. I suppose the consumption of timber in London itself is enormous?—Yes.

9738. For all timber consumed in London I presume carting would still remain the most convenient plan?—In London it would.

9739. It would not be worth while to load it on the trucks and unload it again, either for London or the near suburbs?—I should say not.

9740. Now about the shortage. Who tallies timber into the ship?—Seeing that I am not there when the timber is loaded, I cannot definitely answer that question. I believe the mate of the vessel is responsible for the tally. The captain signs the bill of lading, and I am bound by his signature.

9741. Is there any proof, if there is a shortage, that the timber ever was on the ship, other than the signature of the mate of the ship?—Would not you take that to be a proof?

9742. I want to know whether there is any other proof?—I have no other proof.

9743. Has the merchant any other?—The merchant can have no other proof.

9744. I suppose the accurate tallying of a very large cargo of timber is a somewhat difficult and complicated thing?—It is not an easy thing.

9745. It is not proved therefore, is it, that if there is a shortage it is due to any dishonesty? It might be by accident?—We do not suggest dishonesty—very far from it. It might be an accident as you say.

9746. The timber might never have been in the ship?—I think that the presumption is the timber must have been in the ship.

9747. Is there a large percentage of cases of shortage in your own experience?—In my experience I am sorry to say almost every ship contains a shortage more or less, sometimes larger, sometimes smaller.

9748. Is the freight paid in proportion to the number of standards?—It is.

9749. Therefore the tendency of the ship would not be to under-measure the quantity of timber into the ship?—It would not.

9750. You say the present condition of things at the dock is very much against the interests of the trade, and the fact of carrying a large quantity in barges is a necessity of the trade?—Yes, it is growing into a very large trade with regard to this overside delivery of cargo into barges.

9751. We had from Mr. Malcolm that the quantity discharged overside into barges is increasing year by year?—It is. I may say here I am quite willing to take the dock companies' figures as to the proportion that goes overside and the proportion that is landed.

9752. Do you think that under these circumstances a moderate charge for services rendered in getting barges in or out of the dock would be prohibitory to that traffic?—I do not know what you mean by a moderate charge.

9753. I have only in my mind the proportion of charge laid before us of the expense of getting barges in and out of the docks?—We would prefer of course to pay no charge.

9754. That is natural?—Yes.

9755. What I meant is would it be prohibitory to the barge traffic?—It would depend of course upon the amount charged, and until I know what that amount is, I could not say.

9756. I will say a comparatively small amount. Do you think it is just that barges should go into a dock and put the dock company to expense and pay nothing for it?—I think if the barges have a right of free entry they are entitled to do so, and we are entitled to take advantage of it.

9757. It is one thing having free entry and another causing expense to another person?—Yes. As an

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equitable charge, if the charge were a very small one, I should think that the dock company might be entitled to make it, but in the dock, as we are at present, and not knowing what that charge is going to be, of course I cannot commit myself to saying I approve of the charge beforehand.

9758. My question does not refer to a tonnage rate, but to a rate which would represent the cost of the services rendered by the dock company?—Those services are not very heavy.

9759. (*Mr. Peel.*) Have you any means of checking the shipowner's tally as he delivers from the ship at the dock?—The dock company themselves will supply merchants with officials at a fixed rate to check this tally without any responsibility as regards the Surrey Commercial Dock.

9760. But they will not allow you to have a clerk there, will they?—Yes, they will allow you to have your own clerk there.

9761. Do you do that?—Sometimes.

9762. Do you find when you have a clerk there and he checks the shipowner's tally that, as a rule there is no shortage?—I find that as a rule there is a very small shortage, or hardly any in fact, I may say.

9763. In every case the shipowner's tally may be right, but do you suggest that the timber is lost after it has been landed and before delivery?—I suggest that the timber is lost somewhere in the keeping of the Dock Company.

9764. Did you say that some of the timber goes overboard sometimes to the barges?—Yes, I did say so.

9765. Is this timber floating about in the dock?—No; timber going overside is put into the barge; it goes from the export port upon a separate bill of lading; it is separately placed in a particular part of the ship. It is separately taken out, and it is put into the merchant's craft.

9766. But is timber lost in that way, in delivery overside?—Sometimes it might be lost; a piece or two might fall over from the barge into the water.

9767. But in the case of the timber that is unloaded in the dock, and has to be sorted and piled, is the same trouble not taken to number the parcels?—The Dock Company do not tally from the ship's rail for themselves or for anyone. The tally they take is after the cargo has been landed and has been piled; then the pieces are counted by their own clerks.

9768. I understand; but these elaborate arrangements of sorting and piling apply to timber which has to go through the dock and to be placed on the quay. As regards timber which is put overside on the barges, what do you say?—Do you mean on behalf of the merchant or on behalf of the Dock Company?

9769. On behalf of the merchant. When it is put overside into the barge, these elaborate sortings and pilings are not resorted to?—Generally a separate bill of lading is prepared for one or two sizes of a specific quality—generally the same quality—and the mark would be the same mark; so that there is not the same necessity for sorting as would arise where you are taking delivery of a whole cargo consisting of a very large number of pieces with numerous marks and numerous qualities.

9770. We were told that a larger percentage of timber goes overside than is sorted and piled in the docks?—I think that more timber is landed into the keeping of the dock than goes overside into the keeping of the merchant.

9771. Apart from that question of the railway, is the Surrey Commercial Dock well situated as regards the convenience of the timber trade?—Yes, it is most decidedly.

9772. The larger portion of the timber trade in London, and for manufacturers employing timber, is carried on, I think, on the north side of the river, is it not?—No, I think not. I think the timber docks of the Surrey Commercial Company are very well suited for the requirements of the timber trade of London.

9773. (*Rear Admiral Hext.*) Do you own any barges of your own?—No.

9774. Have you any experience of the working of the Watermen's Company, or any opinion concerning it?—In what sense?

9775. Do you think they are an efficient body of men, and is it a good thing that they should have control over the lighters in the river?—I do not think that any one body like the Watermen's Company should have the control of all the lighterage of the Port of London.

9776. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like you to make clear what is the nature of the necessity for sorting the timber when it arrives. Are there many cases of ships with cargoes belonging to single owners?—In my case the cargo almost entirely belongs to my firm.

9777. To one person?—Yes, in my case.

9778. What is the necessity for sorting that arises in your case?—The necessity is very obvious. In a cargo of timber there may be three or four qualities: first, second, third, fourth. There would be a variety of sizes: 11in., 9in., 7in., 6in., 4in. Every size and every quality has got to be put by itself. That is the work that the Dock Company do and charge for as sorting and piling.

9779. And there are no means of loading the ship so as to obviate, to some extent, the necessity for sorting when the cargo comes out?—No, I am afraid not; I do not know of any means.

9780. We have been informed, I think by Sir Thomas Sutherland, that, in the case of ships of his company, they endeavour, as far as possible, to sort the cargo when it goes into the ships, so as to avoid difficulties of that kind when they unload?—I think his ships bring various cargoes, they are not wood cargoes entirely. Goods which are sold to go overside, that is to say, not to go to the Dock Company's keeping at all, are placed upon a separate bill of lading for that particular parcel. They are placed in a particular part of the ship at the time the ship is loaded. This particular parcel is placed by itself on the particular bill of lading, and it comes out of the ship, as a rule, by itself, and would go into the barge, as a rule, straightaway.

9781. Could not that system be made quite general, so that all the cargo would come out sorted from the beginning to some extent?—My colleague here suggests to me that where goods are arranged to go under cover a customer might put that class of goods under a separate bill of lading.

9782. So that to some extent a good deal of the necessity for sorting can be obviated by measures adopted at the time of the loading of the ship?—I should think so, but it never has been done as far as I know.

9783. Have you ever any cases of ships loaded with goods all of the same quality in a complete cargo?—I have had such cases.

9784. Then, of course, in that case there is no question of sorting?—There is no queston of sorting.

9785. You spoke of a shortage in almost every case, when the dock company gives you delivery, as compared with the tally of the shipowner upon which you have to pay freight. Is there ever any case of a surplus, according to the dock tally?—I have to ransack my memory for a case like that. I think there may have been such a case once in my experience.

9786. If to some extent the tally of the shipowner was accidentally incorrect, the balance would be equal on both sides probably at the end of a time?—I have known this more frequently; I have known cases where the number of pieces, which have been returned by the dock company, agreed with the number of pieces which have been put on board the ship; but a shortage might arise in this way, that the standard quantity might be a short quantity, the cubic feet might be short, or there might be an overage in one particular class of timber, and a shortage in another particular class of timber. I have known cases like that, but they do not occur very frequently.

9787. Perhaps there is some difficulty with regard to the tally when the goods are put on board the ship; do you mean that?—When the goods are put on board the ship, to begin with, I believe (I am speaking from hearsay now, because I have never been there), the custom is for the ship to place a quantity upon an individual bill of lading into a specific barge, which is sent them by the steamer, and the mate, or other responsible officer of the steamer, has the opportunity of counting those goods in the barge before he puts them on board the ship and before he signs for having received them.

9788. So that tally when the goods are put on board the ship ought to be the best of all?—I can say it ought to be the best of all.

9789. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) As a mere matter of curiosity, could you tell me what is the derivation of the standard as 165 cubic feet?—It is called the St. Petersburg standard. St. Petersburg, the capital of Russia, is a very large producing place for wood.

9790. You do not know what the foundation for that very curious measure of 165 cubic feet is?—It is 120 pieces, 12 feet long, 11 in. wide, 1½ in. thick; it contains 165 cubic feet.

9791. Will you refer to question 2326? It will be useful to us to have your opinion on the suggestion made by Mr. Matthews that the tidal rivers or creeks in Essex, as the Colne, the Blackwater, and the Crouch, might be deepened, buoyed, lighted, and made to serve as transhipment stations so as to relieve the congestion in the Thames docks. You will see later on that timber is specially referred to by the same witness as capable of being dealt with in those now unused creeks?—This is the first time I have seen the matter, and, of course, I do not profess to be an expert.

9792. It would be valuable for us to have your opinion on the point?—If it would tend to assist the trade, I should say so, but I have not gone into it.

9793. Do you think it is a practical suggestion?—I cannot say.

Cross-examined by Mr. Loehnis.

9794. I want to clear up this question of shortage. In the first place, a merchant has a certain number of days for loading the vessel, under the charter party?—Yes.

9795. And he has not to exceed those days, or, if he does, he has to pay demurrage?—I believe so.

9796. Therefore his great object is to get the vessel loaded within the days' limit for discharge, he either has a certain number of days or he has to discharge according to the custom of the port, and if the number of days for discharge is exceeded he has to pay demurrage. Therefore it is to his interest to get the cargo into the vessel as quickly as possible, and to get the cargo out of the vessel as quickly as possible?—I should say so.

9797. When a vessel comes over here she delivers part overside, as a rule, into barges. Are the shortages of which you complain shortages shown by comparing the merchants' specification of what ought to be landed with that which actually has been landed, according to the dimensions and according to the qualities after the dock company has ascertained them?—The shortages represent the difference upon the bill of lading quantity and the quantity which has been returned by the dock company as having been landed.

9798. Do you not know, as a matter of fact, that there is practically always in every vessel a certain quantity landed "on account of whom it may concern"?—No, I do not know that.

9799. Frequently?—It has happened so.

9800. Very frequently. And is not that due to the fact that the shipper has himself delivered into barges cargo which ought, as a matter of fact, to be landed?—It would be so if it is so.

9801. And do you not know this as a matter of fact: that if you take the whole quantity delivered on quay during the year you get no shortages in the number of pieces?—I do not quite follow the question.

9802. Do you not know, as a matter of fact, that the dock company returns to the broker pieces as landed "on account of whom it may concern," which wipes out every piece of shortage shown in the returns?—No, those returns do not wipe out every piece of shortage shown in the returns.

9803. When you in your evidence stated that you had lost £247 worth of goods in what you called shortage, is it not a fact that in those cases there had been landed goods "on account of whom it may concern," which were afterwards appropriated by the broker amongst the various merchants who complained of shortage?—In any case where that has occurred to us we have deducted it from the shortage; that is to say, we have given the company the benefit of it.

9804. Take the first vessel, the "Queenmoor." Do you say that there was nothing landed in the case of that vessel "on account of whom it may concern"?—My clerk says there was. *Mr. A. Farquharson.* 12 June 1901.

9805. Would not that be accounted for by the misdelivery of the ship into barges of the goods which ought to have been landed?—It might be so accounted for.

9806. May I take it generally that is the way in which the better part of the shortage of which you complain is to be accounted for?—I should say that would be so.

9807. Now I want to ask you about the way in which the business has changed. In the old days a sailing vessel brought a cargo practically under one bill of lading. It was one parcel of goods, or, at the most, two?—In the old days there were not so many bills of lading in use in a steamer as there are now.

9808. And is it now an ordinary thing to find a vessel coming to the Surrey Commercial Docks with a cargo of between 200,000 and 300,000 pieces of timber. It is not an unusual thing to have 200,000 to 300,000 coming, is it?—I cannot speak from my own experience, but I imagine that the number of pieces is much larger now, because the cargoes are much larger.

9809. Under twenty, thirty, or forty bills of lading?—In my experience we have had as many as thirty and thirty-five bills of lading, but there again it all depends on the size of the cargo; the bigger the cargo the more numerous the bills of lading, but the tendency has been that the vessel should come with a very large number of pieces carried under numerous bills of lading. That is the tendency in overside deliveries.

9810. And that makes the accurate delivery overside very difficult?—Yes, it tends that way.

9811. And increases the labour of sorting?—It cannot increase the labour of sorting.

9812. If you are getting 250,000 pieces it would, would it not?—I beg your pardon; you are talking now of delivery overside into barges?

9813. I am talking of both. No vessel practically ever delivers her whole cargo overside?—I have known an instance. It is occasionally so, but very seldom.

9814. Usually part goes overside, and part has to be sorted?—Yes.

9815. It has to be sorted according to quality and according to size?—Yes.

9816. And you sell on the specification of the dock company?—Yes.

9817. When you talk about mechanical appliances are you aware that Mr. Malcolm said, on the 22nd May, before this Commission, that this question of mechanical appliances had been considered by the Surrey Commercial Dock directors, and had been found impracticable?—I saw that in the evidence which has been given.

9818. Do you accept that—that they have considered it, and according to the best of their judgment have found that it would not work?—Certainly; I must accept it if they say so.

9819. And are the Surrey Commercial Dock directors, as far as the timber trade is concerned, gentlemen who are representative of all the various branches of the timber trade in London?—I should say so.

9820. And I suppose their interests as merchants, or as brokers, pecuniarily is greater that the timber trade should be a profitable trade than that they should earn their dock directors' fees?—Certainly.

9821. Do you not think, knowing the gentlemen who are the dock directors, that they have done that which is best in the interests of the trade?—First of all, the dock directors are not all timber importers; some of them are agents, and some of them are brokers. I have no doubt that they have given this question their consideration, and I do not challenge the decision they have arrived at, but the knowledge that they possess practically a monopoly of the trade may have influenced them in their decision.

9822. I only want to understand what your view is. Their own personal interest is that the trade should flourish?—Certainly.

9823. And that would also be the interest which they have as directors of the Dock Company?—But

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some people have got to be shown their interest; they do not always see it.

(*Chairman.*) You will be careful, Mr. Loehnis, I hope, to limit your cross-examination to challenging statements which have been made by the witness. We have heard from your own witnesses with regard to the Surrey Commercial Docks and what they have done and what they propose to do. Will you please limit yourself to challenging statements which the witness has made?

(*Mr. Loehnis.*) If your Lordship pleases.

9824. The only figures which you have given are figures for 1900?—That is so.

9825. Do you think that 1900 is quite a fair instance to give of the Surrey Commercial Docks?—I could give the figures of 1899. I have given the figures of 1900 as being the most recent and as showing the gravity of the grievance.

9826. But that gravity is due, I suppose, to very exceptional circumstances which were existing in 1900?—There were exceptional circumstances existing in 1900. We had a larger import to begin with in 1900 than we had in 1899.

9827. Considerably larger?—I have not the actual figures before me, but I could believe it was considerably larger.

9828. Has the trade been growing in the last few years? Have the imports been growing from year to year?—Gradually growing. They vary. Some years there is a larger import, some years there is a smaller import. They go up and down according as the demand exists for timber.

9829. The Surrey Commercial Dock has been hampered in the last two or three years, has it not, by this extension of the building of the Greenland Docks. They have lost the use of one of their locks?—They have.

9830. And that was very noticeable last year?—I believe that has existed for some years.

9831. And it is since then that there have been these complaints about delay?—These complaints about delay have not arisen solely in 1900.

9832. Nobody has suggested yet that there were these complaints of being detained till 1898. I think that was the first date of the suggestion?—You mean the delay of the steamer?

9833. Yes?—Not to the same extent, certainly.

9834. Do you not attribute that partially to the fact that the Surrey Commercial Docks have been taking steps to benefit and accommodate the trade by their extension of works?—Yes.

9835. There was some inconvenience for some time as the result of that?—Yes; it must be so.

9836. Now about this question of rent that you have mentioned. Is not this the fact about the way in which rent is charged? Up to 1883 the dock company charged rent on all goods from the date of the shipping breaking bulk?—I could not say as to that as I have not the dock company's charges before me.

9837. You have said something which does not agree with it. Will you say if you can follow me? Up to 1883 they charged rent on all goods from the date of breaking bulk. In 1883 there was a depression in the timber trade and to ease and benefit the trade the dock companies said, "We will make to the trade a concession, that is to say, we will only charge them rent from the date of breaking bulk on goods under cover"?—It may be so.

9838. "And goods which are not under cover are to pay rent only from the date of landing"?—I cannot accept it or deny it

Cross-examined by Mr. Scrutton.

9839. I want to ask you a question with reference to something put to you by Sir John Wolfe-Barry. The freight is paid on the standard and therefore if that was the only consideration the shipowner would not be aggrieved if he delivered a larger number of standards because he would be getting freight paid on a larger amount. That is what Sir John Wolfe-Barry put to you. Now I want to ask you this: is there also a clause in your bill of lading by which the statement made in the bill of lading is made conclusive evidence against the shipowner?—That is so.

9840. So that if the shipowner puts a quantity in his bill of lading on which he was to get freight he would also have to deliver that quantity without being able to dispute that he received it?—That is so.

9841. So that although he might get the freight on more standards he would have to pay the value of the quantity delivered short?—Yes.

9842. It is not to his advantage to put an extra quantity in the bill of sale because he would have to pay for it?—That is so.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

9843. The timber you have to deal with is mostly consumed in London and the London district, is it not?—Yes.

9844. If a charge were put on the lighters you would be able to recover that from the consumers, would you not. It would not fall upon you?—Would not that depend upon the amount of the charge?

9845. Do you say it would depend on the amount of the charge?—Yes.

9846. Say a charge of one shilling per lighter; what do you say to that. Could not you recover that from the consumers?—I should lose that off my profit. I should not ask my consumers to pay that.

9847. Could you not if you wished recover it from the consumers?—I told you I would not ask for so small a charge as that from the consumer.

9848. That is the only answer you give to the question?—Yes. I would lose it off my profit.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9849. In reference to something which Sir John Wolfe-Barry put to you, I do not know if you know Purfleet Wharf?—No; I do not.

9850. Where the Jarrah timber goes?—No, I am not in that trade.

9851. I was going to ask you if you knew whether there was a timber transporter there?—I have heard there is, but I cannot say personally.

9852. And that there has been for a long time?—I cannot tell.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

9853. In answer to Sir John Wolfe-Barry, you said that you look to mechanical appliances as if they were the sole remedy for the congestion in the docks. I do not know whether you had in your mind at that moment that in your evidence in chief you referred to the bad system of labour which exists in the docks?—I am afraid that I had not that particular bit of my evidence in mind.

9854. Would not an improvement in the system of labour be also a remedy which you would suggest?—I should suggest so.

Dr. RUDOLPH MESSEL called and examined.

Dr. R. Messel.

9855. You are the managing director of the firm of Spencer, Chapman, and Messel, Ltd., and a member of the London Chamber of Commerce?—Yes.

9856. You have been nominated by the chemical trade section of the London Chamber of Commerce to offer evidence before us on the subject of the chemical trade?—Yes.

9857. May I ask you whether you drafted the statement of your evidence yourself?—Yes; I dictated it.

9858. It is your own writing practically?—Yes.

9859. Will you kindly tell us what you have to say?—I am a member of the Board of Studies for Chemistry and Chemical Industry of the University of London, a member of the Council and Past Chairman of the Society of Chemical Industry, and a Fellow Member of the Council, and Past Chairman of the Chemical Society. My company are large importers of salt, and exporters of salt-cake and burnt ore, and other chemicals and

minerals. These goods are usually imported and exported in bulk by my company in small vessels chartered for their transport. Prior to the year 1874 my company's works were situated on the canal at Stratford, and the goods referred to were conveyed by lighters and barges between my company's works and the small vessels referred to, which loaded and unloaded their cargo in the River Thames and in the docks. In order to save the expense of such lighterage, my company erected works at Silvertown, on the north bank of the River Thames, and excavated the foreshore, in order that the small vessels conveying full cargoes might be discharged and loaded directly on to and from my company's premises. My company also import such goods as pyrites and copper ore, and bars, and export sulphate of copper and acids in large quantities from and to vessels unloading and loading in the docks and river. In all these branches of business my company have to meet severe competition from centres of industry using the home ports of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Liverpool and Swansea, and also from the German manufacturing centres, sending goods long distances over their canal system to the ports of Hamburg, Antwerp, Rotterdam, etc. My company are handicapped by reason of the delays in the unloading and loading of vessels in the Port of London. We frequently send goods to such vessels in lighters which wait sometimes for many days before the goods therein are delivered on board, and this delay has caused orders to be cancelled, and the goods brought back to our premises; sometimes the delay is added to by the goods being "shut out," the vessel going away without them. I cannot definitely allocate the responsibility for such a state of things, but I am of the opinion that a bad system must generally obtain in the Port of London for it to exist at all.

9860. Will you tell us to what particular dock you allude?—Unfortunately I cannot tell you that. I am of the opinion that the multiplication of authorities controlling the Port of London is not conducive to the establishment and maintenance of well-ordered conditions of commerce; on one occasion my company lost several hundred pounds, by reason of an injury done to one of our barges in sitting on a pile outside the docks, as every authority, dock company, Thames Conservancy, and County Council repudiated liability.

9861. Do you mean that she grounded there?—Yes.

9862. Was she stove in?—She stove in the bottom, and it was supposed we should go to the Thames Conservancy. The Thames Conservancy, however, said it was a matter for the Metropolitan Board of Works on account of the sewer, and therefore we should go to the County Council.

9863. Surely you can tell me the particular dock where this happened?—I am sorry I cannot. I would have found it if I had known it was of any particular importance.

9864. When you tell me you deal in pyrites and copper ore, you must know where they go to?—I am sorry to say I do not. I believe it is the Millwall Docks, but as it is a question of evidence, I should not like to speak with certainty about it. I am of opinion that a thorough change in the administration of the Port of London is necessary, a thoroughly practical and representative body should be substituted for the numerous authorities at present controlling the river and docks. I consider that it is of the utmost importance that the river and docks should be able to offer economical and sufficient accommodation to the largest vessels. It is absolutely necessary that the present conditions of free water should be preserved, the absolute freedom of entrance into and exit from the docks for lighters, such as obtains in the river is a *sine qua non*. I am of the opinion that the Port of London should be administered by a public trust solely for the benefit of the trade of the Port of London, and that the present charges are amply sufficient, if properly adjusted and administered, to sufficiently maintain and improve the port. I am of the opinion that the privilege claimed by licensed lightermen of being the only persons allowed freedom to navigate on the River Thames should be done away with. It is an obsolete and irksome condition of things and thoroughly out of date, and is permitted in no other port or river of the United Kingdom.

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9865. Will you tell me what length of experience you have of the Port of London?—Thirty-one years.

9866. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) What are the principal countries to which you export your goods?—France, Italy, Greece, China, the Cape, and Belgium. We do a very large coasting business too.

9867. A large part of your export, then, would go by vessels having comparatively short voyages?—Yes, comparatively; Italy, for instance.

9868. From what docks do these vessels principally go?—I regret to say I do not know that. I sent my notes to the Chamber of Commerce to ask them if there was anything else required.

9869. The pyrites that come to you I suppose come chiefly from Spain and Portugal?—Yes.

9870. That would also come in comparatively small vessels?—No, they come in 1,000-ton vessels.

9871. But not very big vessels such as go into the Albert Dock and into the Tilbury Dock?—Yes. We have had cargoes to fetch from these docks, and I believe from Millwall Docks too. They sometimes unload in the River Thames, and sometimes they go to the docks. I believe the Millwall Docks are the chief docks to which they go. I really want to emphasise these two points: that lighterage is a very important matter for us, and that is the reason we have moved our works; and the other point is the case where we had to send from pillar to post where we could get no redress—nobody was responsible.

(*Chairman.*) But you cannot tell us where the pillar or the post is.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I will try to help your Lordship about that.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9872. Do you remember that you brought an action against the London and India Docks Joint Committee about this accident?—Yes.

9873. Do you remember the result of the action?—We lost it.

9874. And you lost it on this ground, did you not, that your lighterman was distinctly ordered by the officials of the Joint Committee not to leave his barge there?—Admitting all that, we were sent from pillar to post before we could get any redress at all.

Mr. HENRY BELLINGHAM SMITH called and examined.

9875. (*Chairman.*) You are a partner in the firm of Parker, Wellesley, and Co., carrying on business at 23, Rood Lane, London, E.C.?—Yes.

9876. You have been nominated by the Dried Fruit Trade Association to give evidence with regard to that trade before this Commission?—I have.

9877. Will you please give us your evidence?—For many years past it has been customary to discharge vessels (bringing cargoes of dried fruit to the Port of London) at riverside wharves, whenever the draft of the vessels permitted their coming up the river to the spot where the wharves dealing with this trade are situated. When the vessels are too large to come up the river to the wharves, the vessel usually lies in the docks, and discharges the cargo into river lighters, which carry the goods to the wharves. Some of the reasons for the removal of goods from dock control are as follows:—The scale of charges for landing goods at the riverside wharves are lower than those in force at the docks. The wharves have greater facilities than the docks for handling, examining, and sampling the goods, owing to the close proximity of the wharves to the fruit market. Vessels are discharged more rapidly at the riverside wharves than at the docks, the wharves possessing improved machinery, while the machinery at the London, St. Katharine's, and Millwall Docks is out of date. The management of the riverside wharves exercise more immediate control over, and pay greater attention to, the details of their business than the London and India Dock Company. Early and late work in unloading vessels is a great convenience to my trade.

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which is done in a limited time and under great pressure. The riverside wharves give the utmost facilities for early and late work, while the London and India Dock Company raise great objections. The facilities given in the docks of Liverpool for rapid clearance of goods over the quay at a low rate have largely served to increase the trade of that port at the expense of London. I would say that the increase in currants alone in the Port of Liverpool owing to this facility is nearly 50 per cent.

9878. Do you know that from your own knowledge?—Yes.

9879. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) During what time?—Since 1895 London has been stationary, while Liverpool has increased nearly 50 per cent. These are figures taken from our own books. With regard to the facilities given in the docks of Liverpool for rapid clearance of goods over the quay, there is a rather important point. It is a clearance which enables the wholesale dealers in Liverpool to take goods by van from the quay into their own warehouses or to deliver to railway vans for a very small—merely nominal—charge, whilst in London the docks require that the whole of the warehouse charges (I think 6d. per cwt.) should be paid under similar circumstances. The consequence of that is that the whole trade of the north of England and the Midland Counties has passed from London to Liverpool, and whereas the currant trade generally has increased in the whole of the United Kingdom, London is stationary, while Liverpool has increased nearly 50 per cent. I can put figures in with regard to that.

9880. (*Chairman.*) Can you put in a comparative statement for the last few years?—Yes, from 1895 to 1900. The figures are as follows:—

ARRIVALS OF FRUIT.

	London.			Liverpool.		
	Currants.	Valencias.	Sultanas.	Currants.	Valencias.	Sultanas.
	Tons.	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*
1895-96	29,385	8,900	9,073	18,816	4,154	8,503
1896-97	24,201	8,058	8,934	19,362	3,796	8,056
1897-98	22,525	8,476	7,194	21,597	4,374	7,883
1898-99	29,121	8,896	5,095	23,788	4,563	6,220
1899-1900	28,794	9,102	6,898	25,514	4,660	9,082

The facilities given in the docks of London are in no way improved, while for goods that are taken away from the dock quay as quickly as possible, the dock charges are on the same scale as if the goods were warehoused. The fruit trade of London has been considerably diverted of recent years to Continental ports, owing to the high charges of, and delays in transhipment at this port. I have already pointed out that currants have gone very largely to Liverpool. Take another article, almonds. They have gone, as far as concerns the heavy weight trade in almonds, the Barbary almonds, the common sort of almonds, entirely to Hamburg, owing to the very heavy charges here. Ten to fifteen years ago the whole trade of these Morocco almonds was done in London; practically it has all now gone to Hamburg. The Continental trade in Spanish raisins 20 years ago was done entirely from London; there is nothing at all done now in that trade; it is all done at Hamburg and Antwerp and other ports. It has gone away entirely from London owing to the charges which it could not afford to pay. The date trade, which is a large trade of about 15,000 tons into the port, was entirely done from London within the last few years; it is now rapidly disappearing and going to Trieste, Hamburg, and New York. We have done hitherto the bulk of the New York trade; this year we shall do nothing at all; it has all gone. The charges and delays in delivery have sent the trade away from the port. The Australian trade, which used to be done from London, is now almost entirely done from the ports of production, that is from Smyrna and the Greek ports. Instead of the goods coming first to London and being loaded on to Australian ships, they are now sent direct by steamers from Greece and from Smyrna. Vessels of heavy tonnage engaged in this trade cannot get alongside the quays in the docks without lightering some portion of their cargo, and this causes serious delay and great confusion in delivery. That is, a great portion of the cargoes have to be taken out and put into lighters, and are consequently landed without discrimination of marks, and all have to be sorted afterwards, causing great delay in delivery. Considerable time is also lost owing to the fact that vessels engaged in this trade can only enter the docks at high water, and consequently, if they miss an opportunity, they have to wait 12 hours before another opportunity occurs to enter the docks.

9881. What docks do you refer to?—The London Docks. They have to wait 12 hours for the tide before they can get in. At several of the dock quays the quay room is quite insufficient, and the work of discharging is hampered in consequence, very often in order to get a ship discharged quickly, bulk piles are made of the cargo, with the result that some importers are unable to obtain their goods for two or three weeks. In order to get the steamers away they make a bulk pile of the goods, and this has to be afterwards broken down, and it is two or three weeks before we can get samples or delivery of the goods.

9882. What have you to say about the proposed tax upon barges?—The tax upon barges and their contents, for which the dock companies have been seeking the sanction of Parliament, would have the effect of still further reducing the tonnage to this port, by increasing the expenses attendant upon the transhipment of goods, and would also add to the charges—already too heavy—upon goods handled for the home trade. The effect of the imposition of the proposed tax might compel importers to leave their goods to be warehoused at the docks which would be very prejudicial to my trade, for the reasons mentioned. I consider that the monopoly enjoyed by the Watermen's Company with regard to the licensing of the men employed in the navigation of barges and other river craft on the River Thames, is injurious to the interests of the Port of London, and should be abolished.

9883. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You would not say that the diversion of the trade in raisins, for instance, is entirely due to the dock charges in London?—I should say it is mainly due to that.

9884. But take such a case as you mentioned, of raisins going direct from Smyrna and other ports in the Mediterranean to Australia; is there not a sufficient cause for that, in the nearness of these places to Australia compared with London?—That is so to some extent, but London buyers are the cheapest buyers, and would be able to compete against any other buyers. Merchants here can buy cheaper than anybody else because they buy larger quantities. If we could get the facilities for discharging the goods here without any great cost, we should still do the business. The matter is so hampered by the heavy charges, and more particularly by the delays, that the trade has gone for that reason.

9885. You admit that you have to contend with a tendency to bring about a more direct connection between the producer and the consumer; but you maintain that as an intermediary you could still hold your own if you had greater facilities in the docks in London?—Yes.

9886. You do not deny that there is a natural drift of things away from you?—No, I should not admit that there was that natural drift. I should say rather that preference would be given to London in every case if the business could be done here upon equal terms. It is not the tendency because as a matter of fact Australian buyers who deal direct with Greece or Smyrna know very well that they will not be served so well as they will if they come to London. They are dealing in Greece and Smyrna with people that they do not know very much about, and they very often get badly treated. You may take it that in all cases if London could work on equal terms they would get the business.

9887. Why did the trade in Barbary almonds in particular go from London to Hamburg?—The Continental market is a very large one for Barbary almonds. It is the principal market. It used to be always done here. Particular vessels coming from Morocco came here or to Liverpool and the trade was done from these ports, but owing to the very large charges on almonds the Hamburg people have taken the vessels entirely from us.

9888. The vessels go direct to Hamburg now?—Yes.

9889. Have they taken the trade from Liverpool as well as from London?—I think so, but I cannot answer

for that because we do not do business in that article in Liverpool.

9890. If they took it from Liverpool where the charges are not high as well as from London, where the charges are high, there must be some common cause?—Liverpool was never a very large market for the trade. London was the principal market for the Barbary almond trade.

9891. Then Hamburg does the work of distribution which was formerly done by London?—Yes.

9892. Is there any special reason for London losing the New York trade at this particular time?—Principally I should say owing to the great delay in delivery. Last year that was accentuated considerably by the lightermen's strike. The delays were so monstrous that it put us to enormous expense. Also there is the great loss caused to the New York people; they have always imported some direct but now they are taking their total import direct and shutting London out altogether. Last year I think the lightermen's strike perhaps brought about that.

9893. Then that is a case of the trade going into the direct channel and not a case of London losing its position as an intermediary for the benefit of Hamburg or Antwerp or some intermediate place?—No, it goes direct to New York. Of course London stands very well for the trade. It is a long and dangerous voyage for a steamer to take right away from the Persian Gulf to New York. It is trade we could keep if there were not so much against us.

Cross-examined by Mr. Lewis Coward.

9894. You have made the statement that the machinery at the Millwall Docks is out of date. Will you alter that word "is" to "was," and I think I will not trouble you further? Is it quite fair to make that statement now?—I do not think it is quite fair that I should make that statement, because I must do that necessarily on hearsay, as I have no practical knowledge myself of any docks and wharves. I have simply taken the statement that the docks have very inadequate machinery.

9895. Apart from that, I do not know if you are aware that it has been given in evidence before this Commission only a few days ago that the provision now of machinery at the Millwall Docks quadruples the output, and that the witness who occupied the chair last but one before you paid a very high compliment to the Millwall Docks, as a smaller and poorer competitor, for putting in this machinery; so will you withdraw that statement?—I will withdraw it with pleasure.

9896. When was your statement of evidence drawn up?—Six months ago.

9897. How much more of your evidence is hearsay?—As far as regards the machinery I know only what I am told. I may say that I know also of the way in which vessels are discharged at the different places.

9898. How much more of your evidence is hearsay?—I do not think any more of it.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

9899. You spoke of high charges on transhipment. How much of the charges on transhipment are dock charges. Are you in a position to say?—Yes. For instance, if you take the article dates which are put upon the quay, there is a quay charge. I do not know exactly what it is now. I do not think I have the figures before me; but, at any rate, there is a fairly heavy quay charge, which immediately tells against this particular New York business that I am speaking of. The trade has now gone to New York.

9900. Are you bound to put your dates on the quay?—They can be taken ex-ship, but the difficulties are so great that we prefer to pay the quay charge in order to get facilities.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9901. I understand you put it on the point of lack of machinery; there is no question about your delivery from the wharves being better than from the dock?—Infinitely better.

9902. They can have it that that is bad labour, or some other mismanagement, or machinery, as you put it?—Yes.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Evidence has been given here to show that the Millwall Company have provided machinery for the removal of timber.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) I beg your pardon. It is not confined to timber.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Mr. Lewis Coward expressly referred to a witness who gave evidence shortly before this witness. That gentleman was a witness with regard to timber.

(*Chairman.*) I think you are at one; the witness has withdrawn the statement.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I only want to brush aside what Mr. Lewis Coward said.

(*Chairman.*) Do you not think it is sufficient if the witness has withdrawn the statement made?

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I should like to ask him one question, if I may.

(*Chairman.*) Very well.

9903. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Are you aware of any machinery which has been introduced by the Millwall Company which is used by your particular trade?—No.

(Adjourned to Monday next, June 17th, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

Monday, 17th June, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

MR. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and MR. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

MR. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

MR. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

MR. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and MR. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

MR. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

MR. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

MR. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

MR. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

MR. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Will your Lordship allow Mr. Robinson, who gave evidence at Question 8790 to bring certain particulars before the Commission? The question is with regard to the charge of 1s. 9d. for discharging a vessel of grain. The question put to the witness was: "Give me any instance at all in which you have paid that 1s. 9d. to the London and India Docks Company. Give me the date and the name of the ship." Mr. Robinson promised to look up the particulars and put them before the Commission. He is here this morning, and can now put in the invoice showing that amount has been paid.

Mr. JOHN HENRY ROBINSON, recalled; and further Examined.

Mr. J. H. Robinson.
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9904. (*Chairman.*) I understand you wish to put in some invoices and particulars with reference to Question 8790?—Yes.

9905. Will you kindly do so?—They are the working out of the ship "Polymitis" in the West India Dock this year.

[*The Witness handed in Copies of Accounts showing charge of* 1s. 9d. *per ton for giving delivery of bulk grain from "Polymitis" to barge. See Appendix, 26th Day, No.* 1.]

I have also the charge note for working out an American steamer in 1893.

9906. That is rather remote?—Just as your Lordship pleases. If you care to have it, here it is.

(*Chairman.* I think it is too remote.

9907. (*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I understand the document you have put in refers to the present year?—Yes. It is the working out of a ship of 752 quarters of wheat in the West India Dock of the London and India Docks Company at 1s. 9d. a ton, £14 11s. 5d.

9908. What is the date of it?—The invoices are dated April 16th, 1901.

Mr. LEOPOLD BERNHARD SOMMERFELD, called; and Examined.

Mr. L. B. Sommerfeld

9909. (*Chairman.*) You are a stone and granite merchant, importing large quantities of material into London and all parts of the United Kingdom?—Yes.

9910. You desire to lay evidence before the Commission with reference to the accommodation provided for the loading of the material from the steamers into the railway trucks of the different companies?—That is so.

9911. Will you kindly give us your evidence? — I import large quantities of stone from the Channel Islands, Scotland, Plymouth, Belgium, and France, and I am hampered in my business by the scandalously inefficient accommodation existing for the loading of the material from the steamers into the railway trucks of the different companies. The class of steamers usually employed in this trade are of a carrying capacity of from 300 to 1,000 tons, and therefore do not require very extensive accommodation; but even for vessels of this small class there is only the slightest possible accommodation. For instance, with regard to the Great Eastern Railway Company they have a wharf at Thames Wharf, Blackwall, and here they will only receive vessels not exceeding 140ft. in length, which limits the choice of vessels so much that it is almost impossible to obtain boats for this wharf, and frequently stone has to be first delivered overside into barges and lightered to the railway wharf, which is an absolute waste of something like 2s. per ton, there

not being the slightest necessity for this if vessels of the size usually employed in this trade could go direct alongside the wharf. In addition, at the Great Eastern Railway as well as many of the others, steamers costing from £10 to £15 per day have sometimes to wait four or five days or even a week for their turn, they having to wait while sailing vessels which may have arrived before them are unloaded. On the 6th January, 1899, I wrote to the District Goods' Manager's Office of the Great Eastern Railway Company as follows:—"Dear Sir, Referring to my interview with you, the Midland Railway Company have given me permission for the steamer s.s. 'Count D'Aspremont,' which is 162½ft. in length, to overlap their wharf. This vessel will therefore only occupy the 140ft. of your wharf which you have available, and I am therefore sending her to you with broken granite, which kindly note. I am, dear sir, yours truly, L. Sommerfeld." To that letter I received a reply on the same day, which is as follows: "Great Eastern Railway, District Goods Manager's Office, Hamilton House, Bishopsgate Street Without, London, E.C., January 6th, 1899. Dear Sir, I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of to-day's date. I sent my representative to see you to-day, and I do not know the result of the interview yet. It is true your vessel will only occupy 140 ft. of our wharf, but that 140 ft. we want not for one vessel only, but to work others at the same time as they turn up. When do you expect your vessel to be alongside, and I will see what can be done in this instance, but we cannot take vessels in of this exceptional length at Thames Wharf because it interferes so much with the general working of the place, and being a railway company we want to oblige all our customers as far as we can. Yours truly, John Farrow." Then I wrote again in reply to that on the 10th January. "Dear Sir, In reply to your favour of the 6th inst. I expect my steamer to arrive alongside your wharf during next week and I shall be glad to hear that there will be no hitch on her arrival. I do not quite understand your remark, 'It is true your vessel will only occupy 140ft. of our wharf, but that 140 ft. we want not for one vessel only, but to work others at the same time as they turn up'; as you have always expressed your willingness to receive vessels of not exceeding 140 ft. in length, and I think it would be practically impossible, with your river frontage, for you to have more than one sea-going vessel alongside at one time. As the Midland Railway Company have given me permission for my vessel to overlap their wharf I quite fail to see what possible reason you can have to object. I am, dear sir, yours truly, L. Sommerfeld." Then I received a letter from the Great Eastern Railway Company, dated January 10th. "Great Eastern Railway, District Goods Manager's Office, Hamilton House, Bishopsgate Street Without, London, E.C., January 10th, 1899. Dear Sir,—Referring to your letter of to-day's date, our objection is simply this, that if we have a coal traffic to work at our wharf at the same time as you are doing your granite, and if you occupy so much frontage as this vessel will do, it puts an end to the working of one of our coal berths, and this brings about serious complaints and grumbling from our other customers. I cannot go into the question of what the Midland Company agree to do. You know, of course, as a railway company we want to oblige all our customers, and we do get foul of so many of them when we allow a vessel of the class you refer to to occupy our wharf. I will give instructions for it to be done in this instance, and hope in future you will try and work with us in this matter.—Yours faithfully, JOHN FARROW." As a matter of fact, I frequently have to put my stone into barges owing to the utter want of facilities which exist. Then, with regard to the Great Northern and London and North-Western Railway Companies, the means of discharging from ship to truck here are also most inefficient. These companies appear to have no accommodation of their own, but have some arrangement with the North London Railway Company, by which they are allowed the use of the Collier Dock, Blackwall Basin, when the North London Railway Company do not require the berths and cranes for their own purposes. Even when a steamer with stone is alongside a berth she has to shift away if some collier comes up which desires to discharge for stations on the North London Railway, and this is of frequent occurrence. With reference to the Midland Railway Company, I have not had much traffic over this line, but what I have had has been most slowly discharged. With regard to the South-Eastern Railway Company, fair accommodation exists, and as to the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Company, the same remark applies. I should say that the accommodation on the latter railway might be termed good except that sometimes one has to wait for a berth. When once one has a berth the discharge is quick. With reference to the London and South-Western Railway Company, they have no accommodation for steamers below bridge, and all material for their line has to be lightered to Nine Elms at a great extra cost. To sum up, looking at the importance of quick dispatch for steamers carrying goods intended for destinations served by the various railway companies, I can say that the arrangements existing in such a port as London would be a disgrace to the smallest port, and in my opinion it is absolutely essential that there should be a large stretch of quay space, one on the north and one on the south side, into which the respective railway lines should converge, fitted with thoroughly efficient cranes, so that vessels of the size usually employed in this trade could come alongside and discharge quickly and without having to wait an undue time for a discharging berth. The import of stone into London is one of some magnitude, as I estimate that not less than half a million tons are brought into London by water, a large proportion of which must be intended for further conveyance by rail. As far as the north portion of the river is concerned I have had practically to leave the trade alone, and it hampers the trade very much, because if there were proper facilities we could compete at many places where it is now impossible to do so. One merchant has a wharf on the north side, into which all the railway lines run, and by his enterprise in this direction he has practically acquired a monopoly so far as water-borne stone is concerned. Especially in the London and South-Western district I find it quite impossible to compete owing to there being stone inland, and being handicapped by the extra cost of lightering to Nine Elms.

9912. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What description of stone is it that you are chiefly interested in?—Broken stone for macadamising purposes.

9913. Not block stone?—No, broken stone for the roadways.

9914. Can you give us any idea of what proportion ought to go away by rail for the greatest convenience?—It is difficult to say, but I should think fully a half, if not probably more.

9915. I suppose a large quantity of it must always be barged?—Quite so, if the place is situate on the river.

9916. What is the nature of your complaint. Do you complain against the railway companies, or the administration of the port generally?—I am afraid my complaint is that the railway companies have not provided facilities for water-borne traffic; that such facilities do not exist in the Port of London.

9917. That the wharves of the railway companies are not sufficiently commodious and large?—That is so.

9918. Then I suppose your suggestion is that the railway companies should get larger wharves?—I do not know whether it is that the railway companies should get larger wharves, but railway facilities should be provided as in other ports. For instance, in Antwerp the quay berths are all provided with railway lines, and one can place the goods immediately on rail. Moreover, here, if one had a vessel with 1,000 tons of stone, which would be a small vessel, and one wished to send that over three or four different lines we should have to go to three or four different berths in order to get to the depôt of each company. Under what I should consider a proper system it would be possible to discharge that boat at one berth and afterwards distribute the waggons to the different companies.

9919. Tilbury Dock has good accommodation, has it not?—Stone never goes into any of the docks.

9920. Why not?—It never has done in my knowledge.

9921. Is it because the consignees do not want to pay dock dues?—That may be the reason. It has never been suggested by the railway companies that it should go into the docks.

9922. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Are you speaking from the experience of your firm?—Yes, of my own experience.

9923. I do not understand you are authorised by

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anybody else to speak?—No, I do not come in that capacity.

9924. Can you give us at all an idea of the proportion of trade that you do out of the half million tons that you have mentioned?—My total trade, I suppose, would be about 150,000 tons altogether, but not necessarily in London.

9925. You say half a million tons come into London?—Yes. I should think I do of that about 40,000 or 50,000 tons.

9926. Do you think that your experience is the same as that of other persons in the trade?—With the exception of the firm I have mentioned, who have a wharf on the north side, into which all the railways go.

9927. Have you heard complaints from other people in your business?—Yes.

9928. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Does your half million tons of stone include block stone?—No. I am speaking of broken stone, which is the only thing in which I am interested.

9929. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Where is that wharf on the north side of the river to which you refer?—Griffith's Wharf, Silvertown, and I have sent my steamers to another wharf belonging to Messrs. Williams, at Dagenham, into which the railway companies go. The rate there is much higher, but I have sent it there in order to get despatch.

9930. You say a competing firm has advantages which you have not got?—Yes.

9931. Can you tell me where the accommodation of the Midland Railway Company is?—They have a small place on the river, and also I believe a portion of the Poplar Dock.

9932. Where is the place on the river?—It must adjoin the Great Eastern Railway, because at one time I got permission from the Midland Railway Company for my steamer to overlap their wharf.

9933. Where is the accommodation of the South-Eastern Railway Company?—At Westcombe Park.

9934. Down the river?—Yes.

9935. Have the Brighton Company a place down the river?—Yes; a very good place, at Deadman's Dock, Deptford.

9936. Of course, they have a place up the river?—Yes.

9937. Then you need not lighter from there?—No, not for the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company. They have very good facilities.

Mr. JOHN WHEELER BENNETT called and examined.

Mr. J. W Bennett.

9938. (*Chairman.*) You are nominated by the Home and Foreign Produce Exchange to lay evidence before this Commission?—Yes.

9939. Will you tell us whom you represent?—The Home and Foreign Produce Exchange.

9940. Do you represent any particular firm?—I am senior partner in the firm of Wheeler, Bennett and Company, one of the largest importers of provisions in the City of London.

9941. Do you tell us that, although it is somewhat cheaper to bring goods to the Port of London, this is more than counterbalanced by the delays in discharging and delivering?—Yes, that is so, because the product is so delicately cured that it requires very speedy transit, and, owing to the delays that we have suffered from in the Port of London, we have been compelled to take refuge in other ports.

9942. What have you to say with regard to the disposition on the part of the docks towards wharfingers?—There does not seem to be a disposition on the part of the docks to make things easy for the wharfingers. There seems to be no cohesion between the dock companies and the wharfingers. The great market is in Tooley Street, where the large warehouses are situated, and it is the market for London. We want the product brought up there through the agency of the wharfingers. There is a certain amount of delay in the delivery with the craft. There seems to be no sort of good feeling existing between the dock companies and the wharfingers. This is the excuse they give us.

9943. What is your opinion as to the monopoly of the lightermen?—I think it is an obsolete custom, which should be got rid of, it is strangling the port of London; and time and again we have been delayed with large quantities of provisions on account of strikes.

9944. Have you any remedies to propose?—In my opinion the water-carrying trade should be as free and open as the land-carrying trade, and by bringing the docks under one control in the form of a dock trust. What we want is a supreme control; we have none at present, we want to see the present obsolete equipment replaced by more efficient machinery; we want to have more speedy loading, and we want the lighterage trade to be thrown open, so as to give free trade from one end of the river to the other.

9945. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Can you tell us what are the chief ports outside London to which the goods come that are ultimately destined for London?—Southampton and Liverpool.

9946. Which is the more important as a competitor?—Southampton. The transatlantic boats arrive on Wednesday night in the Port of Southampton, and we get the product delivered in London on Thursday night and Friday morning, so that it comes into the warehouses of the wholesale merchants in time to manipulate for Saturday.

9947. Would not these transatlantic steamers for Southampton always bring the goods?—No.

9948. It is not a question of the facilities of the Port of London?—No. For years and years we have brought over very large quantities of our products into the Port of London, and we should bring them still if we could get a quicker delivery and more facilities.

9949. That is to say you would be better able to compete with Southampton than you are now?—Yes. We pay a much higher rate of freight into Southampton, so as to get a quicker delivery, than we should into the Port of London.

9950. Can you tell us roughly what the difference of freight is by Southampton and by London?—Yes. From Toronto to Liverpool, freight 35s. per ton, dock charges in Liverpool 4s. 3d. per ton, costing landed Liverpool 39s. 3d. per ton. Toronto to London *viâ* Liverpool, freight 62s. 6d. per ton. Toronto to Southampton, freight 53s. 4d. per ton, dock charges (varying from 1s. 6d. ton to 4s. ton) averaging, say, 2s. 6d. per ton, costing landed Southampton 55s. 10d. per ton. Toronto to London, *viâ* Southampton, freight 63s. 4d. per ton. Toronto to London direct, freight 40s. per ton, dock charges and landing 8s. 6d. per ton, costing landed London 48s. 6d. per ton.

9951. So that if you have equal facilities at the Port of London you would use it, from its advantageous position?—Yes.

9952. (*Rear Admiral Hext.*) Do you use the docks or river?—We use the river.

9953. You do not go into the docks in London?—We have to go into the docks.

9954. Do you cart or lighter from the docks?—We send the lightermen down to the docks.

9955. You do it by lighter, not by cart?—That is so.

9956. The principal of your imports at the Port of London go into dock, and thence by lighter?—Yes, that is the cause of the delay.

9957. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do your goods arrive in part cargoes in the vessels, or whole cargoes?—Part cargoes.

9958. Are there as many liners going to London as there are to Southampton?—Not at present. It varies a great deal. Somestimes we have very good services, and then they get tired, or it does not pay, and they lose control of the traffic.

9959. Do your goods come in in passenger steamers?—Yes, in the quick transatlantic line boats, "St .Paul" and "St. Louis," and boats of that kind.

9960. They make their home at Southampton, do they not?—Yes.

9961. Then anything that they carry would always go to Southampton?—Yes; but we could divert at the other end and put the goods into London boats.

9962. (*Chairman.*) What quick transatlantic boats are there which come to London?—It would be difficult to name many of them. There is the "Minnesota."

9963. But I am speaking of the quick transatlantic boats to London?—There are no very quick boats to London.

9964. So that whatever the accommodation in London, it would not be easy to send your goods that way at the present moment?—No, but we have men disposed to take up lines of steamships to promote speed if we could get good accommodation.

9965. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you complain of the want of facilities for unloading into barges?—Yes.

9966. How are your goods unloaded. Are they unloaded overside or on to the quay?—Sometimes they are unloaded on to the quay and sorted, part going by rail and part into craft.

9967. Where does the delay take place of which you complain?—In getting it into craft and lightering it up the river.

9968. If the goods are discharged overside, does the ship discharge them?—Yes, the ship discharges into lighters.

9969. Therefore the dock company does not discharge that portion of the cargo?—No, but the complaint is that they do not give the craft the same advantages as they give the land side of the delivery.

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9970. You think then that the wharfingers are not treated in that respect with the same amount of consideration as if the goods were going into the warehouses of the dock company?—Yes, that appears to be the difficulty.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

9971. I think the bulk of these goods are warehoused in Tooley Street?—Yes.

9972. You make no complaint, I think, of the wharf accommodation there?—Not the slightest; it is the best in the world.

9973. And I think they have modern appliances that you said the docks lack?—Yes.

9974. Lufting cranes, for instance, so that they can take from barges two deep?—Yes. They do it very well when we can get there.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

9975. Do you also import through Liverpool?—Yes, largely.

9976. Do you find that you get quick delivery at Liverpool?—Very quick. They often have races between Southampton and Liverpool; there is hardly any variation of time at all. I do not say it is always the case, because there is the question of weather to consider as a rule.

Mr. JOHN STEWART called and examined.

9977. (*Chairman.*) You are shipping manager to the firm of Henry R. Merton and Company, Limited?—Yes.

9978. You have been appointed to lay evidence before this Commission with special reference to the London clause of the North Atlantic inward bills of lading, and the system of directly charging consignees for work?—Yes.

9979. Does your firm deal exclusively with metals?—Yes.

9980. How much do you import per annum?—From 6,000 to 10,000 tons of metals from North America.

9981. Will you please proceed with your evidence?—Various causes arose during the years prior to the insertion of the "London Clause," that all tended to the increase of the importance of the saving of time in the discharge of vessels, in order that they might spend as little of their time as possible in port and make the greatest number of voyages possible in a year. My experience is that the charge made to the consignee under this clause is detrimental to the trade of the Port of London; there is no adequate service rendered to either the shipper or consignee in return for the payment. The consignee does not receive his goods any quicker by paying this charge—goods discharged from one vessel on the quay frequently get locked in before delivery to barge, by the subsequent arrival of another vessel at the same berth. The method of first discharging goods intended for barges on to the quay of course facilitates the rapid discharge of steamers, which, we are told, is essential. The fact that this method of discharge greatly delays the delivery of goods to the consignee, and causes him considerable expense by reason of the demurrage on waiting craft and loss of interest is rarely taken into account. It is but fair to add, however, that with docks or quays constructed with a special view to the overside trade that the passing of goods intended for water carriage, over the quay would not necessarily mean delaying the delivery of goods. The present docks at which American steamers unload are entirely unsuitable to this method of delivery, and therefore goods are greatly delayed by reason of the quay space being required for vessel after vessel discharging cargoes on to a limited quay space. Barges should have other means of access to the quay than that part occupied by the unloading steamers.

Mr. J. Stewart.

Mr. JOHN YOUNG HENDERSON called and examined.

9982. (*Chairman.*) You are a director of the firm of Henderson, Craig and Company, Limited?—Yes.

9983. Are you chairman of the Wood-Pulp Association?—Yes, I am.

9984. Are you a member of the London Chamber of Commerce?—No.

9985. By whom were you nominated to lay evidence before us?—I was asked by the Chamber of Commerce to do so.

9986. Not by the firm of Henderson, Craig and Co.?—I represent that firm.

9987. As far as regards your evidence, is it the evidence of your firm?—Yes.

9988. And not of the Chamber of Commerce?—No. My company imported into London in 1899 168,358 bales and in 1900 91,907 bales of wood pulp from Canada, Germany, and Scandinavian countries; which is bought very largely by the manufacturers of news and other papers. English manufacturers of papers used in the production of newspapers carry on their business against very heavy competition from Continental countries. Wood pulp is shipped to and arrives in this country both in the dry state and containing 50 per cent. moisture, so that in the latter case the tax under the "London Clause" amounts to 3s. 6d. per ton. It frequently amounts to 3s. 6d. a ton on the dry pulp, which sometimes measures 80 cubic feet per ton. The rate is per ton measurement or weight, so that sometimes it comes to 50 or 100 per cent. more on the dry ton as well as on the wet. By this charge the paper trade of this country is very heavily handicapped in their competition with Continental manufacturers. The producers of pulp in Canada by this charge are at a disadvantage in their efforts to compete with German and Scandinavian manufacturers, because from those countries pulp does not pay this charge. If the London and India Docks Company obtain and exercise the powers sought by them in the bill entitled the "London and India Docks (Lighterage, etc.) Bill, 1901," the home newspaper manufacturing industry on which is dependent the wood pulp industry, will be greatly handicapped in the South-Eastern districts. I am of opinion that the Watermen's Company should be abolished, and that free trade in lighterage should obtain on the River Thames. Such conditions would be most beneficial to the wood pulp trade.

Mr. J. Y. Henderson.

9989. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You say that producers of pulp in Canada are at a disadvantage compared with German and Scandinavian manufacturers because they have this charge for delivery to pay under the American bill of lading?—Yes.

9990. Is not that a question of freight?—It might be

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looked upon from that point of view. It is an extra charge, whichever way it is.

9991. The shipowners who are not making that charge to the merchants might put it into the freight?—Yes. Still, it would increase the trade; it would be the same thing in the end.

9992. If a person makes a certain charge per freight, knowing that he would be able to charge the merchants something more for delivery, that is one thing; if another person knows that he cannot make the charge for delivery, and delivery has to be made, the cost would be adjusted in some way or other?—Yes, but it always adds something to the cost in London. I understand this charge is imposed by the dock companies for allowing the barges to come into the docks and receive the pulp. Years ago there was no such charge, and we got it free, as in the river. All such charges on raw material are very heavy compared with other goods.

9993. So that it is a charge for using the docks which one set of people have to pay and another set of people have not to pay? Is that what you mean?—The buyer of the pulp ultimately has to pay that; the paper maker has to pay it.

9994. Are you prevented from taking delivery overside as regards the goods coming from the Continent, or is that all overside?—It is all put overside in the river either from whole or part cargo.

9995. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You say that the dry pulp is often charged as much by measurement as the heavier wet pulp?—Yes.

9996. What is that due to. Is it due to bad package?—No, it bulks much more.

9997. It is not compressed well?—Some of the pulps are very bulky. You cannot compress them under 60 cubic feet. I have never known a pulp to be compressed under 58 to 60 cubic feet.

9998. Why should there be this great difference between the different sorts of dry pulp. Surely it must be the packing?—There is no great difference really. None come under 60 cubic feet. We have always to pay 1s. 9d. plus the percentage. That is 40 cubic feet per ton, and in many cases it goes up to 80.

9999. That is double?—Yes.

10000. What is that owing to?—It is a different kind of pulp; it will not press so well.

Mr. HAHNEMANN EPPS called and examined.

Mr. H. Epps.

10001. (*Chairman.*) You are a director of James Epps and Company, Limited, cocoa and chocolate makers?—Yes.

10002. You appear before this Commission in order to give evidence with reference to the cocoa trade?—Raw cocoa and the storage of raw cocoa and other Colonial products.

10003. Will you please proceed with your evidence?—My company are in the habit, for the purpose of their business, of investing in and holding some thousands of tons of raw cocoa and other Colonial produce annually, and, until recently, kept such produce in the warehouses of the London and India Docks Joint Committee, of Metropolitan Wharf, of Wilson's Wharf, and others. The following figures show that my company have paid for many years sums of money amounting to over £2,000 per annum for rent on their goods to the London and India Docks Joint Committee, and to the proprietors of the wharves referred to:—

Year ended	£
July 31st, 1892	2,304
,, 1893	2,228
,, 1894	2,278
,, 1895	2,391
,, 1896	2,623
,, 1897	3,170
,, 1898	3,607
,, 1899	3,309
,, 1900	1,045

My company, being of the opinion that the charges for this warehouse accommodation were excessive, erected a warehouse during the year 1898 at a cost of eight thousand pounds, or rather more, and stored their cocoa and produce there instead of at the warehouses of the allied dock companies and of the wharves referred to. During the first year that my company were able to store their produce at this warehouse they saved the sum of £2,264 gross from the amounts previously paid to the London and India Docks Joint Committee and to the wharves referred to (the stock of goods held being without much variation). A larger saving could have been realised if all my company's raw stock had been drawn home.

10004. What do you mean by the word "gross"?—That means without allowing for interest on capital and labour.

10005. Would it not be less misleading if you were to give us the net amount?—I have here a statement of the expenses that I reckon would come off that. The land on which this particular warehouse stands is valued at £3,000, and the outgoings may be calculated at: interest on land at 4 per cent., £120; interest on buildings at 5 per cent., £400; depreciation at 1½ per cent., £100; and so on. I work it out so that I get a net saving that year of £1,546 out of the £2,264 gross.

10006. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What depth of water have you at your wharf?—We have no wharf—we are not on the frontage. It is land carriage.

10007. How do your goods get from the docks to your warehouses?—We draw them in with our own vans.

10008. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you any complaint against the Watermen's Company in working your barges?—No, I have not.

10009. You are content with their control?—We do not use them except very exceptionally. We have no experience sufficient to pass an opinion upon the subject.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

10010. You said: If all your company's raw stock had been drawn home." Is yours one of the trades in which stock is kept abroad in order to avoid dock warehousing charges?—No. We store very largely here. When the statement of my evidence was drawn up our Colonial produce in the docks and at the home wharf came to £98,000, but we do not buy before it is landed.

10011. I only wanted to clear that up. We know that in the wine trade they keep it abroad very often to avoid these charges?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

10012. What are the rates and taxes on those warehouses?—They are on a rating of £2,480, but we have not a separate estimate for that portion.

10013. You have not included it?—I did not include it in that estimate; there was interest on outlay on buildings included in that estimate.

Mr. GEORGE ROFFEY called and examined.

Mr. G. Roffey

10014. (*Chairman.*) You have been nominated by the London Corn Exchange to lay evidence before this Commission?—Yes.

10015. You are a partner in the firm of George Roffey and Sons, who are large importers and dealers in corn and grain?—Yes

10016. And you are also Vice-Chairman of the London Corn Exchange?—Yes.

10017. Is this statement of evidence which we have before us written by yourself?—Yes, and if I had known I was to be cross-examined upon it I should have been more careful.

10018. The contents of this statement are to your knowledge facts?—Certainly, to the best of my knowledge.

10019. Will you proceed with your evidence?—My

firm has been established in London for 60 years, during which time they have imported into London some thousands of tons of corn and grain annually. I have been nominated by the London Corn Trade Association (of which I am a member) to offer evidence before the Commission. The accommodation for berthing and unloading vessels, engaged in bringing corn and grain into the Port of London, and the warehousing and other general dock accommodation, has for many years past been expensive and insufficient. The machinery, appliances and stock in trade for the rapid unloading of vessels are inadequate for the requirements of the trade, and consequently vessels prefer to charter for any other port than London, unless they can obtain a higher rate of freight. The London corn trade has been dominated for the last few years by large combinations of American shipowners, who have imposed their own terms both upon the London docks and on the grain trade generally. This has led not only to increased charges for unloading vessels, but is the cause of such delays and errors in such unloading and delivery of grain that nearly every small trader in the eastern counties has ceased dealing in London in favour of out-ports such as Lynn, Ipswich, and Harwich. The present administration of the port is in divided hands, and in consequence thereof the charges at different docks for similar services are not uniform. I am of the opinion that the present system of double handling of grain should be abolished, and that dock charges for similar services should be uniform all over the port; in fact that the whole system of charges should be re-arranged. After the great dock strike, the docks came to an agreement with shipowners, that they, the shipowners, should do the working out over-side charging the merchant with the cost thereof, thereby losing control of their own business, and also of a very profitable source of revenue to themselves. The corn trade are unanimous in the opinion that the dock companies ought to cancel the agreement, and take the working of the ships in their own hands again, holding themselves solely responsible for the working out between the shipper and the receiver. These and other essential reforms can only be undertaken by a Dock Trust, directed by merchants in the interests of the trade of the port, who should be granted powers not granted under the Dock Act of 1799. Now I wish to say this with regard to the Watermen's Company. The trade generally is of opinion that the privileges of the Watermen's Company ought to be very considerably curtailed; that any man who understands his business and is of good character ought to be able to get a certificate from the Watermen's Company; and that the river should be thrown open to labour, instead of being now a close borough, which is not the case in any other port. It entailed an enormous amount of friction and trouble, delay and disorganisation of trade for four or five months last year, and the men who have the privileges of the Watermen's Company simply dominated the whole trade of the Port of London for some period. If the Watermen's Company's privileges were either abolished with regard to the question of apprenticeship to lightermen, or the river was thrown open to free labour, I do not think cases like the strike of last year would occur again.

10020. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have told us that the corn trade are unanimous in a certain direction. Has there been any meeting or resolution?—We have had informal meetings on the subject, and I think I may say with absolute safety that the corn trade are unanimous in wishing that the dock company should undertake the working, which they usually did up to 1890, for the 1s. 9d. a ton. Although we maintain that that is an excessive charge and ought to be reduced, we would rather see the dock company take that and do the work between the shipper and the receiver than be handed over to the shipping companies, where we cannot fix responsibility.

10021. I am not talking about arrangements. I am simply on the point of unanimity. Have you any formal resolution you can put before us?—I have no formal resolution, but I can say with safety that it is the opinion of the trade.

10022. (*Mr. Peel.*) What is the double handling you speak of?—I was speaking of the double handling in regard to the Atlantic transport liners as they go into the Tilbury Dock. They are handled once there, put into the barge, then sent up to the Victoria Dock and discharged into silos, and from the silos they are discharged into the buyers' and customers' crafts. That is double handling which must entail an enormous amount of expense somewhere.

10023. Then what do you suggest. Do you suggest that the grain vessels should go into docks higher up the river?—These enormous vessels that are being built in advance of the facilities for working them cannot come up the river because it is not deep enough for them. The river must be deepened before they can come up.

10024. Then that is hardly a charge against the dock companies?—No, except that these vessels have been imposed on the trade, as it were. This is only, after all, a substitute for what we should have had to put up with had we been pledged to take our delivery in the Tilbury Dock.

10025. You would not suggest that the goods should be brought up by rail, would you?—No, not from Tilbury, but I should suggest that the trade is very materially hampered and injured by these deliveries first into Tilbury Dock to facilitate the discharge of the vessel. The vessel can come into the Tilbury Dock and discharge in three or four days, and go away again, whereas I can prove that within the last three weeks we have had a great number of complaints from our buyers in the country with regard to these vessels that discharge in the Tilbury Dock, and which have gone away in the course of three or four or five days, that the grain has not been delivered to customers until quite a fortnight afterwards. The delays are so serious to our customers buying this American grain that wherever they can get it elsewhere they will not come to London for it, but go to Lynn, Ipswich, Harwich, and other places.

10026. You put that down to the fact that they cannot get delivery of the grain for some time after it is loaded?—A fortnight after it is discharged in the Tilbury Dock in many instances. Now I should like to speak of the 1s. 9d. charge on grain.

10027. Do you mean as to the system of charging, or the quantum?—The 1s. 9d. system of charge on grain. I say that grain has to pay for a great number of other goods that pay nothing, and, therefore, the expenses of the docks are maintained out of the charges they make upon grain, whereas, if all goods that enter the dock paid dock-charges, the 1s. 9d. per ton could be reduced by 50 per cent., and yet the dock revenue be quite as good as, if not better than, it was with the 1s. 9d. charge; that is to say, that grain pays the revenue of the dock where other goods do not. They have no power, I understand, to raise the dock-charges on these other goods, and they have power to raise it on grain; and grain pays the proportion for other goods, really and truly.

10028. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Do you mean they have a maximum for other goods beyond which they cannot go?—I think it was Mr. Scott, of the Dock Company, who said that 80 or 90 per cent. of the rice which came into his dock paid nothing, but every atom of grain that goes into his dock pays a charge. I understood from his first day's evidence that the 1s. 9d. charge on grain in the dock they get nothing out of; but I cannot quite understand that when I am told that other docks consider that the 1s. 9d. charge on grain pays them from 25 to 30 per cent. profit.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

10029. You were saying something about the mode of measurement. I do not know if you read Mr. Gordon Coombe's evidence?—No. I do not think I mentioned measuring.

10030. Is not the delivery under the American bill of lading now made by servants of the shipowners direct into the barges alongside if it does not go on to the quays?—Not always, but to a certain extent.

10031. But it is the shipowners' servants who make the delivery, and, therefore, there is no independent authority to come in between to deal with the measurement of the grain?—Exactly.

10032. Is not that one complaint of the corn trade in London?—Yes; a very serious complaint.

10033. And that which used to be done by the old City Meters is now entirely gone?—Yes.

10034. And you desire to see some independent authority introduced between the shipper and the receiver?—Yes.

(*Mr. Druce.*) My Lord, may I be allowed to put a question in the absence of my counsel on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company?

(*Chairman.*) Yes.

Mr. G. Roffey.

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Cross-examined by Mr. Druce

10035. You alluded to the equipment of the machinery being inadequate. Do you include the Surrey Commercial Dock in what you said?—No; certainly not. I think the Surrey Commercial Docks are the only docks in London which are carried on on business principles. I think that is shown in the value of their shares and their being able to pay five per cent. dividend every year, when other dock companies pay nothing.

10036. (*Chairman.*) Have you anything to do with the Surrey Commercial Docks in your business?—Yes, very largely; and I have always found them well-equipped.

10037. (*Mr. Druce.*) You think that the working-out of the ships ought to be done by the dock companies themselves?—The working-out of the ships is done by the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, and there we get a responsible agent between the shipper and the receiver. What I want to point out is that we have innumerable complaints of wrong delivery, deficiencies, and so on, from our customers, amounting to £10, £15, and £20 to £25 a-piece, which we have really to ignore rather than spend hundreds a year in order to recover them.

10038. I understand you to say that you came here officially not to represent the Corn Exchange, but the Corn Trade Association?—I came here, I think, officially to represent the Corn Exchange. I was nominated by the Corn Trade Association, and being the Vice-Chairman of the London Corn Exchange, I take it that I represent them.

10039. Have you any resolution of the Board requesting you to attend?—No; they did not appoint anybody.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

10040. Are you familiar with the working out of grain in the Surrey Commercial Dock?—Yes.

10041. Do you know whether that company have any grain elevators?—I believe they have on land.

10042. Are those of use for the working out of the ships?—I do not think they work out of ships by elevators. I do not think they are used until the grain gets on to the land.

10043. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you never have grain in the Surrey Commercial Dock under the American bill of lading?—No, never; at least, I do not think so, because the American grain that goes into the Surrey Commercial Docks always goes in in tramp steamers, not by line steamers. I have never known one of the Atlantic transport boats to go into the Surrey Commercial Dock, and it is the Atlantic Transport boats and some others that have this bill of lading which causes this expense, trouble, and anxiety to the buyers to know when their goods are going to turn up in the Eastern counties and other places.

10044. Is that the reason for the difference of system?—I think so, to a very great extent.

10045. It is because in one case the grain comes in liners and in the other case it comes in what are called tramp steamers?—Yes.

10046. And the tramp steamers have not the American clause?—No; and tramp steamers, generally speaking, have full cargoes, whereas the American liners are always split up between wheat, maize and so on. Then again, the liners are so enormous that they cannot come up the river at the present moment. They have been built I suppose in anticipation of better dock accommodation.

10047. Do you wish to touch on the evidence which was sent in in the name of Mr. William Pigote Wood?—Only to suggest that I think you ought to hear him because he is a man who has a house in Ipswich and Hull, trading personally with those places.

10048. You have said all you wish to say on your own behalf?—Yes.

Mr. Frederick Stone Garratt called and examined.

Mr. F. S Garratt.

10049. (*Chairman.*) You are nominated by the London Corn Trade Association to offer evidence before us?—Yes.

10050. You are the head of the London house of the firm of Robert Procter and Sons?—Yes.

10051. Importers of foreign grain of all sorts carrying on business in London, Liverpool, and Hull?—Yes. Previous to my connection with the grain trade I was from 1876 to 1882 in charge of the general traffic management of a line of steamers running from New York to Bristol and Avonmouth Docks. I am not personally a member of the London Corn Trade Association.

10052. Will you kindly proceed with your evidence?—I do not know whether I am coming to give evidence with regard to the practical working of cargoes of grain or evidence against any docks.

10053. You are not here to give evidence against anybody?—Merely to give evidence with regard to working cargoes of grain coming into England?

(*Chairman.*) We should like you to know, Mr. Whitehead, that it is not by our invitation that we have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Garratt.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I understand that the witness desires to explain to the Commissioners how it is that the trade in grain is leaving London and going elsewhere.

(*Chairman.*) We have already gone into that question very fully.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I understood from the last witness that Mr. Garratt could go into the question of the movement of trade from the Port of London.

(*Chairman.*) We would suggest that statements are useless to us without going into figures, since it is impossible for us to tell the exact character of the services performed, or the difficulties that have to be dealt with at the various ports. Without having the figures it seems to us to be useless to go into the services performed at London, Liverpool, or Hull with regard to particular charges.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I really think that counsel sometimes forget that we had a large amount of evidence as to the movement of trade, last year before counsel appeared. We had an enormous mass of evidence last year, all of which, of course, it is our duty to examine very carefully.

(*Chairman.*) Do you wish us to take this evidence, Mr. Whitehead?

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) The witness himself is not apparently desirous of giving evidence at all.

(*Witness.*) I beg your pardon. I am nominated by the London Corn Trade Association to give evidence, and there are one or two points which, as far as I can judge, the witnesses who have already given evidence have not clearly emphasised with regard to the question of charges in London. Some witnesses seem to say that this 1s. 9d. is never charged by the London Docks. I have paid it, and I have a bill here which I can put in.

10054. When you first came into the box I understood you to ask whether you should give evidence against the docks?—We have houses in Liverpool, Hull, and London.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) My Lord, unless Mr. Garratt desires personally to press any matters I do not think, on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce, I will press this evidence upon you. I think a good deal of it has been gone into on a former occasion.

10055. (*Chairman.*) If you wish to tell us anything as to the want of facilities in the port we shall be glad to hear you?—Some of the previous witnesses, I think, have given the Commission the impression that this 1s. 9d. is not charged by the Dock Company. We have paid it this year, ex "Loango."

(*The Witness handed in a Copy of a London and India Dock Company's Account, showing a charge of* 1s. 9d. *per ton for giving delivery of wheat from "Loango" to barge. See Appendix,* 26*th Day, No.* 2.)

We have actually paid it to the London Dock Company. It is not in all cases the ship company who work out the grain. I have myself paid 1s. 9d. to the dock com-

pany. The dock company seem to reiterate the statement that this 1s. 9d., which is an excessive charge, always goes to the ship company. With regard to facilities, I maintain that there is not in the whole of the London docks, even including the Surrey Commercial Docks and the Millwall Dock, a properly constructed elevator—that is, a large receiving warehouse where a ship carrying bulk grain can go alongside, and the whole of the grain be taken from the ship in bulk, taken into the warehouse, stored, and delivered without a lot of hand labour, and so on. There is no warehouse that can take the grain by its own machinery from the ship, take it into the warehouse, store it, and deliver it to rail or carts and back again, as the case might be. There are some pneumatic elevators, some floating elevators—I do not know how many—which put the elastic spout of the elevator into the grain and pump it out of the holds of the vessel through a floating structure, after which it goes through shoots and hoppers, and is weighed and delivered into barge. In the first place, a port like London for the delivery of grain should have, not three or four, but fifty or a hundred properly constructed elevators. It is not my province, but expert engineers, I suppose, know perfectly well—and you have probably heard it from engineers—that with a properly constructed floating elevator, instead of having to pay 1s. 9d., the whole thing could be done for 3d. or 4d. a ton, and the charge of 1s. 9d. is preposterous. If you choose to go into the question of what can be done, you will find what I say is correct. As merchants we bring grain into London, and this 1s. 9d. is really a tax on our trade. We used to send grain to Hull and other ports, such as Ipswich and Lynn, and now we do not send any, because absolutely the London charges kill the trade, and those ports are now fed from Hull. They do the business down the East Coast and down to Northampton and Birmingham. I remember that fifteen years ago there never was a pound of grain sent from Hull to the Birmingham district, and now there is a considerable trade done from Hull to Birmingham, because Hull charges in contrast with those of London are so light. I should suggest that the London port ought to have in every dock a properly constructed grain elevator. The total imports of grain into London are nearly ten millions of quarters per year, so it is a very important trade. I do not know that it is realised what an important trade the corn trade is. As a trade we pay very large sums for working our grain. If they had the elevators the London docks would be able to charge what other places charge.

10056. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you use the Surrey Commercial Dock?—Yes, we frequently have grain going into the Surrey Commercial Dock.

10057. You do not pay 1s. 9d. a ton there?—I think it is 1s. 9d. a ton in the Surrey Commercial Dock.

10058. Mr. Roffey told us that the American bill of lading was never used in the Surrey Commercial Dock?—Not for tramp steamers.

10059. But we are told that the other steamers do not go there?—They do not habitually go there, but they could go if they wished.

10060. Is most of the trade that you speak of done in liners?—The American trade is principally done in liners. When the freights get dear the liners cannot carry the whole of the goods. Then the outside tramp steamers come. They ship whole cargoes, and then they can choose their own dock to go to, and they choose to go to the Surrey Commercial Dock, I suppose, because they find it better worked than the other docks. *Mr. F. S Garratt.* 17 June 1901.

10061. Mr. Roffey told us he was completely satisfied with the grain facilities of the Surrey Commercial Dock?—I am very glad to hear that he is so happy. Of course I have the experience of Liverpool and Hull. He may be satisfied with London because he does not go to Liverpool or Hull. If he knew Liverpool and Hull, I think he would not be satisfied with what they do in the Surrey Commercial Dock.

10062. What you desire is in the way of facilities to have more appliances and machinery for discharging the grain either in the warehouses or into the barges?—Exactly. If the dock companies had proper machinery and did the work themselves, instead of charging 1s. 9d., they could do it for 9d. or 8d. or 7d., and still make a considerable profit, and these elevators would enable the dock companies to keep grain in store much cheaper than they do.

10063. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You say that the Atlantic transport steamers only bring part cargoes. Supposing there were grain elevators in every dock, do you think that those steamers would move from their berths and go and discharge their grain, and then come back again?—I think it is quite possible. The reason these big steamers do not move about is that they would lose time if they did, but if they could go under a properly constructed elevator, which would work out 100 tons an hour out of each hatchway, they would go, because the mere fact of going to the other side of the dock would enable the ship to be discharged so much more quickly.

10064. Of course with a full cargo it would pay, because they could naturally go to a grain elevator; but would a vessel with a part cargo use the elevator?—I should think it is very likely, because the American bulk grain is certainly more than half the cargo. Sometimes it is a large part of the cargo—that is in the liners.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

10065. Do you happen to know if the liners in Liverpool go alongside an elevator?—No, because the whole system in Liverpool is different. The liners in Liverpool go alongside the quay and put the grain on to the quay from the ship, and it is there delivered to the receivers. But there again, although they do that, they charge 1s. 1d. a ton, and the London charge is 1s. 9d. a ton for much less work. Steamers in the Waterloo grain warehouses do go under the elevators, and the grain is taken from the ship into the elevator. That is the case in the Birkenhead warehouses and the Waterloo warehouses used specially for whole cargoes of grain.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

10066. Have you ever discharged grain yourself?—Yes, in past years.

10067. I think you were in charge of the general traffic of a line of steamers?—Yes, before I was specially in the grain trade.

10068. Have you used grain elevators yourself?—No, because it is a good many years ago, and grain elevators had not come in then.

10069. Have you experienced any difficulty with regard to the matter I was putting to Mr. Roffey just now with reference to the absence of any independent authority with regard to weighing, and so on?—So far I have not.

Mr. JOHN KINGSFORD called and examined.

10070. (*Chairman.*) You have been nominated by the London Flour Trade Association to lay evidence before us with regard to that trade?—That is so. *Mr. J Kingsford*

10071. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—I am President of the London Flour Trade Association and a member of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce. I wish to submit a general statement on behalf of the London Flour Trade Association, as President of that body, and also a statement to show the disadvantages under which American flour is being placed in this port owing to the introduction in 1888 of this "London Clause."

10072. Did you prepare your own statement of evidence?—No. It was drawn up by one of the sub-committee of the Flour Trade Association, and afterwards it was approved by the sub-committee. I wrote the criticism on the London Clause, which was afterwards approved of.

10073. I understand you are in the flour trade?—Yes.

10074. What is the name of your firm?—William Kingsford and Son.

10075. Have you any specific facts to back up the statements which you make. They seem to be statements of opinion?—No, they are facts, and I am here to be cross-examined upon them. Take the case of the flour being landed at St. Katharine Dock.

10076. Have you any specific instances to support your statements?—We can get flour landed cheaper else-

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where. We have flour that is landed in St. Katharine Dock for which we pay certain prices, and we have flour landed at other places for which we pay less money. The flour was landed at St. Katharine Dock because it was during the watermen's strike, and it was the only place where we could get it landed.

10077. Do you complain of the charge?—Yes. We think that the Port of London demands and should have (1) the cheapest and most convenient dock accommodation; (2) the best management; (3) the newest appliances; (4) the greatest railway facilities; and we do not think that the present companies are at all likely to give us these. We think that the time has come when it is no longer possible for the interests of the port to be at the mercy of private companies.

10078. And like a good many of the other witnesses, I understand you suggest a dock trust?—Yes.

10079. I understand that your trade claims that American flour, one of the principal products of the people, should be admitted free to the Port of London?—Yes. I ought to say that we are one of the biggest trades of London, with an annual import of 367,000 tons.

10080. What do you wish to tell us about?—I am here to speak on this question of the "London Clause." It is a clause which has troubled us from the year 1888, and which we have tried to do away with.

10081. Will you tell us what you object to?—We object to the whole thing. We want free delivery according to the facts that we have given in evidence. Of course, flour is put on the quay just in the same way with the Australian steamers, but they do not charge us. We have free delivery there. The charge there is included in the freight, and that is what we want. In the working of the London Clause, importers pay 1s. 9d. per ton on all flour coming from Canada and the United States, for which they get no material advantage. By the terms of this clause importers' barges have to make application for the goods within 72 hours of report of vessel, and when for ship's convenience the vessel reports at Gravesend it is 12 to 24 hours before she is actually in dock. Although application has to be made and destination given within 72 hours of the vessel's report there is no guarantee as to when delivery of the goods will be made, and although barges have to be in continual attendance at the dock to take delivery when it suits the convenience of the dock company, it is seldom delivery can be obtained in less than ten days, and it often takes three weeks before delivery is completed. I have a table of the times actually occupied, which I would like to hand in, showing that the average time in which we obtain goods is about ten days.

(*The Witness handed in a Statement showing the time occupied in landing flour at an up-town warehouse from certain vessels discharging in the London Docks under the "London Clause." See Appendix, 26th Day. No.* 3.)

Canadian and American flour is by far the largest import of flour into London, and although other imported flour, such as Hungarian, French, Russian, Australian,, Californian, gets free overside delivery, Canadian and American flour is subjected to the London Clause, and besides which, whereas the charge for landing at an uptown warehouse for the purpose of distribution in Canadian and American is 4s. per ton, the charge on other imported flour is 3s. 6d. per ton, so that Canadian and American costs 2s. per ton more to land than other flour. With Australian flour these steamers come in; we obtain our flour without any clause whatever. The flour is put on the quay and paid for by the shipowner and included in the freight, and that is what we want on the American liners. Since the introduction of the London Clause in American bills of lading, the chief wharfingers and the London and India Docks Joint Committee have combined together whereby under a penalty of £500 they bind themselves to certain fixed charges for the landing, weighing, and delivery, and making merchantable of flour.

10082. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You gave us an average of 10 days as compared with 72 hours?—Yes.

10083. Will you give us the shortest and the longest times?—This is the time taken for flour after the date of the ship's report until it is brought up to the granary either at the docks or the uptown warehouses.

10084. No, I think the time should be up to the time that it is discharged into the barges. Nobody knows what happens to the barge after it leaves the dock?—You cannot very well get the date of that going back a long time.

10085. But in your statement you have given us an average of 10 days?—We could not go back to September and October and obtain those dates from the shipowners.

10086. Is the 10 days including delivery to the wharf itself?—Yes, you may take it that would mean a tide less.

10087. Not more, you say?—I do not think so.

10088. Then you compare 10 days minus a tide with 72 hours?—No, I do not. The statement is made up on the date the flour arrives at the wharf.

10089. You say that is less one tide?—Yes.

10090. Then your average is 10 days less one tide?—Yes.

10091. As compared with 72 hours?—No, nothing to do with 72 hours.

10092. 72 hours is the amount of latitude you have?—Yes. Then we obtain our goods in from 5 days (that is the lowest date) up to 19 days.

10093. Is that from the time the vessel reports?—Yes. She has three clear days. The shortest time in which we have obtained flour is 5 days, and the longest time is 19 days.

10094. Then this 72 hours is a latitude which is allowed you from the time of the report, is it not?—Yes.

10095. Therefore you have to take the 72 hours off the time if you complain of the whole time. You need not send your barge there for 72 hours after the report is made?—No, we need not, but, of course, occasionally the flour might be available within the 3 days.

10096. But no complaint would lie against you if your barge was there 72 hours after the time you were told?—No, not with the ship, but the buyer might complain. A man with a country barge cannot always wait the exact 3 days. If he is there he must go in as soon as he can; he could not wait a day lying about; he would go in at once.

10097. The American clause has been decided to be legal, has it not?—Yes, it is legal certainly, but it is in contravention of the Dock Charter and the Merchant Shipping Act.

10098. But still the judges have pronounced it to be legal?—Yes, because we accept the bill of lading; we contract ourselves out of our rights, but we cannot help that.

10099. If the American shippers on this side of the water accept the clause, then it becomes a legal document and it does not contravene any Act of Parliament; that is by the decision of the courts?—The shipowners compel us to contract ourselves out of our rights. We have certain rights but we are deprived of them.

10100. Do you wish the Commission to recommend that the law shall be altered?—We should be quite content if the American steamers charged this 1s. 9d. per ton, and made that part of the freight. We do not complain about putting the goods on the quay; let them do that. We do not want to delay their steamers; let them put the goods on the quay just like the Australian steamers do, and let that charge be part of the freight.

10101-2. I do not quite understand what you want the Commission to do. The law is perfectly plain according to your own statement that it is a legal arrangement between the ships on this side and the ships on the other side?—It is a legal arrangement, yes.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) There is no contravening an Act of Parliament or anything of that kind, because the Judges have decided that it is not in contravention.

10103. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Is there any report of the case to which you have referred?—Yes.

10104-5. Is there any report of it in the newspapers that you can refer me to?—In the newspapers of the day, of course.

10106. Have you any report of it?—No, I have not.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) It interests me to know on what grounds you contested the clause. As you have not the report I suppose we cannot tell.

See 10863. (*Mr. Harper.*) I think we shall be able to supply that. I do not think the question of the agreement between the Dock Company and the Atlantic Transport Company forms any part of that special case; it was on the bill of lading *per se* as a commercial case question.

(*Witness.*) We are utterly powerless in this case on this side. The steamship owners print the bill of lading; that bill of lading is circulated all over America; it is presented at different mills in different parts of America and it contains those clauses; a miller accepts it in America and it is sent over to us; it is a contract already made between the shipowner and the miller; we have no alternative but to accept it.

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Mr. Herbert Bisant Tasker called and examined.

Mr. H. B. Tasker.

10107. You are nominated by the London Flour Trade Association acting in conjunction with the London Chamber of Commerce to offer evidence before this Commission?—Yes.

10108. To what does your evidence principally refer?—My evidence refers principally to the system of charges on, and the method of working, flour imported into London as compared with Liverpool. As regards the comparative facilities of the two ports I would point out that the docks in Liverpool are so situated that a very large proportion of the flour, probably 70 per cent., is carted direct, from the quay to the baker's shop, thus saving 2s. 3d. per ton on the charges. Owing to the situation of the London Docks, this is impossible, and the full expense of 9s. 1½d. per ton (that is now raised to 9s. 4½d.) has to be paid, whereas in Liverpool this flour only incurs 5s. 4d. per ton for total charges paid by the shipowners and flour importers. Then, again, in Liverpool there is something done for the benefit of the flour importer, for the flour is there weighed, sorted, classified for damages, and delivery orders are acknowledged for specific parcels or portions of parcels. In London you pay the quay rate and get nothing for it, you simply have to wait, get your flour when they please to let you have it, just as it comes, and if you want it weighed, sorted, classified, etc., you have to pay the full landing, storage, and delivery rates. Another facility obtainable in Liverpool is that unless the quays are very crowded you can nearly always get your flour put on rent at a very moderate rate, which is often of immense advantage and saving to the importer. By the above we think we have clearly proved our case, that in London we pay a quay rate and get nothing for it compared with good work done in Liverpool, and that there is careless and slow handling here, against good, quick work and careful handling in Liverpool. I do not know whether I am out of order in saying that. I have been very interested in reading Mr. Scott's evidence, and notice he bitterly complains of how little we use dock warehouses for landing our flour. There is a case that has come to my knowledge a little while ago where I had some some flour landed at the Victoria Dock, and I wanted to export that flour by a steamer in the same dock, only at another part of the dock. I asked what they would charge to put it on board from one part of the dock to another; 3s. 4d. a ton was the charge. Had that flour been landed at any private wharf in London it could have been done for 1s. 9d. I asked them whether they could not lighter it for a very much smaller amount than 3s. 4d. They said: "No, we are not bargeowners; we cannot lighter it, that is not our work;" though, of course, they employ more barges than any company in the Port of London. Then I asked: "Supposing I wanted the flour stored with you in the Victoria Dock, put on board outgoing ship in another dock, what would your charges be?" They said 8s. 9d. per ton. So you can see that it is quite reasonable that we should not land more flour in the docks than we can help, because it directly prevents our exporting it. The difference in charge of 8s. 9d. to 1s. 9d.—7s. a ton—is a much more handsome profit than we get on our trade in the usual way.

See 11736-42.

10109. Will you tell me what you eventually did with that particular flour?—That actual flour I put on rail and sent it into the country afterwards, but I supplied my export customers with flour landed at a wharf, in order to save the difference between 1s. 9d. and 3s. 4d.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

10110. Can you give me the name of a particular jetty. Can you identify that transaction for me?—I cannot here; I have not my books. The information is in my books in the office.

10111. How long ago was it?—Within the last month or two. I know it is a fact now, and the consequence is, of course, I did not attempt the business.

10112. Can you give me any particulars of the ship and the dock. It was Victoria Dock, I understand?—It was Victoria Dock. The flour was warehoused in the warehouses in the Victoria Dock, in the dock company's hands.

10113. Standing in your name?—Yes.

10114. I only want to identify the transaction if possible?—Certainly. I shall be very pleased to give you full particulars from the office.

10115. Can you tell me the ship that it arrived by?—I cannot now. It is not the only transaction I have ever had in my life.

10116. That is the reason I want to get something definite?—If you ask me to do it I shall be pleased to send you the information. I can send anything, but I cannot answer the question here.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

10117. Have you ever had any difficulty with regard to the measuring out when the ship delivers flour or grain to barges?—Yes, generally two or three times a week.

10118. I do not know whether you were here when Mr. Roffey gave his evidence?—Mr. Roffey was a grain witness. I am speaking of flour.

10119. Have you the same difficulty with regard to flour that he was speaking of with regard to grain?—Yes.

10120. Would it be desirable that there should be some dependable authority to act between the shipowner and yourself as receiver?—I think it might be an advantage.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

10121. With regard to the facilities at Liverpool compared with those at London, do you get quicker delivery in Liverpool?—Yes, because in Liverpool you only have to apply for your goods after they are absolutely ready for delivery.

10122. And is that an advantage?—Certainly. Here you have to apply for them within 72 hours after the ship reports, but you may not get them for a fortnight.

10123. With regard to the handling of the flour, is there any difference in the facility in that respect as between Liverpool and London?—Yes, decidedly. In London we dare not import flour in cotton bags, because the handling it receives is so rough that the bags are not sufficiently strong, but in Liverpool we import all our flour in cotton bags, and flour can even be landed in Liverpool, carted, we will say, to an Irish steamer, sent over to Ireland, then transported by railway into the heart of Ireland, and it will get there in better condition than flour in jute bags will come up from the Victoria Dock to a London wharf.

10124. With regard to the quay accommodation in London as affecting the flour trade, is it conveniently arranged?—We get no advantage of quay accommodation; we get nothing; it is not the sightest use to us; it makes no difference to us whether the flour goes on the quay or not, because it is not sorted for marks and classified for damage, and the bags are not weighed. There is nothing done for us on the quay. The only thing is, we, as consignees of the flour, have to pay 1s. 9d. a ton in order that the steamship owner should put it on to the quay, which he ought in the ordinary way to do at his own cost.

10125. The flour is always discharged comparatively low down on the river?—Yes.

10126. It has to be taken to the centre of distribution, which is higher up?—Yes.

10127. Therefore it always has to proceed either by barge or by cart?—Yes.

10128. It has to bear the expense involved in that cartage or barging, and that makes the question of facilities all the more important to the flour trade?—That is so.

Mr. JOHN INNES ROGERS recalled and further examined.

Mr. J. I. Rogers.

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10129. (*Chairman.*) I understand that you now come before us to present the scheme for a trust as adopted by the London Chamber of Commerce at a meeting held on the 9th of May last?—Yes.

10130. Will you be good enough to give us the scheme?—I ought to say, first, that we present this with extreme diffidence, and really in reply to the request of the Commission made some months back that we should prepare a scheme. See 1281.

10131. I do not think you are quite accurate as a matter of fact. We never did ask for a scheme. We said we could not listen to anything unless you formulated your ideas?—I understood that we had to draw up a scheme.

10132. At all events, you have done so?—Yes, and we were very anxious after we had drawn it up to consult the various public bodies on the subject in order to work in consonance with them, but for various reasons they were unable or declined to consult with us. We then called a large meeting of traders, representing a large number of trades, and they made a few alterations in the scheme, but practically it was unaltered. Our idea is to have a scheme for the waterways only, and to exclude warehousing.

10133. Will you please give us the scheme?—Yes. *Formation of the Trust:*—(1.) A London Harbour Trust (hereinafter called the Trust) to be formed, to whom shall be given the sole control of the waters of the Thames from Richmond Lock to Yantlet Creek, and of the water area of the docks, and of the banks, foreshores, piers, tow-paths, and adjacent property, and also of the waters and banks of the Lea and other streams, so far as may be desirable. *Object of the Trust:*—(2.) The objects of the Trust are to acquire the control of the whole of the waters of the port, and having done so, to control them and the traffic thereon so as to promote the trade and commerce of the port for the benefit of, and in the interests of the whole of the inhabitants of London, and not of any section thereof. In particular, the object of the Trust is to render the waters of the port accessible, so far as is reasonably practicable to the vessels of all sizes of all nations, and to promote their entry, unloading, reloading, and sailing to the best of their ability, levying only such rates, tolls, and charges as may be absolutely necessary for such purposes, or for extensions of the works of the Trust, and using all surplus revenue (left after paying the expenses of administration, interest on borrowed capital and amortization thereof), in the reduction of such rates, charges, and tolls, with the aim of rendering and keeping the Port of London as the chief mercantile mart of the world as well as of the Kingdom. *Powers of the Trust:*—(3.) The Trust shall have transferred to it the whole of the powers, duties, rights, privileges, charges, rates, and tolls now exercised or enjoyed between the said limits by:—(a.) The Thames Conservancy Board. (b.) The Watermen and Lightermen's Company. (c.) The London and India, Millwall and Surrey Commercial Dock Companies and any other docks. (d.) The Commissioners of Canvey Island. (4.) The Trust to be able to impose and collect rates, and to do any matter or thing which may be done or vested in the authorities or undertakings taken over. (5.) The Trust to have the power transferred to it of regulating pilots, of fixing pilotage rates, and to take over any property, real or personal now held in Trust and for pilotage purposes in the port. (6.) The Trust to have powers to dredge channels and shoals beyond Yantlet Creek where necessary. (7.) Above Richmond Lock the authorities now existing to continue in charge, with all their powers and rights, in the same way as is done by the Mersey Trust above the Port of Liverpool. (8.) In taking over the powers of the various bodies named, the Trust is to safeguard the interests, so far as may be, of the servants of the corporations they supersede. *Constitution of Trust:*—(9) The Trust to be constituted as follows:—Ex-officio members: Corporation—six representatives. London County Council—six representatives. One representative of the Admiralty and one of the War Office. The Chancellor of the Exchequer. One representative of the Board of Trade. The Chairman and Secretary of H.M. Customs. Two representatives of the Thames Conservancy. Two representatives of the Trinity House. Two representatives of the London Chamber of Commerce. Twenty-five elected members, representing the shipowners, sailing barge and tug owners and lightermen, short sea traders, Lloyds, public and private wharfingers, and merchants and manufacturers landing goods in the port. The President and Vice-President to be elected by the Trust. These representatives to form the Board of the Trust. The elected members to be chosen in the manner laid down in Schedule A. (to be hereinafter drafted). *New Docks:*—(10.) On and after the formation of the Trust, no new dock or docks is or are to be formed within the limits of the port save by the Trust itself and for its benefit. *Transfer of Docks to Trust:*—(11.) On and after the formation of the Trust by Act of Parliament, the whole of the property, rights, and privileges of the London and India Dock Company, the Millwall Dock Company, the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, and any other dock company within the limits of the port, shall pass to and be vested in the Trust, which shall thereupon and thereafter enjoy the same, and in return assume and in due time pay such liabilities as may be incurred from that date on account of such docks. (12.) The Trust to have power to take over such property on or near the river, as it may think desirable to acquire, the power to be compulsory, subject to due compensation to owners. (13.) Money due, to or from various authorities and undertakings, to be taken over by the Trust at the time of transfer, and all books, papers, and documents relating to the property and rights of the authorities or undertakings to be handed over to the Trust. *Revenue of the Trust:*—(14.) The revenues of the Trust to be those now levied with power to add to, diminish, vary, or extinguish such charges, rates or tolls as are or may be levied by: (*a*) The Conservators of the Thames. (*b*) The Watermen and Lightermen's Company. (*c*) The dock companies or others whose interests have been or may be acquired. (15.) The Trust to be empowered also to make such charges as may be reasonably levied on any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever that may be landed in or on any public or private wharf, warehouse, quay, foreshore, shore, banks, road or path within the jurisdiction of the Trust, from any ship, vessel, lighter barge, tug, boat, raft, or floating receptacle. *Power to Public Bodies to Aid Financially:*—(16.) Should such rates, charges, or tolls as are hereinabove enumerated be insufficient for the maintenance or development of the port, the London County Council, and /or the Corporation, on the request of the Trust, may, if it so please, levy a rate of not more than in the pound sterling on the property liable to rates within the jurisdiction of the Council, such to be solely used:—(*a*) In deepening, dredging, and keeping in order the channels, shoals, docks, basins, and water area of the port and its approaches. (*b*) As security for a loan or loans to be guaranteed or raised by the Corporation of the City, the London County Council, or by the Trust, with its or their authority for the purposes named in the preceding paragraph, such loan or loans to be for a period for each of not more than years, interest to be duly paid thereon at dates to be fixed; and if interest be not duly paid, the Corporation or the London County Council may enter upon, seize, and become possessed of and enjoy the whole of the property, rights, powers, privileges, tolls, charges, rates, rents, or fees of the Trust, and administer the Trust thereafter in the interests of the inhabitants of London. Provided nevertheless that, if it be shown to the satisfaction of the Corporation or the County Council, that any or certain works are essential to the development or maintenance of the port, and that the rates, charges, tolls, fees, or rents levied, or which may be levied by the Trust, are insufficient for the due execution of such works, or would only be sufficient at too great a cost for the trade of the port for the time being to bear, then the Council may in its absolute and unfettered discretion make a grant to the Trust of such sum or sums as may be necessary for such works, either by way of a free gift or a loan, seeing only that the Trust use such grant or grants for such works and for no other purposes. *Payment for the Docks:*—(17.) The Trust shall be empowered on the security of the property acquired, and of the rates, charges, tolls, rents, or fees to be levied by them in the port, to borrow such sum of money at such rate of interest as may appear reasonable, interest to be guaranteed by the Corporation and /or the London County Council in consideration of their representation on the Trust, and out of the proceeds of such loan or

See 10308. See 10310. See 10272; 10311. See 10334. See 10298

loans to pay the dock companies for the value of their property as hereinafter provided. (18.) The Trust shall take account of the value of the property of the
See 10270. dock companies, and shall pay therefor (either in bonds or cash) such a price as shall appear reasonable having regard to the condition of the property, but not more than the market value of the debenture mortgage, or debts, of the companies and of their preference or ordinary shares on the . The value to be attached to the bonds will be determined and enhanced by the greater liability of a public trust to fulfil its obligations, as compared with the debts of the dock companies. Disputes as to the value of the property, or as to the sum to be paid for it, to be settled by arbitration as provided in Schedule B. (This Schedule we have not yet drawn up.) *Administration of the docks by the Trust:*—(19.) On becoming seized of the properties of the dock companies or of any of them, the Trust shall, as soon as may be, proceed to sell or to let upon rent to the best advantage, all water basins, warehouses, sheds, cranes, boats, lighters, land, or other property that may not be consistent with its duties as a Trust for the water area of the port, and not for the purpose of warehousing goods for hire, such warehousing beyond a period of clear days after landing being expressly forbidden to be undertaken by the Trust. The Trust, as soon as may be, shall retain in its possession or control only the water area of the docks and port and the quays, locks, bridges, and appliances that may be requisite for the accommodation of vessels within the docks, and the landing therefrom of goods on to quays, elevators, stages, barges, or craft, having regard to the following conditions:—(*a*) The Trust may retain any land likely to be wanted for extensions of the docks area, and all roads, bridges, and other appliances or adjuncts that may be necessary for convenient access to the docks, or for the construction or enlargement of railway lines within the dock areas. (*b*) The Trust may also keep, purchase, hire, or erect such sheds, warehouses, or elevators of one or more storeys upon or adjacent to the docks, quays or stages, such sheds and warehouses to be used only for landing, and for weighing, taring, and sampling of such goods by persons licensed by the Trust, and acting under their supervision under cover at such rates or tolls as may be fixed by the Trust, so long as the rates for landing shall not be less than the tolls charged by the Trust when goods are landed elsewhere, and so long as such goods are removed by the owners from such premises within a space of days from the date of landing and if not so removed, then the Trust shall be bound to place them at the risk and cost of the owner at the nearest or other suitable public warehouse receiving goods on rent or hire. (*c*) If any warehouse or warehouses taken over from the docks,
See 10272. abuts or abut on the water side of a dock, creek, or river, with no intervening quay between such warehouse and the water, the Trust shall in no case use such warehouse or warehouses for the purpose of storing goods, unless it be reasonably suited for the landing, and weighing, and sampling of goods as hereinabove provided, but shall sell or let such warehouse or warehouses so abutting upon the water, and be empowered to charge additional tolls for the direct discharge of goods into the warehouse, so that such property shall not unduly compete with the public and private wharfingers of the port. (*d*) The Trust may place or erect quays or stages between such abutting warehouses, or other warehouses or property and the water under its control. *Legal:*—(20.) The revised laws as to the Trust and the port to be embodied in one consolidated Act, and based as far as may be applicable or desirable on 21 and 22 Vict. Ch. 92, The Mersey Dock Consolidation Act, 1858, with power to the Trust to confirm, issue, vary, or cancel bye-laws, etc. Until new bye-laws are issued, those in force under the power of any previously existing body to remain in force. The Trust, in particular, to have power to issue new bye-laws for the registration of lightermen, barges, etc., in place of those of the Watermen's Company, and also to be given all requisite powers over and under, and in the docks to be acquired. General powers to various authorities under the Canal Boats Act, 1877 to 1884, the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, and the Public Health Act, to remain as they are, but so far as may be, their administration within the port to be handed over to the Trust. The Thames Conservancy Act, 1894 (57 and 58 Vict. Ch. 187), the Thames Watermen and Lightermen's Acts, 1859 (22 and 23 Vict. Ch. 133) and 1893 (56 and 57 Vict. Ch. 81), and the various bye-laws and rules issued thereunder, to be used as the basis of the powers of the Trust, but to be repealed; new Acts being passed to renew and confirm what may be left of the Conservators' and Watermen's Company's powers.

10134. Now have you any remarks to make upon that scheme?—Yes. I am the chairman of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce, and submit the following evidence with reference to the scheme. In accordance with the suggestion made by the chairman
See 1281. of the Commission on the 4th day's sitting, that the London Chamber of Commerce should submit details of their suggestion that a public body should be formed to administer the Port of London, the Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee appointed a sub-committee to draft such scheme. This sub-committee was appointed, and consisted of:—Mr. Charles Charleton, director of the Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers (1900) Limited, Chairman of the Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee of the London Chamber of Commerce; Mr. John Innes Rogers, chairman of Joseph Travers and Sons, Limited, Chairman of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce; Mr. George Roffey, of the firm of George Roffey and Sons, vice-chairman of the London Corn Exchange; Captain Anthony Standidge Thomson, C.B., one of the Elder Brethren of Trinity House, Member of the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Edward Besley, managing director of Chamberlain's Wharf, Limited, member of the Wharfowners', Warehouse Keepers' and Granary Keepers' Association; Mr. Henry Coke, late general manager of David Sassoon and Company, late president of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, and late member of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and of the Bombay Port Trust. The sub-committee as above held meetings on November 29th, December 5th and 11th, and submitted their scheme to the Railway and Dock Rates and Charges Committee, who recommended it to the Council of the Chamber at a special sitting held on the 9th January, 1901, when the scheme as presented by the sub-committee was adopted "for purposes of conference only." The Council of the Chamber were of the opinion that it was desirable that a united scheme from the City Corporation, the London County Council, and the Chamber of Commerce should be presented to the Commissioners. The conference was therefore delayed until the very last moment in the hope that the co-operation of the City Corporation might be obtained. The London County Council were also requested to join the conference, but declined to do so on the ground that they had decided upon their course of action prior to receiving the invitation.

10135. Will you tell us the answer that you received from the City Corporation?—They practically had adopted their own scheme. We had a number of verbal communications with the officials of the Corporation, and we found they preferred to go on by themselves. Therefore we thought it was useless proceeding further. The scheme was sent to various trade associations and trade sections of the Chamber, with a request that it might receive the consideration of those bodies, and that a delegate might be appointed to attend a conference to be subsequently held to either approve the scheme or to suggest amendments thereto on behalf of those bodies. The bodies represented were:—The London Shipping and Forwarding Agents' Conference; The Foreign Carriers' Conference; London Chemical Manure Manufacturers' Association; London Flour Millers' Association; London Corn Trade Association; London Flour Trade Association; Barge Owners' Protection Society; Sailing Barge Owners' Protection Association; Grain Trade Mutual Protection Association; Committee of Lloyd's; Metropolitan Grocers', Provision Dealers', and Oilmen's Association; Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom; London Wholesale Sugar Dealers' Association; Wine and Spirit Association; Indian Tea Association; Preserved Food Trade Section (Chamber of Commerce); United Planters' Association of Southern India; Western Australian Section (Chamber of Commerce); Provision Trade Section (Chamber of Commerce); Leather Trade Section; Trade Marks Section; Toy and Fancy Goods Trade Section; Colonial Wool Merchants' Association; Textile Trades Section (Chamber of Commerce). The Wood Pulp Association expressed their approval

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of. the scheme, but did not attend the Conference. Certain amendments were proposed by delegates at this Conference, some of which were adopted by a majority, for recommendation to the Council, and some were not accepted by the majority at the Conference. These amendments were four in all; three had reference to Clause 9 (the constitution of the Trust), and two referred to Clause 19 (administration of the docks by the Trust). These amendments will be detailed in their respective places. The chief difference of opinion disclosed was as to whether the proposed Trust should take up the warehousing of goods, more or less in competition with the existing wharfingers. The conference by a majority decided against this idea, in consonance with the opinion of the Chamber. The Chamber also asked for independent suggestions from Mr. P. W. Meik, M.Inst. C.E., C.M.G., and Mr. Francis Brooke Girdlestone, Manager of the Bristol Docks. I now hand in the two letters they wrote in reply:—

(*The Witness handed in Copy of a Letter from Mr. P. W. Meik, M. Inst. C.E., C.M.G., respecting the scheme of the Londor Chamber of Commerce for the formation of a London Dock and Harbour Trust. See Appendix, 26th Day, No.* 4.)

(*The Witness also handed in Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. B. Girdlestone, Secretary and General Manager of the Dock Estate of the Corporation of the City of Bristol respecting the scheme of the London Chamber of Commerce for the formation of a London Dock and Harbour Trust. See Appendix, 26th Day, No.* 5.)

The London Chamber of Commerce now beg to submit to the Commission the result of these lengthy labours and discussions. They do so with considerable diffidence, and solely in deference to the request of the Commission. Your Lordship tells me it was not at the request of the Commission, but we understood it was, or we should not have gone into all this work. The subject bristles with difficulties and the Chamber simply hand in their scheme as a draft for consideration. Their guiding principle has been, while respecting the existing position and proceeding on the lines of least resistance, to draw up a working plan for a public Trust which shall absorb the various authorities and shall manage the waters of the port, and the waters only, for the good of London as a whole. We feel acutely that London has for a long time past been falling behind the requirements of modern commerce, and that in the interest of its 6½ millions of people, in the interest of the nation, and even of the Empire, a vigorous effort must be made to bring this great and ancient port up to the level of the age. With this object in view, we have not approached the subject in a huckstering spirit with a view to reducing the charges upon our businesses. On the contrary, it is our belief that no adequate reform can be brought about, without at first, at any rate, increasing the burdens upon trade; but we are willing to submit to this so long as the money falls into the hands of a public body working for the interests of all, and not into the hands of private bodies quite properly working in the interests of their shareholders. We greatly regret that, owing to circumstances, our action takes the apparent form of an attack on the dock companies of the port. As a matter of fact, we see their difficulties very clearly, and sincerely sympathise with their position. We should have much preferred that the whole question should have been discussed on general grounds, but owing to the dock bills this has been impossible. At the same time, we feel that, while the dock companies should be treated not only fairly, but with the utmost consideration, the time has come when the control of the docks of the port should be taken out of private hands, and that the navigable waters of the Thames should be governed as a whole in the public interest. The difficulty is to create such a trust with fairness to all the parties. We have to deal with:—(1.) Ships discharging in the river, of a tonnage of some 16,000,000 tons a year, These pay no dues to the port except the entirely inadequate Conservancy charge. (2.) Ships of some 6,000,000 tons a year discharging in the various docks. These pay dock dues of 1s. per ton, in addition to the Conservancy charge. (3.) Goods landed on the docks —some 2,000,000 tons a year out of the 6,000,000 tons brought into them, the remainder being removed by lighters which pay no charges or dues, but the working of which entails considerable expense on the docks. (4.) Goods either landed at public or private wharves in the first instance or lightered to them from the docks. These goods pay nothing towards the expenses of the port. The joint value of the public wharves of London is believed to exceed that of the docks, judging from the rating books. (5.) Of the value of private waterside premises no estimate can be formed, but as the separate properties exceed 300 in number, their aggregate value must be enormous, especially as some of the waterside factories or warehouses are of immense extent. (6.) The lightermen's and bargeowners' interest. We have thus at least six distinct and more or less conflicting interests to deal with, and the initial difficulty faces us that for the smaller ships discharging in the stream (which appear to give us some 70 per cent. of our supplies) London is almost a free port—that is, we only pay ½d. or ¾d. per ton on the ships in the Conservancy charge, and the goods pay nothing at all. It is believed that this can be altered without driving trade elsewhere by a moderate increase in the rates on ships and by a port landing charge on goods, which shall extend to all goods whatsoever landed in the port. The short sea traders naturally would object strongly to both propositions, but without them we believe that an adequate revenue cannot be raised. The only alternative if the river is to be brought up to date is a rate on all property in London. We should only contemplate this if it were proved that the cost of bringing up London to the level of the age would be so great that if placed on ships and goods it would drive trade away. In considering this question also it must be borne in mind that charges must not be so raised here as to encourage imports at Southampton and other railway ports. With reference to long distance and large vessels the dock dues here are 4d. per ton less than in Liverpool, but shipowners state that the latter is nevertheless the better port for them, in consequence of the facility of discharge. If we can obtain the latter advantage, dock ship dues here might be raised. There can be no doubt that much of the delay and difficulty in the Port of London is due to the public and private warehouses, where goods are stored, covering miles of space on both sides of the river. This necessitates lightering, of some of the results of which the dock companies quite naturally complain, though their proposed remedy is absolutely unjust and impracticable in the opinion of the Chamber. Parliament a century ago granted a compensation of one million sterling for the partial creation of a dock monopoly for 21 years to the public wharfingers of London then existing. Their interests now are probably enormously greater in the aggregate than in 1800, and our immense private waterside interest has probably entirely come into being since then. Free lighterage, in the opinion of the Chamber, is thus absolutely essential to the port. In our scheme for a trust we have tried to deal fairly with all the conflicting interests in the port, and if we have proposed any thing that is unjust to anyone, it has been contrary to our intention. In our proposals we have dealt only with the waterways of the river. We believe that it is absolutely impossible for a trust to buy up the whole of the public and private warehouses where goods are landed, at any price that would not be prohibitive, in addition to the cost of the docks and other improvements necessary in the port. If the whole of the warehouses are not bought up, we should leave the trust with the advantage of the public credit, competing with private individuals. In addition to this, we believe that warehousing has not only decreased, but that it is likely to decrease in an increasing proportion, owing to the changes going on in the trade, which render it essential to reduce charges, and to keep as light stocks as possible. The trust might thus spend tens of millions on bricks and mortar, which might rapidly depreciate in value. A trust for the whole waters and waterside interests of London would also necessitate the employment of tens of thousands of labourers, an undesirable position for a public body. For all these reasons we believe that the only port trust practicable in London is a trust to control the waterways. As regards the constitution of the trust we believe it should be very largely municipal, so that there should be efficient control in the general interest. In the peculiar position of London as a great military, naval, and fiscal port, several Government departments should also be represented on the trust, as proposed in our scheme. The whole of the detail work ought, however, in our opinion, to be in the hands of practical representatives of the traders and shipowners interested in the port. As to the finances, I give the following evidence with some diffidence, as we have felt ourselves in the difficulty of not really having sufficient data. The Chamber of Commerce have not sufficient data to make more than a rough sketch of how

See 10250.

the financial portion of their scheme would work out. If the power be given to the trust to levy port dues on ships, and on all the goods landed in London, it is obvious that any revenue required can be raised. The sole thing to guard against is to see that the port dues to be imposed do not exceed those of other competing ports. If the necessary money cannot be raised without making London relatively dear, the importance of bringing our port up to the front rank is so great from the civic, national, and Imperial points of view, that in the last resort, a rate in aid, levied on all property in London, would, in our opinion, be justified. We do not, however, believe that any step of the kind would be in any way necessary. The market value of the various stocks and shares of the dock companies of London in round figures is £17,000,000 to £18,000,000.

10136. Does that include the Surrey Commercial Docks and the Millwall Docks?—Yes.

10137. And the Poplar Docks?—I took the whole of the dock stocks; I do not recollect the individual names.

10138. That includes all the companies you propose to take over?—Yes. If the undertakings were bought at that price the land and warehouses would be sold under our scheme. As the land area is roughly half of the whole area of the docks its value may be taken for our purposes at £9,000,000. Then we have to consider the unknown amount required to adequately deepen the river and to bring the docks, quays, and appliances up to date. The cost of a 30ft. channel up to the Albert Docks has, we believe, been put by the County Council Engineer at £2,000,000, and to this we add £4,000,000 for the cost of dock improvements, a figure probably unnecessarily high. This would give the following as the capital required by the trust:—Capital—Cost of water area and quays of docks, £9,000,000; cost of deepening river, £2,000,000; cost of modernising docks, £4,000,000; total estimated capital, £15,000,000. We assume that this money would be borrowed at 3 per cent. under a public guarantee or perhaps by a loan from the municipal authority raised at 2¾ per cent., and lent at 3 per cent., so as to allow for redemption.

10139. Where do those figures come from; who is responsible, for instance, for the suggestion that a municipal authority could borrow at 2¾ per cent.?—That is in our scheme. We have discussed it a great deal; I do not know that we have taken a formal vote upon the point. This was put in in a very diffident way; we have not gone into each of these points specifically, but that is the general idea underlying it. A capital of £15,000,000 at 3 per cent would mean a yearly charge of £450,000. We took out the figures as to the cost of managing ships in Liverpool, from the Liverpool Dock returns as nearly as we could. We then added 2d. a ton, because they have not in Liverpool to deal with lighters. The yearly charge of £450,000 might be raised as follows:—

Estimated Revenue.	
Dock dues on 6,100,000 tons of shipping at an average of 1s. per ton, with a maximum of 1s. 4d - - - - - -	£305,000
Port dues on 22,000,000 tons of shipping in and out at an average rate of 2d. per ton, with a maximum of 4d. - - -	185,000
Balance required for income to be made up by a charge on all goods arriving in the Port of London. For the purpose of rough calculation I have assumed that the shipping tonnage represents the goods tonnage 14,500,000 tons at an average of 5d. per ton - - - - - - - - - -	302,000
Total gross income of the trust - - -	£792,000
Expenses of working taken at 1s. per ton, the Liverpool cost being apparently 10d. per ton without the lighters we have to deal with here - - - - - - -	305,000
Income of trust - - - - - - -	£487,000

See 10277.

If exports were charged at an average of 2d. per ton for dues the extra income would be £70,000. We do not propose to charge exports. The receipts given above omit a number of important items for rent, graving docks and other charges made by the docks on ships which the trust would continue. It also omits a number of minor charges made by the Thames Conservancy. In fact, in the absence of details as to the actual gross and nett revenue from ships in our docks, the only object of our rough outline sketch is to show that there are ample sources of revenue for the proposed trust, the only difficulty being to adjust them so as not to interfere with trade. A small increase in charges such as is proposed would be compensated to traders as a whole by the universal creation of quay rates in London which would follow on our scheme. We propose, it will be noted, no port dues whatever on exports. The gross extra charge on London goods and ships named above would amount to £475,000 a year, or less the present conservancy rates, say, £415,000 a year. It is quite likely that quay rates at the docks would save merchants even half of this sum, but assuming the gross extra charge to nett £300,000 a year, after deducting this saving, the alternative would be a rate on London property of 2d. in the £, in which case no extra charge need be imposed on ships or goods.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

Now I will deal with the clauses of the scheme in detail. Class 1.—Yantlet Creek is suggested as the seaward limit as it was not thought advisable to encroach on the waters under Admiralty jurisdiction. Clause 6, however, proposes to give powers to the Trust to dredge seaward channels and to deal with shoals. There appears at present to be no authority dealing with these points. Clause 2.—I have no special remarks to make on the definition of the object of the Trust which speaks for itself. Clause 3.—Here the original scheme proposed to take over the lighting and buoying powers of the Trinity House, but on consideration it was thought better to leave these matters under the present management. Thames buoying and lighting are paid for out of the general revenue of the Trinity House levied on all shipping, and while this remains unaltered it would not be economical for the Trust to undertake the work out of specially raised funds. Clause 4.—It will be seen later that it is not proposed to include warehousing among the undertakings of the new authority. Clause 5.—It should be recorded that Captain A. S. Thomson, C.B., of the Trinity House, one of the members of the sub-Committee responsible for the scheme, differed from his colleagues with regard to this Clause. The majority of the sub-Committee and the Council of the Chamber both approved of the Clause as it stands. Clause 9.—Constitution of Trust.—I will first of all detail the amendments suggested by delegates to the conference in connection with this Clause. In the original draft the President and Vice-President were among the ex-officio members and were: the Lord Mayor for the time being, and the Chairman of the London County Council. An amendment to the effect that the President and Vice-President should be elected by the Board of Trust was adopted by a majority of delegates. In the original draft scheme no representation was given to the lighter, barge, and tugowners. A motion to the effect that these bodies should have representation among the elected members was carried. A motion to the effect that the new Borough Councils for riverine boroughs should have representation was not seconded. Representation of the County Council and the Corporation.—This representation was accorded with the view of a public guarantee of the loan, and possibly of a rate.

10140. What do you mean by a "public guarantee." Do you mean an imperial guarantee?—No, I mean a municipal guarantee.

10141. Perhaps you would be kind enough to tell us what you do mean?—That the Corporation and/or the County Council should guarantee it. In other official cases we think an ex-officio representation of two or three at the most will suffice, as the root idea of the constitution of the new authority should be that those paying port dues or having intimate business relationships with the port (such as the wharfingers and lightermen) should have the main representation, and that the working Committees (with the exception perhaps of the Finance Committee) should be entirely taken from the elected members. Apart from the financial aspect the City Corporation is entitled to representation, from its old historical connection with the management of the port; from its position on the existing Thames Conservancy, and by reason of its connection with the port as the sanitary and market authority. We consider that the London County Council are also entitled to representation, and if either taxation of the ratepayers of London or a guarantee of

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the Trust's loan is necessary to a strong representation on the Trust. The inclusion of both these bodies would strengthen its constitution, for while the detail work of the Trust should be in the hands of the elected members we feel that it should not altogether be conducted in trade interests, without control on the part of the general public as represented by the inhabitants of London. The imperial aspect of London should also be represented, as London is the centre of the Empire, and the Thames includes our chief arsenal and is a great naval and military centre. As the chief port of Customs' revenue and for British commerce, the Board of Customs, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Board of Trade should have a voice on the Trust. There was considerable difference of opinion in the Chamber as to whether the elected representatives who would have an immense amount of work to do, particularly at first, should or should not be paid. The Commissioners are of course aware that in Liverpool the elected representatives are not paid, and the system has worked admirably. The very best men are placed upon the Trust, and are proud to serve their fellow-citizens without reward. London is less concentrated than Liverpool; there is less public municipal feeling among the commercial community, and there might be a danger of unpaid representatives taking up the work for the promotion of their own special interests. The question of payment is a difficult one, and the general feeling was that the Chamber should not make a recommendation to the Commission upon this point. Clauses 14 and 15.—This is not a suggestion that the new authority should be entitled to the property of the Watermen's Company. It is hoped that the company will be done away with; but it will probably need its revenue for pensioning its members and officials, and compensating its freemen. Clause 16.—We think that the revenue of the Trust, if given powers to impose dues on all goods landed in the port, will be ample for all requirements. There is not, in our opinion, the slightest fear that the guarantors would have to take over the administration. We do not think that the proposal that the Exchequer should guarantee the loan is practicable, as such strong opposition would be met with. We think that the London County Council should be asked to guarantee the loan, solely in order to raise the money cheaply. So far from thinking that the security of the rates would tend to extravagance on the part of the new authority, we think that that body, composed, as it would be, of those merchants and shipowners whose interest it is to appropriate the dues they pay to the proper purposes of improving and preserving the harbour and accommodating shipping, who know that all surplus moneys will be devoted to reducing or abolishing the dues in proportion as they can be surrendered, would use the utmost care over expenditure. Clause 18.—The market value of the shares and stocks of the companies should be the basis for the payment. They are trading companies, and cannot fairly claim a right to the enhanced value of their property, consequent upon the increase in the population. It was discussed several times among us, and we thought that an average value of the shares might be taken, say, over a period of three years, or something of that sort. What we have put in is the market value, leaving the date to be fixed.

See 10261

10142. Are you aware whether there is any Parliamentary precedent for buying up undertakings of this kind at a Stock Exchange market value?—I am not aware. We wish the dock companies to be treated handsomely and liberally, and if there is no precedent without a percentage added to it we should bow to that, of course. Then with regard to the last clause, No. 19, Mr. Coke was to be here to explain, but, owing to the evidence having come on earlier than we expected, he is not here. He was a member of the Mersey Dock Trust for several years. If your Lordship wishes, I can give the bulk of his evidence, which I can support.

10143. Has it been carried as part of your scheme?—Yes.

10144. Do you wish to make any remarks of your own upon it?—I only wish to give the reasons that influenced the Chamber in deciding that warehousing should not form part of the general business of the new authority. First, they consider that under the circumstances of the Port of London such authority should not interfere or compete with the public wharfingers.

10145. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What about private wharves?—Public or private it would be; but discretion should be given to the new authority to retain such warehouses adjacent to the docks as may be necessary for the purposes of the trust. Secondly, they do not believe that the new authority would be able to make a general warehousing business profitable. I am aware that the present dock authorities hold a contrary opinion, but I would point out that in order to make any definite statement as to whether any particular branch of their business is or is not carried on at a profit, the accounts of those branches should be kept separate and distinct, and that only the difference between the receipts and expenditure should be carried to the general accounts. To fully illustrate the reasons for my belief that warehousing would be of no advantage to the new authority, I would allude to the system in force at Liverpool, where the warehouse accounts are kept distinct from the general account. The profit or loss on each warehouse is shown and the net balance is carried to the general account. This net balance, I believe, does not cover the interest on capital expended on the warehouses, notwithstanding that the charges in the board's warehouses are generally higher than those of outside warehouse-keepers. If he had been here Mr. Coke would have enlarged on that point, because he was a member of the trust for some years. Powers should be given to the new authority to levy dues on goods discharging in the river, inasmuch as such goods get the advantage of all improvements of the port, the amount and method of collecting being left to the authority.

10146. What is the basis of the opinion that the market value of the shares should be the basis of the purchase?—We discussed it, and we thought it was fair that the market value prior to your report or any scheme being formulated should be the basis, in order to prevent speculation in shares after the method was known.

10147. Is not the general basis of the purchase of public undertakings of this nature, and tramways, water companies, and so forth, a certain number of years' purchase applied to net maintainable revenue?—I believe it is very frequently so.

10148. Had you anything special in your mind which induced you to adopt this in contradistinction from that usual basis?—We thought that the market value of the shares was obviously their value at the moment, and that therefore it would be fair to the dock companies to adopt that.

10149. Was it before you that the usual basis was the basis that I have indicated to you?—No, it was not.

10150. It was not discussed by you?—It was not discussed.

10151. I see you have addressed yourself—and speaking for myself I am extremely obliged to you for having done it—to what a good many people think is the real core of the question, that is, whether a public trust can be formed without injustice to the private and public wharfingers?—Yes, that has been my main preoccupation.

10152. First upon that question you have had, I suppose, to consider whether as a practical matter the severance of what we may call the docks from the warehouses can be made?—Yes, we thought on the balance that it could, but it presents great difficulties, undoubtedly.

10153. As that is so very important a question, I want to know if you are able to tell us whether you were advised or informed by a practical man upon that practical question?—We had several wharfingers at several of our meetings, and they were of opinion that the only practical step was a trust for the waterways. We thought on going into it that it was perfectly practicable.

10154. Now I want to know, please, if you can tell me, how you addressed yourself to that question, because that is, if I may call it so, a practical dock question—I mean the question whether the warehouses can be severed from the docks. Were you advised by any dock expert on the point?—We were not.

10155. Did you only take the opinion of the wharfingers?—The wharfingers, and Mr. Coke is a practical man. He has had to deal with the creation of two trusts, one in Liverpool and one in Bombay, and he thought it was entirely practicable.

10156. Did you yourself go over the docks and the warehouses with a view to seeing how far they were practicable, as did Mr. Coke?—He is very intimately acquainted with them, and in former years I was very intimately acquainted with them. I spent months of

my time in the docks, but I did not go specially for this purpose.

10157. Did you get any report from any engineer or dock expert on the point?—No.

10158. You will not understand me as underrating the value of your and Mr. Coke's opinions on the matter. I only want to know to what extent you were assisted by experts on this very practical commercial point?—We were assisted by a great body of commercial men, and they were of opinion that it was quite practicable; but we had not the opinion of any dock expert.

10159. I am not suggesting, of course, that you should have obtained London dock opinion, but you have not obtained any from anywhere?—No, except that which we have handed in.

10160. I have looked through that, and it does not deal with the point at all. Do you draw any distinction between the different docks in respect of this matter; that is to say, taking the London and St Katharine or the Albert and Victoria Docks, is any one of them better adapted for severance of its warehouse business than the others?—I think the St. Katharine Dock is less applicable to the purpose, because I think all the warehouses go right out to the water's edge, from my recollection.

10161. Then we will take that first. If you take St. Katharine Dock, would you say, that, as far as the dock is concerned, you could not separate the warehouse business from the dock business?—I think it could be separated.

10162. But with difficulty?—With comparative difficulty.

10163. In your opinion is it the least adapted for the purpose?—Yes. We attempted to deal with that in one of our sub-clauses. The point was raised by Sir Robert Giffen.

10164. That is what I was very much interested to see, because it shows that you have really dealt with what a good many of the witnesses have not dealt with?—In sub-clause (c) of clause 19 we have attempted to deal with that, but really what impresses our minds mainly is that we do not believe that warehousing will pay a trust. We believe that from the course of trade that warehousing is decreasing, and is likely to decrease, from general trade and commercial reasons.

10165. Is not that a somewhat hazardous opinion to give in relation to the proposition in another portion of your scheme, that the warehouses when bought by the public authority should be sold at the price of nine millions?—It might affect it, undoubtedly.

10166. If you think that the warehouse business is a declining business, what grounds have you for estimating the purchase value of these warehouses at nine millions when acquired?—You must recollect that it is a very special business in many respects, and that what might not pay a general trust, might pay a company or an association of a particular trade. For instance, the wool trade is an important trade. It might be worth their while to buy a block of warehouses, and to give a very fair price for it, in consideration of their working their own trade. They would understand their difficulties and their advantages better than a general trust would, and they would be more flexible in their regulations.

10167. Do you then wish to modify the opinion you have expressed as to the declining nature of the warehousing business by saying that you would not expect that it would increase or maintain itself, in the hands of a public trust?—Yes, that is what I mean.

10168. The Chamber of Commerce do not anticipate that the warehousing business in private hands would decrease?—No; I think not. The great tendency is for people to take goods into private warehouses at present, because the goods have to be sorted, weighed, and measured out, and so on; and that would always take place. For instance, in our own business we should have been very glad a short time ago, if the opportunity had offered, to have premises in the docks.

10169. Do you regard the warehousing business for certain trades as so specialised as to be only fruitful in the hands of private specialists?—That is my personal opinion.

10170. And as such you would deprecate the carrying on of warehouse business by a general Trust?—Yes.

10171. Now as to the 9 millions. I am quite aware of the difficulties you have had in preparing this scheme, but have you informed yourself by any expert opinion as to the value, or have you merely formulated the scheme from a bird's-eye point of view?—We have done the best we could. We put that forward with the utmost diffidence. Of course if we had had the docks valued by experts it would have been a very expensive matter, and we have no funds for such a purpose.

10172. But it is a matter that would be ascertainable by a very competent opinion?—Certainly.

10173. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Can you not give us the voting as to the separation of the warehouse property from the water space property?—The Chamber of Commerce as such is very strongly in favour of it, but when we had the conference with regard to the separation it was only carried by a small majority, and I think mainly by votes of the Chamber of Commerce. Several delegates had an object in view which we did not think was at all justifiable. They thought it would be a great advantage if the Trust was enabled to compete with private warehouses so as to bring down the heavy rates in London; but we did not think that was a legitimate object in a public body. That was the main difference of opinion.

10174. You think that these gentlemen's votes were influenced to some extent by private views?—Yes, by the view of their own trades.

10175. You thus consider that they might be rather influenced adversely to the proposal and were not considering it from a public point of view?—That was our opinion.

10176. At any rate you carried it by a majority, but not by a very large majority?—No, but the Council of the Chamber is practically unanimous in favour of the separation.

10177. Are there not two very distinct questions to be considered in the separation, one the physical question, and the other the commercial question?—Certainly.

10178. You cannot give us any help on the physical question?—No.

10179. You have not consulted any engineers?—No.

10180. You have no really detailed information on the point?—No.

10181. With regard to the commercial view of the subject, I gather that you have no doubt whatever?—We have no doubt at all.

10182. Am I not right in thinking, as has been given here in evidence, that the successful conduct of the private warehousing business rests a good deal on facilities given to traders?—Do you mean advances?

10183. We will say banking?—I think to a very considerable extent it does.

10184. And that is one of the functions which is fulfilled by the private wharves in London, and which to some extent takes away the goods from the dock warehouses?—I have heard it very frequently stated so, but I am not personally acquainted with it.

10185. Those facilities are facilities which could not very well be given by a Trust?—No. It would be impossible for a Trust to give them.

10186. But if the dock warehouses were formed into a warehousing company, or a series of companies, the affording of those commercial facilities would present no difficulties?—None whatever.

10187. And to that extent the various warehouses would all be competing on equal terms?—Yes.

10188. The difficulty which we were told by Mr. Scott presses upon the great dock company would not apply under such a new condition of things?—I think not.

10189. On your revenue side of the question I notice that you propose a considerable addition to the charges. You take first of all the existing rates on a ship at a shilling a ton, but I think you add to that 5d.?—4d.

10190. You do not add 4d., but you propose a maximum of 4d.?—Yes.

10191. Lower down you add 5d.?—We add 5d. by a landing charge on goods—a port due on goods landed in the port, wherever they may be landed.

10192. That would be additional to what is paid now?—It would. Our difficulty is to know whether it is so far additional as to drive the trade elsewhere. If so, it would have to be modified; but with that point

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in view we have left out certain items of revenue which would help to fill any gap.

10193. Then you also propose to add to the Conservancy's present charge on shipping?—$\frac{3}{4}$d. to 1$\frac{1}{2}$d. is, I think, the present Conservancy due.

10194. Then that again is a slight addition?—Yes.

10195. I gather that having given the best consideration that the Chamber could give to this subject, you do not think that these additions would drive away the trade?—No; but we had not the exact rates for similar services in other ports before us. It would very much depend on that, of course. That would be all-important.

10196. But still, as representing the Chamber of Commerce, you propose this as part of a financial scheme, and, therefore, I presume that, *primâ facie*, on the information you have at your disposal at present, you suggest it is reasonable?—Yes.

10197. And, really, the finance of your scheme rests upon these proposals?—Yes.

10198. (*Mr. Peel.*) Do you suggest that the maximum and minimum rates should be fixed by Act of Parliament, or do you suggest that this trust should have power to charge what it likes?—We have not considered that point; but I should think that the Trust ought to have power to levy what rates it thinks desirable.

10199. Without any restriction?—Yes, without any restriction by Act of Parliament. But we have not considered that point.

10200. You did not consider whether you would allow any trader to have any appeal to any public body with regard to that question?—We have not considered it; but the natural body would be the Railway Commissioners.

10201. In section 12, you say: "The Trust to have power to take over such property on or near the river." I suppose that means in reference to constructing new docks?—Constructing new docks or means of access. I believe—in fact, I know—that the Dock Company have an enormous wall round portions of their property. It might be desirable to make new approaches through that, for instance—new streets even.

10202. Then, with reference to transhipment, do you propose to exempt transhipment goods from any charge?—We have made no proposal for any charge upon them, because we think that both the exports of London and the transhipments have been suffering by the heavy nature of our charges, and if the Trust could raise sufficient revenue on imports only, we think it would be very desirable, if possible.

10203. Then, as to your rate in aid, you were going to do that by requesting one of the public bodies to supplement the revenue if necessary?—If necessary. Of course our proposal is that the Corporation and the London County Council should have between them 12 members upon the Trust, and, therefore, any question could be conveyed by those representatives to their respective bodies.

10204. But you would leave it entirely at the option of these public bodies to raise the rate or not?—Certainly.

10205. And in the same way with regard to the raising of the capital sum?—It would be entirely optional on their part; but that would be settled by Act of Parliament, of course.

10206. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With reference to what you say with regard to estimated revenue, the only due you would put on shipping not using the docks, would be 2d. per ton, with a maximum of 4d.—Yes.

10207. That means for ships using the river or the wharves, and not the docks?—Yes. All the ships coming in would pay it.

10208. The ships that use the docks would pay that in addition?—Yes.

10209. Then with reference to the average of 5d. a ton, I presume by that that you would give the Trust power to charge rates on goods. They would charge more on a pound of tea than on a pound of lead?—Yes. That would be the average.

10210. Then with reference to the constitution of the Board: you give the Corporation six representatives, and the London County Council six representatives?—Yes.

10211. Why should you have those representatives here in London when they are not necessary in London?—The circumstances are somewhat different. The Corporation of London for a great number of years was the sole authority of the port, and it now is the market authority and the sanitary authority. We propose to leave that in its hands. The London County Council is already represented on the Thames Conservancy, and I think very properly so, and, although we are traders, we think that the whole working of the scheme should be somewhat controlled in the public interest, though the details should be left to traders. Liverpool used to be a municipal trust, but there were found to be great objections in Liverpool and other places to municipal trusts, because they applied the revenue to churches, police courts, and various things.

10212. Then you put on two representatives of the Thames Conservancy?—Yes, that is for the upper river. We propose to leave the Thames Conservancy as it is above Richmond lock. We have been asked why we have selected Richmond lock instead of Teddington lock. Teddington is, of course, the lock named in the old Acts of Parliament, but the new Richmond lock—a half-tide lock, I believe—has been erected, and we think that the Thames Conservancy should have the management of the whole of the pleasure traffic of the river, and if they stopped at Teddington lock there would be a break.

10213. You propose to take the pilotage out of the hands of the Trinity House, and yet give them two representatives?—Yes. We have left the buoying and lighting in their hands.

10214. Did you discuss that question?—Yes, we discussed it with Captain Thomson, a member of the Trinity House. He was opposed to the removal of both, but the commercial members overbore his opinion.

10215. You would leave them the power to dredge the channels, but yet you would refuse them the power of buoying them?—The Trinity House do not dredge the channels, do they?

10216. No, but you propose that the new Trust should dredge the channels?—Yes. I think our opinion was rather economical. Captain Thomson pointed out that the revenue that was used in the Thames by the Trinity House was raised over the shipping in the whole of the kingdom, and that, if the Trust had to raise a special revenue with a view to lighting, it would add to the expenses of the Trust. Our first proposal was to have only one authority in the river altogether for lighting and other purposes.

10217. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You perceive superficial inconsistencies between what you are suggesting and what your witnesses have told us as to the dearness of the Port of London, and yet, after that, you come forward proposing to add to the charges?—Yes.

10218. I suppose your reason is that you think the charges as they are now are not properly adjusted, and what you really propose is a readjustment. Is that so?—Yes. We imagine that one result of this scheme would be largely to increase quay rates in London, and that considerable economies would be effected in that respect. Another point is that so long as the charges are levied in the public interest we have not such an objection to them as if they were levied for the benefit of individuals or private companies. If they are found to be necessary by a Trust for bringing the Thames up to the level of the age, we are prepared to make a sacrifice.

10219. But suppose, for instance, that these gentlemen in the wheat trade, who now grumble at being saddled with 1s. 9d., found themselves saddled with an additional 5d., do you not think they would complain?—Our opinion was that the quay rates would effect a saving. But, at any rate, we are prepared to pay somewhat more under the state of things disclosed by the evidence before the Commission. We think the state of things is so serious that it must be grappled with, and we propose that, if the extra charge would be too great a burden on trade, the municipal authorities should intervene by a rate.

10220. But you are not sure that, as a matter of fact, the trade is quite prepared to pay a charge of 5d. per ton on goods imported, which may be an extra charge?—They would be prepared to pay an extra charge. There would be great differences of opinion as to what that charge should be, but I think they are all prepared to pay a landing charge on goods.

10221. I rather infer from some of the evidence that has been given that they are not prepared to pay, and will object very much to pay, anything more than is paid at any other ports?—We believe that the effect on the port would be a very general and drastic revision of the scale of charges, and that very considerable economies would be effected on the whole, and that, although there would be an additional landing charge, it might be saved in other directions.

10222. But, still, it is a great deal to impose upon the trade, a new charge of about £300,000. I am speaking of the 5d. per ton on goods?—It is a very great deal.

10223. And the last state may be worse than the first unless you could make quite sure that some of the other charges are as a matter of fact diminished?—We do not think it would have the effect of increasing them all over, but if it had, if the rate proved to be oppressive, we could apply to the public authorities to ask for permission for them to aid us. That scheme is entirely tentative. We felt bound to make some remarks on the financial part of it, but, as I said in introducing it, it speaks with no authority at all.

10224. I am putting to you the difficulties which you must see for yourself that we on the Commission will have to consider?—I see them very plainly.

10225. With regard to the amount of tonnage of goods which may be subject to this charge of 5d., have you any information to give us additional to what you have given us as to what the amount of that tonnage may be?—No. We have found very great difficulty about that. We got from the Conservancy Board the figures of the entire tonnage entering London, and then we have deducted the ships coming in in ballast. They would, of course, have to pay the port due on ships, but not on goods, because they do not contain goods.

10226. But a great many ships come in. Liners, especially liners in the short sea trade, do not come in with full cargoes. In fact, as a rule they have not full cargoes. Is not that so?—I believe so.

10227. So that this 14,500,000 tons is a little speculative. It may be 10 million tons with tolerable certainty, because we know that about four million tons go into the docks in the foreign trade, and about six million tons of coal. I think that is the figure that was mentioned—but beyond that I have seen no particular evidence as to what the amount of goods may be that comes in. Are you aware of any return as to the amount?—No. That was one of our main difficulties in drawing this up. There is no return of the actual amount landed in London.

10228. But if we should find as a matter of fact that instead of the 14,500,000 tons, upon which you estimate you can make a charge of 5d., you have not more than 10 millions, it would affect the rest of your estimate?—Yes; but, on the other hand, I think the shipping tonnage is less than the actual amount of goods.

10229. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) That is the registered tonnage?—Yes.

10230. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That is to say as regards the capacity of the ships?—Yes.

10231. But that is not quite the problem as it affects the practical part of the question as to what the quantity of goods coming into London is?—That is quite true.

10232. Have you compared this item of £305,000 for expenditure in working the docks with the actual figures of expenditure in the dock companies' accounts for the same services?—I have not done so, because from all I could make out the dock companies' accounts are so mixed up with other items that they have very great difficulty in stating what was for ships and what was for warehouses. Therefore we took the Liverpool rates, where the figures seem clear, and make the average come to 10d. per ton on the cost of working the ships that went into Liverpool. Then to meet the special difficulties of London we added 2d. per ton to cover the expenses of the barges.

10233. What is the total expenditure of the dock companies as they stand?—I have not the figures here, but I have looked through them several times.

10234. It is a very much larger figure than this, is it not?—Yes; it is a very much larger figure.

10235. Then you must assume that all the other expenditure of the dock companies is for the other purposes of the business, and not for this reduced business which you have assigned to them?—Yes. I assume so.

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10236. It is a little speculative as it stands?—Yes. I think I stated that.

10237. Can you tell me whether the business carried on at Liverpool by the dock authorities there in regard to warehousing is a large business or not?—I went down there for the purpose of this inquiry some time ago, and went over the docks, and saw the different officials, and gathered that it is not a large business compared to the extent of the docks, and that it has never been a paying business; and I am aware from our own experience in our own trade that we warehouse all our goods in our own place there. We move them immediately from the quay.

10238. Is it an increasing business at Liverpool?—I think it is a decreasing business from all I have gathered, and that it has been decreasing over a course of years so far as the dock companies are concerned. I cannot speak with authority on that point, but Mr. Coke could.

10239. I should like to know what you know as a matter of fact, and not merely from reports?—I cannot speak on that.

10240. You speak of the business of warehousing exceeding that of the docks, judging from the rating books?—I did not say the business exceeded that of the docks, but what I mean is that their valuation for rate purposes is greater than that of the docks. We have that on the authority of one of the members of our Committee, who is a wharfinger, and who has had those statistics compiled.

10241. But you cannot give us the figures, can you?—No. I cannot give you the figures.

10242. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Did you consider the question whether the barges should be charged anything in the dock for services rendered, or not?—I think the whole basis of our inquiry was that lighterage and barging should be absolutely free as it is at present. We think it essential to the Port of London.

10243. And you did not consider the question of charging a licensing fee, or any charge at all on the barges?—As far as a licensing fee is concerned, it would be a small matter, and there would be no objection to that; but with regard to charging a barge on all the goods it contained every time, that would be, in our opinion, destructive of the trade of the port.

10244. Was it ever considered whether the barges should be charged any small licensing fee or anything in other ways for services rendered by the docks, and for losses entailed on the docks by their using the docks?—No. We want the barges to be free. A small licensing or registration charge there would be no objection to. We had that out several times. We thought the proper way was to make any charge that there is on the goods to get the revenue for the Trust, and to leave the lighters free; otherwise it would be very detrimental to the interests of the wharfingers.

10245. But still the Trust would be handicapped unduly by that competition if the barges pay nothing, because they would take the goods away from the docks, or away from the Trust that might be formed, exactly as they do at present?—The Trust would get the revenue from the landing charge on the goods.

10246. But they would not get it on the overside deliveries?—They would not get it on the overside deliveries, but the goods, wherever they were landed, would pay whatever charge there was. We thought it was right to put it on the goods, but not on the barges.

Cross-examined by Mr. Balfour Browne.

10247. You have spoken of the body of representatives, and you gave a list. Was there any shipowner amongst them at all?—Mr. Becket Hill.

10248. Is that the only one?—No, there was another one who has already given evidence. We consulted the Chamber of Shipping, and two of our witnesses, Mr. A. L. Jones and Mr. Becket Hill, were consulted throughout.

10249. And those were the only shipowners you consulted, were they?—We consulted the Chamber of Shipping as well.

10250. They have not been represented here, I think?—Now let me ask you this. You say, "The joint value of the public wharves of London is believed to exceed

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that of the docks judging from the rating books." Do you mean the rate books for poor law purposes?—For parochial purposes.

10251. Are you aware that docks are to be assessed at one-fourth of their value, while warehouses are to be assessed at the full value?—I was not aware of that.

10252. Now, where do you get the figures of your valuation of the dock companies of London, which you say is, in round figures, from 17 millions to 18 millions. Has there been any valuation made?—The Stock Exchange valuation.

10253. The Stock Exchange valuation. Is that all?—Yes.

10254. I have a question to ask you about that afterwards. Then you speak about the cost of water area and quays of docks as nine millions; the cost of deepening the river as two millions, the cost of modernising docks as four millions, making 15 millions in all; but in that figure you have not included the nine millions which you would have in the first instance to pay for the warehouses?—No.

10255. So that it comes to out of pocket, all at once, 23 millions or 24 millions, even on your own showing?—Yes.

10256. Then you say you think that this trust that you want to establish could borrow as cheaply as the Government?—Three per cent., we propose.

10257. Two-and-three-quarter per cent. you propose?—No. I say we assume that this money would be borrowed at 3 per cent. under a public guarantee, or, perhaps. by a loan from the municipal authority raised at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

10258. I do not know what that means?—It means that the corporation, or whoever raised it under guarantee, would get the money at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and make a profit on it towards amortisation.

10259. Do you know any precedent for allowing a public body to borrow money at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. and lending it at 3 per cent. in order to get a profit on it?—I do not know that there is any precedent for such a problem as we have before us at all.

10260. (*Chairman.*) The witness just now spoke of a public guarantee, and then when I asked him what he meant by it he defined it to be a guarantee of the Corporation of the City of London and the London County Council, and not an Imperial guarantee?—Yes, the Corporation of the City of London, and/or the London County Council.

10261. (*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) As you say you want to make precedents, you are making one here. You said: "They are trading companies, and cannot fairly claim a right to the enhanced value of their property consequent upon the increase in the population." I suppose you know of other trading companies. Take a water company for instance. Is that a trading company?—I do not know whether it is or not. I suppose it is in one sense. See 10141.

10262. Trading in water?—Yes.

10263. Are you aware that their properties not only increase in value in consequence of the increase of population, but they increase in value in every quinquennial period, whenever the rating of London is increased?—I believe it is so.

10264. Why should the dock companies be treated differently?—We wish to treat the dock companies fairly and handsomely, and I believe that this would do it, in giving them the market value of their undertaking.

10265. Do you not think that if you take away a man's property, he should have, not only the present market value, which is your idea, but all the prospective value that there may be in that property?—No; I think not in the case of the dock companies.

10266. Why not?—Because the dock companies have had very valuable water privileges given to them in the past years, which are now standing in the way of public improvements.

10267. Every public body, such as a gas company or a water company, has privileges given to it by Parliament, as you know?—Yes.

10268. To break up streets and roads is one of them?—Yes.

10269. Why should a dock company be treated differently in this way without any prospective value being given to it?—This is only tentative. If the dock companies are not satisfied let them make their own proposals. We wish them to be treated handsomely.

10270. Then in paragraph 11 of the scheme you say: "On and after the formation of the Trust by Act of Parliament the whole of the property, rights, and privileges of the London and India Dock Company, the Millwall Dock Company, the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, and any other dock company within the limits of the port, shall pass to and be vested in the Trust." That is, every piece of property is vested in the Trust. Then in Clause 18 I find this: "The Trust shall take account of the value of the property of the dock companies, and shall pay therefor (either in bonds or cash) such a price as shall appear reasonable, having regard to the condition of the property, but not more than the market value of the debenture mortgage or debts of the companies, and of their preference or ordinary shares." So that the value is to be taken before it is ascertained?—That is a point that did not occur to us, but I think that could be very easily set right. See 10133. See 10133.

10271. Are you a wharfinger?—We have two private wharves.

10272. Listen to this, and see if you think it is fair. It is sub-section (c) of Clause 19 of your scheme: "If any warehouse or warehouses taken over from the docks abuts or abut on the water side of a dock, creek, or river, with no intervening quay between such warehouse and the water, the Trust shall in no case use such warehouse or warehouses for the purpose of storing goods, unless it be reasonably suited for the landing, and weighing, and sampling of goods as hereinabove provided, but shall sell or let such warehouse or warehouses so abutting upon the water, and be empowered to charge additional tolls for the direct discharge of goods into the warehouse, so that such property shall not unduly compete with the public and private wharfingers of the port." You mean to say that these warehouses in the dock are to be purchased and taken out of competition. Do you think that is fair?—That would be handed over to a private initiative which could compete. See 10133

10273. I beg your pardon. They are to be let or sold, so that such property shall not unduly compete with the public and private wharfingers of the port?—It means that the Trust shall not unduly compete.

10274. Then are all those warehouses still to be in competition with the ordinary wharfingers?—So far as they belong to private or individual wharfingers, who shall compete if they think fit.

10275. But the Trust is to put additional tolls on for the express purpose of not allowing them to compete. It says: "And be empowered to charge additional tolls for the direct discharge of goods into the warehouse, so that such property shall not unduly compete with the public and private wharfingers of the port." The very object of putting those tolls on is to prevent competition in the interests of the public?—And it is to ensure fair play in the interests of the wharfingers.

10276. It would be very fair play in the interests of the wharfingers if you kept the whole of the nine millions out of competition?—That is not the object. The object is that the competition should be keener than ever.

10277. Then you said: "The expenses of working are taken at 1s. per ton, the Liverpool cost being apparently 10d. per ton." Would you mind telling me where you get that 10d. per ton, because we cannot find any such figure?—I got it from that book you have there, the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board Report. I do not know what year that is. See 10139; 10386–98.

10278. I find here that the total expenses on the debtor side are £1,252,909?—I think that includes warehousing.

10279. That includes interest on bonded debts. In order to make it fair I must take out that, because that is not a working expense. Now I deduct £582,000, the interest on bonded debts. That gives for working expenses £670,000 per annum. Where is your 10d.?—Does not that include warehousing?

10280-1. No, the warehousing is a separate matter altogether. That is £210,000. I have not got that in. This includes engineers' department, harbour master, marine surveyor, riverside station, observatory, dock traffic, dock lines of railways, police expenses, general

charges, Parliamentary and law expenses, income tax, and so on?—But a large number of those items have nothing to do with working the ships.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) They are the working of the docks, and you say that the working expenses at Liverpool are apparently 10d. per ton. This is not working the ships; it is working the docks. What you have given us here is expenses of working taken at 1s. a ton, because Liverpool is 10d.?

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What do you say it works out to?

10282. (*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I have not worked it out, but the tonnage is less than London. I am sorry to say it cannot be worked out, because it deals with the whole of the river and the river dues as well. I do not know how Mr. Innes Rogers did it?—There are a large number of items in this amount which I think have nothing to do with it, such as the Mersey Docks annuities, and interest on promissory notes.

10283. It is very likely that I may have included some things that should not have been included, but I want to know how you get that 10d.?—By taking the tonnage and working out the items which have actually to do with the working of the docks.

10284. Can you give me the tonnage and the items, and we will see if they are accurate?—I have not got them here, but I have been through them a large number of times.

See 10386-98 10285. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Perhaps you could give that statement on another occasion?—Yes, I will look it up.

10286. (*Chairman.*) And you will put it in?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Loehnis.

10287. Is it your proposal that this Trust is to undertake the discharging of vessels?—No.

10288. Did you hear Mr. Roffey to-day say that it was the unanimous opinion of the grain trade that the discharging ought to be done by the dock companies so that there is only one person after the vessel between the vessel and the receiver?—I was not present.

10289. Do you know that that is the view of the grain trade?—I think it is very probable, because there is a great difference of opinion on all those points.

10290. Then on that you do not represent the opinion of the grain trade. Now with regard to timber, is it your opinion that the Trust is to sort the timber into various qualities and various lengths?—We have not considered that point.

10291. You are only going to have the water and quays; you are not going to take any warehouses; you are going to discharge in August, September and November timber cargoes on to the quays. When are you going to get that cleared away. Who is to take that away. You have not got any land to stack it on. You will have your quays blocked. How are you going to deal with it?—We shall make them take it away to some other place.

10292. Make who take it away?—The owners of the goods.

10293. And you are going to undertake sampling, taring, and weighing, but you do not intend to deal with the timber trade in any way similar to that in which the Surrey Commercial Dock Company are dealing with it at the present moment?—Some of the members of the timber trade objected to our scheme. I think there is a sort of pond or reservoir where the timber is kept, and it was a general opinion I think that the Trust should allow those to be kept with the warehouses. They are empowered to sell any portion.

10294. Then as far as the timber trade is concerned they were not unanimous?—No, they were not unanimous at all. We only carried these things by majorities. It bristles with difficulties.

10295. Then may I take it that the whole of the timber trade objected?—I do not think so.

10296. The majority?—They objected to warehouses.

10297. The timber trade came to the conclusion that your proposal to separate the docks from the warehouses was impracticable?—As far as certain portions of the trade are concerned at any rate.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

See 10133 10298. In clause 17 of your scheme you say the trust shall be empowered "to borrow such sum of money at such rate of interest as may appear reasonable, interest to be guaranteed by the Corporation and/or the London County Council in consideration of their representation on the trust." Assuming the Corporation will not put their hands in their pockets at all, and the County Council do guarantee this fund, do you still propose six representatives of the Corporation and six representatives of the County Council?—Yes.

10299. Still?—Yes. We have not considered that point, but I should say so certainly.

10300. Why?—Because of the old connection of the Corporation with the river, and from the fact of its present connection for market and sanitary purposes.

10301. That somewhat conflicts with paragraph 17, does it not?—I do not think so.

10302. Will your scheme work without a public guarantee?—I think so.

10303. What I am suggesting to you is this: You are proposing an extra £300,000 a year on the trade of the port, are you not?—Yes.

10304. In order to run your scheme you must put that charge on the trade all at once?—Yes.

10305. You cannot do it by degrees?—You could not do it in the twinkling of an eye. Some months must elapse before the trust came into being.

10306. But would it not be possible with a public guarantee to levy a charge on the trade gradually instead of putting it on the trade at once?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Porter.

10307. You say that the County Council and/or the Corporation may levy a rate on the property liable to rates within the jurisdiction of the County Council or the Corporation. I take it that you do not mean that the rate should be levied simply on the specific jurisdiction, but over the whole county of London?—Yes, over the whole County of London.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

10308. What is the nature of the jurisdiction that you propose in Clause 1 that the trust should exercise:—"to whom shall be given the sole control of the waters of the Thames from Richmond Lock to Yantlet Creek, and of the water area of the docks, and of the banks, foreshores, piers, towpaths, and adjacent property"?—Similar to what the Conservancy Board now has. See 10133

10309. Neither more nor less?—Neither more nor less.

10310. Then in the third clause, sub-section C, you refer to "The London and India, Millwall and Surrey Commercial Dock Companies and any other docks." Do you mean public docks there?—It was very doubtful on going into the question what were docks and what were not docks. We put that in generally. We had not the material for drawing up the scheme in detail, but we put that in to cover all docks that were docks. See 10133

10311. Then in Clause 11 you say: "On and after the formation of the trust by Act of Parliament, the whole of the property, rights and privileges of the London and India Dock Company, the Millwall Dock Company, the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, and any other dock company within the limits of the port"?—Yes. See 10133.

10312. Take the case of Hay's Wharf, which is a small private dock—I think the only one in London—do you propose to acquire that?—No.

10313. You will exclude it?—Yes.

10314. Now take the question of the constitution of your proposed trust. You are entirely deviating from the Liverpool model here?—Yes, that is so.

10315. You yourself pointed out, I think, that Liverpool has worked admirably?—It has.

10316. And there are there only four ex-officio members, and the whole of the balance of 24 members are elected by the electors?—It is something like that; but the circumstances are very different.

10317. You have placed on here all these gentlemen representing, if I may so call them, ex-officio members, and, as I understand, they are to have no voice whatever in the actual management of the Trust?—Not the details.

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10318. They are a sort of watchdog?—They are to settle the principles. The policy of the Trust the whole Board will settle.

10319. What do you mean by "the policy"?—Questions of general policy. There will be an enormous number of questions to settle on general broad grounds.

10320. Will you give me an illustration of the class of things you refer to that would go to the whole Board, and that would not be the province of what I will call the Executive Committee?—We mean that the executive work of the Board should be done by the elected members.

10321. But you leave finance to the whole Board?—Yes.

10322. Then the executive would be simply able to carry out that which the financial part of the scheme allowed them?—The management of a dock or wharf is of an extraordinary character and a work of very great detail, and they are practical men who would have very much more knowledge.

10323. At the present time the London Docks Boards contain 24 merchants and lawyers. I do not think there is a shipowner or bargeowner among them?—I do not think that the directorate of the docks is a model to follow altogether.

10324. But still you are suggesting that that body should actually carry out the permanent work?—Yes.

10325. You agree with Mr. Pembroke, do you not, that the funds you could raise from a tax on goods would be adequate for the support of your Trust?—We believe so, but we are in this difficulty. We do not know how many goods are landed in London.

10326. You have the tonnage of shipping in. That is net registered tonnage, that 22 millions, I suppose?—Yes.

10327. In and out?—We take it on the 14 million tons, I think.

10328. Forgive me. You say port dues on 22 million tons of shipping in and out; that is about 11 millions in?—Yes.

10329. Then we heard a short time ago how the ship builders had begun to dodge the tonnage register by making a squarer vessel. That would be a vessel of a much greater carrying capacity?—Yes.

10330. And your 14,500,000 tons is merely a percentage of 3,400,000 tons on the different-shaped vessels?—That is 14,500,000 tons entering the Thames, less the ships in ballast which make the 22,000,000, as I understand it.

10331. The 22,000,000 tons are net registered tonnage in and out, and half that is 11 millions in?—Yes.

10332. Probably carrying import goods?—Yes.

10333. And you put the import goods 14,500,000. Subtracting the two, you get 3,400,000 as being the percentage on the different-shaped vessels?—I think there is more comes in than goes out.

10334. Then in Clause 12 of the scheme you propose that "the Trust to have power to take over such property on or near the river, as it may think desirable to acquire, the power to be compulsory, subject to due compensation to owners." What do you suggest that is for. What is the need of a power like that?—There are new docks, for one thing.

See 10133

10335. For purposes of that kind?—Yes, and approaches to docks for facilitating the working—roads, or railways, or bridges.

10336. Then, in Clause 15, with regard to the Trust being empowered to make charges, and so on, I suppose you are suggesting that those charges should be levied equally on all goods coming into the port?—Yes, wherever they may be landed.

10337. That is a tonnage rate, without regard to value?—No, it would be an average rate graduated to a certain degree in proportion to value.

10338. That is just what it does not say. Have you considered that at all?—We have called it an average rate in the financial part of it. Of course, as one of the members of the Commission said, we should not dream of charging the same rate on lead as on tea, for instance.

10339. You are proposing to make the heavier goods cheaper?—Yes.

10340. You know, do you not, that the heavier goods do not come to wharves?—Some of them do. Lead probably does not; but I do not know.

10341. Do you yourself think that this power of levying a rate on the county of London including, of course, the City of London, is a desirable thing as long as you have the means of raising it directly from the industry affected?—I think it is very undesirable; but if, on the other hand, it is found that we cannot raise sufficient revenue for the Trust, we think the Trust is such an important matter to bring the Thames up-to-date, that even such a power as that should be exercised.

10342. And you would give the extraordinary representation suggested in Clause 9?—I do not think that representation is too large.

10343. Now, with regard to the suggestion in Clause 19, about administration, you are proposing that all the warehouses should be sold or let on rent to the best advantage?—Yes.

10344. That would rather have a tendency to cause what is sometimes termed a slump in warehouse property to put all the warehouse property on the market at once?—Not necessarily. I think there would be a very great demand for them.

10345. You told us a short time since, as I understood, that the warehousing business was steadily diminishing?—The public warehousing business, but the private warehousing business is increasing with the increase of imports.

10346. Do you mean to say that the business of individual merchants is increasing?—Yes.

10347. There is not an individual merchant, is there, in London who requires a warehouse such as a dock warehouse?—Many of them.

10348. A large dock warehouse, or do you mean a floor?—One of the buildings I mean. I mean one of those blocks.

10349. Is it not one of the difficulties at the present time that goods go much more rapidly into actual consumption than they used to?—Yes, but they have to go into a warehouse to be sorted and dealt with.

10350. That can be done in sheds, can it not, in many instances?—No. In many instances it cannot. The things have to be weighed in small packets.

10351. But in many other instances it might be done in sheds?—It might be, but then they would not take them away from the quay.

10352. Then there would be no warehousing for them, and so keeping the sheds would not be effective protection for the wharfingers. You could do all the short time warehousing, sampling, and taring at the sheds?—It would be the Liverpool system practically.

10353. Can you tell me how many days you propose?—We have left it blank.

10354. Can you tell me what you have in your mind?—I have nothing in my mind.

10355. Can you tell me what was discussed?—I do not think any special number of hours was discussed.

10356. Mention is made of clear days?—I think three days was discussed.

10357. Take hides and things of that sort. That would account for a very great proportion of the goods?—Very probably.

10358. All that could be dealt with in sheds?—Of course, the docks could do this and have quay rates to-morrow if they like, and therefore the wharfingers would not suffer in that respect any more than if they did it at once.

10359. According to your scheme, sub-section (b) of Clause 19, you are proposing to keep, purchase, hire, or erect sheds, warehouses, or elevators, and so on, to do this same work?—Yes, but not to house goods for rent.

10360. For how long do you propose these?—We have left that to the Commission.

10361. Was that three days again?—That was what was discussed.

10362. Was there a difference of opinion about it?—We thought it was a matter presenting very great difficulty, and we could not settle it. We had not information enough before us.

10363. What were the limits; what were the proposals of each side?—I do not think there were any definite proposals.

10364. Some people thought less time, I suppose?—Some thought less and some thought more.

10365. Then you are to sell and let the warehouses abutting on the water. That is according to sub-section (c) of the same clause. I suppose when you put in that you had specially in your mind the warehouses at St. Katharine's Dock?—What we had in our mind were some questions asked by Sir Robert Giffen at one of the early sittings of the Commission, which raised the precise difficulty, and then we found that it applied specially to St. Katharine's Dock.

10366. Have you observed that at St. Katharine's Dock a number of the quays are actually let. Has not the Clyde Shipping Company a berth there?—Yes. But the trust would not interfere with that.

10367. But they have the quay, which is really the ground floor of the warehouse, is it not?—Yes.

10368. Have they the warehouse; it bears the name on the end, does it not?—Some of them have, some of them have not.

10369. Do not the Clyde Shipping Company, and the Apollinaris Company, and others?—I believe so.

10370. And Elder, Dempster and Co.?—I do not know. You may take it there are a number of warehouses let in St. Katharine's Dock.

10371. You were asked a question about the assessment of the docks. I do not think my friend intended to mislead the Commission, but in general terms, comparing the figures you gave, you were including in the price of the docks their up-town warehouse?—Yes.

10372. In no sense, of course, could it be assessed on the principle of being part of the docks itself? It is miles away?—That is so.

Re-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

10373. With regard to these additional charges which the Chamber of Commerce put forward in their claim?—They were only inserted tentatively.

10374. One can quite understand that there was no absolute unanimity with regard to the new charges, but as I understood your evidence the Committee thought that if there were a public Trust traders would get a *quid pro quo*?—Yes. *Mr. J. I. Rogers.* 17 June 1901.

10375. In increased facilities of the docks and quick dispatch?—Yes.

10376. And that an important factor in those facilities would be a low quay rate?—Yes.

10377. Which would facilitate that quick despatch?—Yes.

10378. Then with regard to the figures which Mr. Balfour Browne commented upon, he put it to you that in that figure of £15,000,000 you had not included the £9,000,000 which you appropriated to the warehouses which the Chamber of Commerce proposed should be sold?—Yes.

10379. Taking the cost of deepening the river that would not be an immediate out of pocket expense, would it?—No, it would take some time.

10380. That would be spread over some time?—Yes.

10381. Take the next figure, the cost of modernising the docks?—That would take several years I should imagine.

10382. The immediate out of pocket expense would be £9,000,000?—Yes.

10383. Then you would have £6,000,000 further expenditure gradually incurred?—Certainly.

10384. Then you would have the £9,000,000 gradually repaid as the warehouse property came to be sold?—Certainly.

10385. (*Chairman.*) We shall be much obliged if you will convey to the Chamber of Commerce our thanks for the scheme they have been good enough to put before us?—Certainly.

Recalled 10386.

(Adjourned to to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

Tuesday, 18*th June*, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. HORACE AVORY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., and Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the Short Sea Traders' Association.

(*Chairman.*) It may be convenient to the learned counsel present if we now say that we propose to hear their addresses on the 1st July, or, at any rate, we hope to commence them on that day. The Commissioners have greatly appreciated the help which has been rendered to them by counsel in the shortening of the proceedings by the condensation of the cross-examination of witnesses, and they trust that counsel will restrict their speeches to the matters which affect their particular clients.

Mr. J. I. Rogers

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Mr. JOHN INNES ROGERS recalled and further examined.

10386. (*Chairman.*) I understand you wish to put in a statement with reference to your evidence yesterday?—Yes. Mr. Balfour Browne questioned my evidence with respect to the working of the ships in Liverpool costing 10d. per ton. I have here the accounts of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board for the year ending 1st July, 1900. These are the dock expenses, which, I think, are applicable to the working of the ship: Harbour master, £43,556; marine surveyors, £4,844; riverside railway station, £832; observatory, £801; dock traffic expenses, £94,329. That, however, includes expenses of foreign animals' wharf, £27,000. Police expenses, £41,196; general, £76,004; engineers, £211,836; and then the Conservancy I take as £40,000, as the Conservancy includes other charges. That comes to a total of £513,398. There are 12,380,000 tons entering the Mersey, and that works out at 10d. per ton.

10387. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Where do you get the figure of twelve million tons from?—Those figures are in the last page but one of the accounts.

10388. Does that correspond with the 15 millions in the Thames?—No. I think you will see that ten millions go into the docks and two millions in the stream. They are not precisely the same figures, but I take it that as we have six millions in our docks, and they have ten millions in theirs, the cost of working is proportionately greater there than if the ships remained in the stream.

10389. Are you quite sure about the ten millions in the docks, because the figure we have had hitherto is eight millions?—I take it from that book of accounts.

10390. Is it not the figure of gross tonnage you are giving now?—I do not know; I took the figures there. I think it is the registered tonnage.

10391. But there are two figures of registered tonnage, one gross and one net, and it is very embarrassing unless you tell in each case what figure you are giving?—I am unable to say. Those figures work out at 10d. a ton. That was the basis of my figures. There is one other point which I should like to direct your attention to, which I saw on looking at this table. That is the statement of warehouse expenses for the year ending 31st July, 1899. The balance transferred after paying the expenses of warehousing in Liverpool was £51,439 6s. 2d., and I am informed that to pay the expenditure on the warehouses in Liverpool an amount of £60,000 is wanted.

10392. (*Chairman.*) That has nothing to do with the question, has it?—No, but that confirms the point we raised yesterday as to the warehouses.

10393. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I see that in the account of the expenditure of the Mersey Docks and Harbour

Board there is an item of £42,000 for insurance and depreciation of vessels. Ought that to be a part of the dock expenditure, or what is it?—I am unable to answer that. I do not understand it.

10394. But if it should involve an item that you ought to have included as part of the dock expenses, it is rather an important item?—It is the working of the ships that I have been taking, and I do not see that insurance would have anything to do with that.

10395. Might it not be the vessels which the Dock Company use in the course of their business?—It might be so.

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10396. Then it is a proper item to go in?—Possibly.

10397. Of course you would quite admit that all those figures which you have put in illustrate the mode in which you have arrived at your conclusions?—Yes.

10398. And they are open to the observation of the Commission when we come to look into it afterwards as to what the real expense would be?—Certainly. They are conjectural, more or less.

Mr. CHARLES WHELON called and examined.

Mr. C. Whelon.

10399. (*Chairman.*) You are a partner in the firm of George Simon and Whelon, and have been connected with the wine and spirit trade since the year 1872?—Yes.

10400. You are also chairman of the committee of the Wine and Spirit Trade Association?—I was chairman last year.

10401. And you have been appointed to lay evidence before us on behalf of that Association?—Yes.

10402. Did you write your statement of evidence yourself?—Yes.

10403. Will you be good enough to proceed with that evidence?—The actual effect on the wine and spirit trade in the want of a better organisation at the docks in London is at the present day probably less than it was 30 or 40 years ago owing to the fact that the heavy scale of charges has driven importers and merchants to seek accommodation where expenses are more moderate. In days past, wines and spirits bonded in the London Docks met with a more ready sale and commanded better prices than would have been the case if they were bonded elsewhere, but by offering lower rates the other bonded warehouse proprietors have gradually succeeded in drawing away from the docks so large a part of their stock that at the present time the extra value pertaining to goods lying in the docks has almost ceased to be considered. As a large proportion of the incoming steamers go into the docks, the natural inference would be that by far the greater part, if not the whole quantity, of wines and spirits imported into London for storage would be kept in the extensive vaults and warehouses provided by the Dock Company, for it seems evident that with a ship "alongside" goods should be discharged and housed in the vaults at hand cheaper than if removed to other stores; nevertheless, the reverse is the case, for in a comparative table, which I will give to the Commission presently, it appears that, as compared with 30 years ago, the docks have suffered a falling off of the stock of wine and brandy held by them of over 70 per cent., as against a decrease of about 50 per cent. in all other London bonded stores. Increased facilities for obtaining supplies from abroad, and heavy expenses here, have had a great influence upon the stock of wines and spirits kept in this country. The figures given of the total imports of wines show no serious variation between the quantity imported now and 30 years ago. A comparison of those figures makes it evident that the docks have not held their ground as well as the rest of London and the United Kingdom. Prior to the dockers' strike, in 1889, the custom prevailed for the Dock Company's competitors to offer varied concessions, extending as far as 50 per cent. or more, from the dock rate according to their anxiety to attract business, but at the conclusion of the strike an agreement was come to—which seems to have been fairly well adhered to—that the printed dock rates should be recognised as the standard throughout the Port of London, but whilst the docks were to allow a maximum discount of 10 per cent. other warehouse keepers were to be at liberty to offer 15 per cent. It must be remembered that wines and spirits being subject to duty, their every movement after entry is guarded by Custom House regulations, and this in itself is apt to make things move more slowly than is the case with free goods. At the docks these movements are slower than elsewhere owing to the red tape that exists in their system, and in this respect there is great room for improvement. As a proof of this it may be stated that at an up town warehouse it is possible to clear a cask of wine or spirit and have it all ready for delivery in an hour and a half, whilst at the docks it practically takes 24 hours to accomplish the same object. In the case of rums which are practically confined to the West India Docks 48 hours may be taken as the ordinary time in which a similar operation can be carried through. Whatever may be the cause of this it is very desirable that wine and spirit merchants should be afforded facilities for clearing their goods from the docks more expeditiously. In days past such delays were not of much importance, but the same cannot be held good at the present time, and until some radical change takes place in the docks' administration they can hardly expect to maintain even their present unfavourable position. One of the serious disadvantages that exists is the inadequate provision made for dealing with goods of all kinds going to or coming from the docks. The limited space available at the railway dock depots often causes a heavy congestion of traffic with the result that horses and men are kept in enforced idleness for many hours, and this must have a most disastrous effect upon the importations *vid* London of goods intended for inland towns, for these delays have to be taken into consideration when through rates have to be compiled. An alteration in the matter would probably bring back to the port very much of the trade that during the last 25 or 30 years has drifted away to Liverpool and other ports.

The following is a table showing the relative stocks in 1870 and 1900:—

The total stock at the London and St. Katharine Docks.

WINE.

1st October, 1870	-	5,442,140 galls.
1st „ 1900	-	1,464,980 „
Showing a decrease of		3,977,160 galls., or 73 per cent.

BRANDY.

1st October, 1870	-	3,674,760 galls.
1st „ 1900	-	1,006,800 „
Showing a decrease of		2,667,960 galls., or 72·6 per cent.

RUM.

At the London, St. Katharine, West India, and Victoria Docks.

1st October, 1870	-	3,393,096 galls.
1st „ 1900	-	2,356,380 „
Showing a decrease of		1,036,716 galls., or 30·5 per cent.

The total stock in all London

WINE.

1st October, 1870	-	8,204,240 galls.
1st „ 1900	-	3,939,475 „
Showing a decrease of		4,264,475 galls., or 51·9 per cent.

BRANDY.

1st October, 1870	-	4,256,040 galls.
1st „ 1900	-	2,202,133 „
Showing a decrease of		2,053,907 galls., or 48·2 per cent.

The total stock in the United Kingdom.

WINE.

1st October, 1870	-	14,155,029 galls.
1st „ 1900	-	7,370,000 „
Showing a decrease of		6,785,029 galls., or 47·9 per cent.

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BRANDY.

1st October, 1870		9,348,741 galls
1st „ 1900	-	4,963,000 „
Showing a decrease of		4,385,741 galls., or 40·9 per cent.

RUM.

1st October, 1870	-	6,746,730 galls.
1st „ 1900	-	7,425,000 „
Showing an increase of		678,270 galls., or 10 per cent.

Total Imports into the United Kingdom.

WINE.

1870	- -	17,774,782 galls.
1899	- -	17,387,744 „

BRANDY.

1870	- -	7,942,965 galls.
1900		2,465,122 „

RUM.

1870	- -	6,915,117 galls.
1899		5,627,359 „

10404. Have you any remarks to make upon that table?—No, except to say that the evidence I have given with regard to the total stock at the London and St. Katharine Dock is taken from the returns of the dock itself. Those with regard to all London are taken from the various bonded stores. The stocks in hand in the United Kingdom and the imports of wine and spirits into the United Kingdom are taken from the figures given by the Board of Trade.

10405. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are these figures as to the stocks in bonded stores published figures?—Those given by the docks and bonded stores are the figures they themselves issue. I do not know that they issue them publicly, but they send them round to the trade Press.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

10406. You refer to the case of rums in the West India Docks, and you say that 48 hours "may be taken as the ordinary time in which a similar operation can be carried through." Are you able to tell us how far that delay is due to Customs arrangements?—A great part of it is due to Customs arrangements. At any rate, we might say that 24 hours is due to Customs arrangements, because in all cases there is a test to ascertain the actual strength.

10407. And there is a great deal of blending, is there not?—Yes, but it is not necessarily the blending. The blending might be done before. The extra delay is in connection with the Custom House requirements to ascertain the actual strength.

Mr. HUGH COLIN SMITH re-called and further examined.

Mr. H. C. Smith.

10408. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us now in order to give evidence on the subject of the licensing of lightermen on the River Thames?—Yes.

10409. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—My firm are large employers of labour on the water and own and hire a large number of barges. I beg to hand in a copy of the Thames Lightermen's Bill, 1901, also copies of six petitions, namely, one to the House of Commons for leave to bring in the Bill, and five to the Board of Trade in its support.

The Witness handed in the following documents:—

(*A copy of the Thames Lightermen's Bill of* 1901. *See Appendix, 27th day, No.* 1.)

(*A copy of petition of shipowners, merchants, wharfingers, etc., trading in the Port of London to the House of Commons for leave to bring in the Thames Lightermen's Bill*, 1901. *See Appendix, 27th day, No.* 2.)

(*A copy of petition of merchants, brokers, and members of the commercial sale rooms to the President of the Board of Trade on the subject of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company, dated the 9th day of November*, 1900. *See Appendix, 27th day, No.* 3.)

(*A copy of petition of merchants, brokers, and members of the London Shipping Exchange to the President of the Board of Trade on the subject of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company, dated the 9th day of November*, 1900. *See Appendix, 27th day, No.* 4.)

(*A copy of petition of merchants, brokers, and members of the London Metal Exchange to the President of the Board of Trade on the subject of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company, dated the 9th day of November* 1900. *See Appendix, 27th day, No.* 5.)

(*A copy of petition of members of the Corn Exchange to the President of the Board of Trade on the subject of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company, dated the 9th day of November*, 1900. *See Appendix, 27th day, No* 6.)

(*A copy of petition of members of Lloyd's to the President of the Board of Trade on the subject of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company, dated the 9th day of November*, 1900. *See Appendix, 27th day, No.* 7.)

10410. With reference to this bill, of which you hand in a copy, we understand that your evidence to-day will be restricted to the matters which are embodied in that bill?—Yes.

10411. And that bill still represents your views on the subject to which it refers?—Yes, and the views of the mercantile community generally, as I think the petitions will show.

10412. You understand my point. The Bill has been withdrawn and is dead, and we want to be assured by you that the views expressed in it have suffered no modification?—Certainly not.

10413. It was only withdrawn because this Commission was sitting?—Yes, that is so. The business carried on by my firm is general and a large one, and more or less affects a great number of the trades in the Port of London, so that I am able to speak both as to the particular business of lighterage and as to the trade of London generally as affected by lighters. My firm have taken great trouble in connection with the lighterage trade, and have assisted in the efforts which have been previously made to relieve it from the restrictions relating to the employment of licensed lightermen. I gave evidence before the Thames Traffic Committee in 1879, and I wish to call the attention of the Commissioners to the report of that Committee recommending that the navigation of barges should be thrown open entirely. Lighterage is at present carried on under three Acts of Parliament—the Watermen's Acts of 1859 and 1893 and the Thames Conservancy Act of 1894. Three classes of men are affected by these Acts—(a) lightermen, (b) watermen, (c) men equivalent to lightermen and watermen who have not served an apprenticeship, but have worked under a contract of service for two years, which contract is defined by Sections 301, 302, and 303 of the Thames Conservancy Act of 1894. The latter class of men, after completing their contracts and proving their competency to the satisfaction of the Court of the Watermen's Company, obtain certificates, which certificates are equivalent to a lighterman's or waterman's license. A lighterman is defined under Section 3 of the Watermen's and Lightermen's Amendment Act of 1859 as a person working or navigating a barge, boat, or other craft for hire within the limits of the Act. A waterman is a person navigating, rowing, or working for hire a passenger boat. Under the 2nd Section of the Act a passenger boat is described as a sailing boat, river steamboat, row boat, wherry, or other craft used for carrying passengers within the limits of the Act. An apprentice, who under Section 52 may be in sole charge of a barge or boat, is a person who has served two years, and whose competency has been ascertained to the satisfaction of the court of the company. Under Section 48 an apprentice must not be less than 14 or above 20 when he enters into his indentures. It is thus seen that under the Act a youth of 16 may be in sole charge of a barge. The 1859 Act recites 7 and 8 of George IV. and repeals it. It also recites and repeals the 18th Section of 4 and 5 Anne, Chapter 19, under which freemen of the company were obliged to serve on board Her Majesty's fleet if required. The 66th Section of

the Act provides that no barge, etc., shall be worked within the limits of the Act unless a licensed man or apprentice is in charge. A licensed lighterman is a person holding a licence in respect of which he has qualified by serving an apprenticeship to a freeman or widow of a freeman for five years at the least. This qualification is described in Section 56 of the Act. Under Section 8 the limits of the Act are from Lower Hope Point on the east to Teddington Lock on the west. Section 11 of the Act provides that the company shall be regulated by a court of master, wardens, and assistants elected from the freemen of the company. Section 18 provides that the master and wardens shall retire from office annually, and the court shall fill the vacant offices, but the retiring master and wardens are eligible for re-election, and if there is no re-election, the master and wardens shall continue to act. Section 20 provides that an occasional vacancy shall be filled up by the court. Section 10 provides that the company shall consist of freemen who would have composed the company if the Act had not passed and such other persons as may be admitted freemen. Section 44 provides that every person who holds a licence or is the registered owner of any barge or lighter shall be qualified to be admitted a freeman of the company. Under Section 66 a barge owner is liable to a penalty not exceeding £5 if a person other than a licensed lighterman or apprentice is in charge of the barge, but no such penalty is payable if the owner proves to the satisfaction of the magistrate that he is unable for the usual compensation to obtain the services of a lighterman. The funds of the company are raised under the 84th Section of the 1859 Act. The court of the company is empowered to make bye-laws under the 80th Section of the Act, and such bye-laws have to be printed and made public. The funds of the company are raised under the 84th Section of the Act, and the company's balance-sheet has, after audit, to be sent to the Thames Conservancy and to the Board of Trade. (Sec. 309 of the Thames Conservancy Act.) The accounts of the company are kept under the 27th Section of the Act of 1859 under two distinct heads, the "Poors" account and the company's accounts. Under Section 310 of the Conservancy Act the Board of Trade have power to regulate the income of the company in the event of its being found more than enough to meet the proper expenditure of the company by reducing the fees. Upon these matters the company themselves will be able to give reliable information. So far as the promoters of the bill are concerned we have no suggestions to make as to the application of the funds of the company. The promoters think that the persons from whom the court is selected should be somewhat broadened, and include the directors of limited companies who own barges. The main contention of the promoters is that the employers of lightermen should not be restricted to any particular class of men but the barge owners (who cannot in all cases insure) should be at liberty to employ such persons as they may select and in whom they have confidence. There is no limit of liability for the barge owner as there is for the shipowner, or as in the case of a shipowner, who is free from liability altogether when the vessel is compulsorily in charge of a licensed pilot, although the barge owner has to compulsorily employ a licensed lighterman. The promoters of the bill are
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the mercantile community at large and not the master lightermen only, but the master lightermen are, speaking generally, in full sympathy with the promoters of the bill. The promoters of the bill were moved to take action owing to the very serious loss and dislocation of trade consequent upon the dispute between the masters and men which lasted for some months in 1900 and 1901. They were influenced by the fact that under the present law London stands in the grave peril of its whole maritime trade being stopped at any moment in consequence of a dispute arising between these 8,000 men and their masters. London is the only port where this is the case. The promoters of the bill are in no way interested, nor does the question of wages enter into their consideration. They are satisfied that if the restriction was removed they would secure a better class of labour and relieve the commerce of London from the risk attaching to men refusing to work in consequence of a dispute with their masters. Apprenticeship is absolutely unnecessary, and the practical value of an examination in a hall on shore of a man's competence to navigate a barge is nil. I recognise that a broad distinction must be drawn between watermen rowing boats with passengers and who own the boats, and journeymen lightermen who are employed by barge owners. In one case the craft is a frail boat navigated in all sorts of directions, and constantly across the line of traffic; whilst the barge is now mainly towed, and if rowed always navigates with the current. A barge is a distinctly substantial craft and does not carry passengers. A very full history of the company was written some few years ago by Mr. Humpherus, the late clerk of the company, and there the explanation of the restriction and licensing is explained. It dates from early times when the river formed a part of the highway between the extreme east and west, and was the principal means of conveyance for all the passenger traffic to and from London. Goods formed little or no part of the traffic in those days, and it is the safety of life and the maintenance of order which is spoken of as justifying the steps taken by the authorities to regulate the 40,000 watermen who are said to have been employed in the work. There was always a power reserved to the Trinity House to license seamen to navigate the Thames as lightermen or watermen between their voyages. There was a regular service of barges each tide between Gravesend and London for the carriage of passengers, but the idea of restricting the employment of persons to navigate this craft when working with goods only was never formulated, and it is only by imperceptible degrees that the rule at length applied, and has been duly brought about, no doubt, by the hackney coaches, and then the steamboats, and then the railways, completely destroying the passenger traffic on the Thames, at least so far as watermen are concerned, and leaving the river as a highway only for the transport of goods. It is, I think, by accident and not by design that the present restriction as to the employment of lightermen as distinguished from watermen exists. The promoters of the Bill have caused inquiries to be made at the outports, and so far have been unable to learn that any system at all exists as that on the Thames. In no case have the lighter hands to serve an apprenticeship, nor are the owners restricted as to the employment of men. In the case of the Thames, the application of the Act is limited to the vessels working within the limits of the Act, so that barges navigating from below Lower Hope Point to above Teddington, though they may navigate under oars in the river, have not to employ licensed men, and do not do so. But the anomaly arises if one of these barges stops on her way up from Sittingbourne, say at North Fleet, and loads a cargo there to be discharged at a point within the limits of the Act, then she has to take on board a licensed man, otherwise the owner is summoned under Section 66. So, too, the lighters of Trinity House have not to employ licensed men. The 35th section of the Act of 1893 and the 313th section of the Conservancy Act of 1894 exempts the owners of barges passing along the River Lee and using the Thames from the necessity of employing Thames lightermen. The 312th section of the Thames Conservancy Act protects the owners of duly registered lighters navigating from any place on the Thames above Teddington Lock to any point on the Thames as far as London Bridge, and, therefore, within the limits of the Act, from being compelled to employ Thames watermen. But below London Bridge they have to take licensed men. In fact the Act is strictly limited to a particular class of craft, and these craft are such as least need these men, because they are most constantly navigating the waters to which the Act applies. It is not from any present public advantage that the restriction exists, nor can it be considered necessary for the public safety, because if such were the case it would equally apply to all barges whether going from the west end of the Thames, or the east end of the Thames or the Lee. In 1893 an Act was passed amending the Watermen's Act of 1859. This Act deals mainly with the registration of craft, and with the necessity for the owners of craft to have legibly marked upon them the names and numbers of the barges and their owners. Under the 7th section of that Act no craft may be worked until the certificate has been issued and the particulars above mentioned affixed to the craft, so that means exist for ascertaining the person responsible when damage arises. Efforts have been made previous to the present to amend the difficulties complained of, and in 1890 a Committee of the House of Commons recommended that a Bill should be brought in by the Board of Trade to remove the restriction as to employment.
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10414. Can you tell us what was the result of that recommendation?—Nothing. Apparently the view of

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the Committee was that the system of apprenticeship should also be amended, but they thought the examination as to capability should be maintained. The apprenticeship and the restriction are the two great objections to the present system. In my opinion any examination must be useless, as it is impossible to ascertain a working man's capabilities for outdoor employment by examination held in a hall. Of late years the employment of steam tugs has become very general, and one of the most striking anomalies of the Act is that steam tugs are not required to employ licensed men of any kind, unless they are plying for hire with goods or passengers. The craft towed must have a licensed man, but the steam tug who provides the motive power and tows them into mischief or otherwise, need not employ a licensed man.

The company passed a bye-law under which steam tugs in all circumstances would need to employ licensed men, but in the case of Kennaird v. William Cory and Sons the Court held that such bye-law was bad. The suggestion that barges when being towed should not employ licensed men would certainly be a relief, but I suggest it would rather add to the anomaly, as then neither tugs nor barges, though moving faster than the tide, would employ licensed men. In the opinion of the promoters of the Bill nothing but complete relief from the restriction can place the trade of London by water in a satisfactory condition, and this can, in my opinion, be safely done.

10415. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you ever raised the question under Section 66 of the Act of 1859 as to licences of the men not working for you?—I do not quite understand your question.

10416. At certain times you have had strikes when you have had a dispute as to terms?—Yes.

10417. At that time it would be legal for you, I suppose, to employ other men?—Yes.

10418. Have you ever tested the point as to how far that employment once begun may continue?—During this late strike when our men refused to work we carried on our business with the aid of some of our wharfmen and our clerks and so on. The strike lasted from the 15th October to the 24th January. During that time we moved up and down the river about 2,000 barges, and we carried about 40,000 tons of goods without any accident at all. I hand in a table giving the figures.

(*The witness handed in a statement of goods and barges shifted during the Lightermen's strike of 15th October 1900 to 24th January 1901 from Hay's Wharf. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 8.*)

10419. Is it not rather anomalous that you are compelled to take these men who refused to work for you when they are willing to come back. Is not that an extraordinary arrangement—that you are obliged to take the men when they are willing to come back?—Yes. We can get lots of men but we cannot offer them permanent employment because the moment they come a licensed man may say: "You have no right to employ these men; I will do the work."

10420. Have you ever tested this point?—Yes.

10421. How far did you go?—We cannot go any distance because they can take us to a police court if we do not employ them.

10422. You might put this section of the Act before the magistrate—Section 66: "If the owner proves to the satisfaction of the magistrate of the court before whom the case is heard that he is unable for the usual compensation to obtain the services of any such lighterman or apprentice"?—We did that, but at any moment if a licensed man comes forward and offers to take the barge we have to employ him and get rid of our other men. That is the trouble.

10423. Have you any case where the point has been tried?—Not myself, but there have been cases.

10424. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) If you did away with the present monopoly would you put the control in any person's hands or would you leave those men to be unlicensed and the matter entirely in the hands of the barge owners?—I should like to be as free in the employment of lightermen as I am in employing drivers for my vans in the City—to take whom I like. I am responsible.

10425. Would you ask for any examination?—No, none whatever.

10426. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Turning for a moment to this Committee of 1890 was it appointed to examine the subject at large, or was it a Committee to which a bill was referred?—It was a Committee to which a bill was referred.

10427. Was the bill introduced by the same promoters as the bill of 1901?—Practically the same, and it passed the second reading in the House and was referred to a Committee.

10428. Then the Committee in their report did not adopt that bill; they recommended the Board of Trade to introduce a bill?—Yes.

10429. They thought it should be a Government matter?—I think so.

10430. Then the promoters, finding nothing was done, introduced another bill in 1901?—Yes.

10431. Did the Board of Trade in any way decline to take action or merely let the matter go by the board?—I think they let it go by the board.

10432. They gave no opinion in the House of Commons or elsewhere as to the recommendations of the Select Committee?—I do not know.

10433. Is this bill of which you have given us a copy in all respects what you would introduce, say, next session?—Yes; it was introduced this session.

10434. I am aware of its introduction this session. I will not trouble you about that, but it is the bill which now expresses your views *verbatim et literatim*?—Yes. The difference between this bill and the previous bill is that this does not interfere with the Watermen's Company. We merely wish the restrictions taken away and leave the Watermen's Company to themselves.

10435. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) The Thames Conservancy have very considerable powers over the navigation of barges in the Thames have they not?—Yes.

10436. They have the power to require towing of all barges?—I do not know that.

10437. I believe I am right in saying that they have the power, but they have not exercised it to the fullest extent?—Certainly not.

10438. Perhaps you have not read the Act of Parliament under which the power exists. It is the Act of 1894. Have you any views as to whether it is for the good of the river that barges should be allowed to drift about with the tide in the way they do now as compared with being towed?—It is a very difficult question to answer, because there are short trips with a barge when towing would be very expensive. I do not think that they get in the way of the navigation.

10439. I think from my own experience they sometimes do so very much indeed. Do you think that the trade of the port would suffer very materially if towing was compulsory?—No, not materially; I should say not.

10440. There was a recommendation of the Thames Traffic Committee which says that they think a rule might properly be made requiring all dumb barges navigating the whole distance between London Bridge and the uppermost dock entrance in Blackwall Reach to be towed?—That is the whole distance. I think there are very few now that do come up under oars.

10441. It is only, therefore, with regard to their short trips that you would like to retain the advantage, such as it is, of not being towed?—If you had two or three tugs going down the river to bring up your barges and you wished to send a barge to some wharf close by or to the tier it would render it very expensive to get a tug just to take it a few yards.

10442. But I suppose for anything like considerable distances the time saved and the certainty of arrival are great advantages to the barge owner?—Certainly, and everybody thinks so.

10443. You think that is rather a matter which may be left to the self-interest of the person concerned?—Yes.

10444. Are we to take it that you are of opinion that there should not be any examination into the antecedent position of people employed to navigate barges?—Yes.

10445. You would rather trust to the individual examination of antecendents by those who are going to employ the men?—One would not employ men unless one knew they were capable.

10446. Would you recommend that reliance should be placed upon the employer taking the necessary steps?—Yes. It is entirely in the self-interest of the employer only to employ capable men.

10447. You are not in favour of any licences being granted?—No.

10448. Or of any examination into antecedents by any public authority?—No.

10449. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) With reference to what Sir Robert Giffen asked you, when the strike was on, free trade prevailed as regards employment of men; the moment it stopped I suppose the view you took, on advice, was that you were able then to obtain for the usual compensation the services of lightermen?—Yes.

10450. And therefore the exemption under Clause 66 of the Act went?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10451. On behalf of the Watermen's Company I should like to ask a question or two. Was the Bill of 1890, that was referred to the Select Committee, founded upon the recommendations of the Thames Traffic Committee of 1879?—More or less I believe it was.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Was that a Committee of the House of Commons?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) It was a Committee of the Board of Trade.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) A departmental Committee?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Yes.

(*Chairman.*) Who was the Chairman?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Mr. Farrer was in the chair. There were seven members of the Committee.

10452. All the recommendations of that Committee were discussed before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1890?—I cannot say that they all were.

10453. In substance they were?—Yes.

10454. Did you give evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1890?—Yes.

10455. And in substance you put before that Committee the same views as you have put in your evidence to-day?—Yes.

10456. I do not know whether the Commissioners have before them the report of that Committee. I wish to call your attention to it. Was this the report of that Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1890? "That the constitution of the company, called the 'Master Wardens, and Commonalty of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames,' should be amended, the company ceasing to be, as now, a close corporation. Whenever a vacancy takes place in the Court of the Company, it should be filled up by election, the electors being in all or the majority of cases, the Freemen of the Company, and no one being eligible except a licensee of full age. That the examination for a lighterman's license should be more strict than at present. That any persons shall be eligible for a lighterman's license if found on examination to possess the necessary qualifications, it being no longer necessary that he should be an apprentice to a freeman or to the widow of a freeman, or to a bargeowner employing a freeman or licensed lighterman. And your Committee recommend that a Bill to effect these amendments of the present law be prepared by the Board of Trade, and introduced in the next session of Parliament." Those were the recommendations of the Committee after hearing the evidence?—Yes.

See 10646.

10457. Was that report made after hearing a very large number of witnesses (I have in my hand the book containing the evidence) called for the promoters, and I think only two or three called on behalf of the Watermen's Company. The Committee stopped the evidence on behalf of the Watermen's Company, did they not?—I do not recollect that, but there were a great many witnesses called by us, certainly.

10458. Do you not remember that the Committee stopped the evidence tendered on behalf of the Watermen's Company?—I do not recollect anything about it.

10459. You said in your evidence that "the promoters of the Bill are the mercantile community at large, and not the master lightermen only; but the master lightermen are speaking generally in full sympathy with the promoters of the Bill." Is it not a fact that in 1890 the master lightermen, or a large number of them, presented a petition against your Bill?—Certainly, but my evidence is that now they have changed their opinion.

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10460. Are we agreed that in 1890 the large majority of them were against you?—Yes—at Watermen's Hall.

10461. But were they in fact the large majority of the whole of the master lightermen?—I should say not, because the principal lightermen on the Thames are the Companies, and they are not represented at Watermen's Hall.

10462. Do you remember as a fact that the petition against the Bill was signed by 253 master lightermen?—I do not deny that.

10463. Will you just see if you recognise the petition. I do not want to fix you to a figure without a reference. Here is the petition against the Bill, presented by the master lightermen?—Yes, it is so, but I do not see the names of the large lighterage companies in it who are the principal lighterage people on the Thames, as, for instance, The Thames Steam Tug Co., The London and Tilbury Lighterage Co., and so on.

10464. That is the petition that was presented against the Bill?—Yes.

10465. You have to-day in your evidence called attention to an Act that was passed in 1893, amending the Watermen's Act of 1859?—Yes.

10466. As a fact, was not that Bill introduced by the Watermen's Company?—Yes, I think so.

10467. And that has, as I understand you, effected an improvement?—Yes.

10468. You approve of the conditions?—Certainly.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

10469. With regard to the offence under section 66 of the Act, is not the information on which the summons is issued generally laid by a common informer, by a lighterman, who goes on board at some particular time?—Yes.

10470. And it is his evidence generally that is brought against the particular barge owner?—Yes.

10471. And he swears that at some particular time he tendered his services for the usual remuneration?—Yes.

10472. And, that being done, the magistrate considers that this Statute has not been complied with by the lighterman, and, consequently, convicts?—Yes.

Re-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

10473. Just one question with regard to this matter of the ownership of the lighters. I see, in the list of petitioners for the Bill in Parliament, there are a large number of bodies petitioning besides shipowners. I see, in the petition for the Bill, there are mentioned the Union Lighterage Company, Limited, the Thames Steam Tug Lighterage Company, Limited, and the London and Tilbury Lighterage Contracting and Dredging Company, Limited. Are they amongst the largest owners of lighters?—Certainly.

See 10409

10474. Does the number of barges owned by them run into hundreds or more?—Yes.

10475. And are they larger owners of lighters than any of those which appear in that petition which Mr. Avory referred to?—I should say very much.

10476. These large companies, which do the bulk of the lightering trade now upon the Thames, are not, as I understand, represented at Watermen's Hall, are they?—No.

10477. One question with regard to this matter of examination. My learned friend has called your attention to the fact that Mr. Childers' Committee recommended that the examination for a waterman's license should be more strict than at present. Have you carefully considered that recommendation which was made by that committee in 1890?—Yes.

10478. Do you now say that, having carefully considered that during the last ten years, you have come to the conclusion that examination is no security, and that the responsibility of the owners of the lighters and the cargoes in the lighters is what should be the security for the proper navigation of lighters?—That is my opinion.

10479. That is your point?—That is my point.

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10480. You have an absolutely unlimited liability, as I understand, except so far as you may be able to cover it by insurance, with regard to the goods in your own lighters, or with regard to the damage which may be done by your lighters to other vessels?—Yes.

10481. Therefore, you, as owner, have the very greatest interest in seeing that your barge is properly and carefully navigated?—Certainly.

10482. And you represent that that is sufficient security, and a greater security than examination?—Yes.

10483. Do you see any reason why the navigation of your lighters or barges or the lighters and barges which convey your goods should be put in any different position from the case of driving cars and vans in the streets, where also valuable commodities are carried?—No, not at all.

10484. The responsibility of the owner is what ought to control the matter?—Yes. We have a large number of vans and we can employ anybody we choose.

10485. With regard to the watermen you have a different case, there the waterman is plying for hire more like a cabman, or anybody else in the streets?—Yes.

10486. And you do not want to interfere with that?—Not with the watermen.

10487. You do not want to touch that question?—No.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Would your Lordship put a question for me which I have omitted. I should like to know whether Mr. Jacobs, the Managing Director of the Thames Steam Tug and Lighterage Company, was not elected on the Watermen's Company about 18 months ago.

10488. (*Chairman.*) Will you answer that question, Mr. Smith?—Yes, I think he was.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Is there something latent in that fact?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) The witness stated that the representatives of the large towing companies were not represented on the Watermen's Company at all.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) But he would be, I think, in accordance with the Act, elected not as a representative of the company; he would merely happen to be a member of the company, but he would be elected as Mr. Jacobs, a Freeman of the company.

(*Witness.*) As a barge owner.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That is under the constituency as created by the Act of 1859.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) It is only the fact that I want. I do not want to get into controversy about it. My Lord, there is one other question I am reminded of. The witness has stated that during the strike he got a large amount of work done, and efficiently done, by unlicensed men. The question is whether during that period the witness was not in fact employing at least 14 licensed men, whose names I have here.

(*Witness.*) Some of the men stuck to us.

10489. (*Mr. Avory.*) I suggest at least 14 of the licensed men?—Does that include foremen, because the foremen did stick to us. I cannot tell you off hand; my manager could tell you that.

10490. What it comes to is that a number of licensed men were, in fact, working for you during that strike?—Foremen.

10491. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Is it within your knowledge that any Parliamentary action was taken by anybody (promoters or anybody else) between the report of Mr. Childers' Committee in 1890 and 1901 when you introduced your Bill?—No; no action was taken by anybody.

10492. No appeal was made to Parliament by anybody?—No.

10493. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Did you give any evidence before the Board of Trade Departmental Committee which reported in 1879?—Yes.

10494. Then perhaps you are acquainted with the report. Have you read the report?—Yes.

10495. The Departmental Committee reports at considerable length upon this subject on pages 47 and 48. Perhaps you have forgotten it, but the matter was dealt with in that report at very considerable length?—What matter?

10496. The question that we have been discussing as to the throwing open of the navigation?—Yes, it was for the purpose of discussing that that the Committee was formed.

10497. That and other things. There were a great many other subjects in the report, but that particular subject was dealt with at pages 47 and 48. Do you recollect the names of the gentlemen who sat on that Departmental Committee?—No.

10498. You will see all the signatures at the end of page 54. There is Thomas Henry Farrer—that is the late Lord Farrer?—Yes.

10499. Sir Richard Collinson?—I do not know who he was.

10500. Was he not chairman of the Thames Conservancy or in some way connected with it?—No, I think Sir Frederick Nicholson was—the next on the list.

10501. Sir Richard Collinson was Deputy Master of the Trinity House?—Yes.

10502. Sir Frederick Nicholson was one of the conservators of the River Thames?—Yes.

10503. Then there is Staff-Captain Batt, Master Attendant at Chatham Dockyard?—Yes.

10504. Thomas Gray, Assistant Secretary to the Marine Department of the Board of Trade?—Yes.

10505. W. C. Morgan, Secretary to the Steamship Owners' Association?—Yes.

10506. And Digby Murray, one of the Nautical Advisers of the Board of Trade?—Yes.

10507. I suppose one would call that rather a strong committee of a departmental kind?—I am not quite sure, but I think Mr. Chamberlain was President of the Board of Trade when this was introduced——

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Mr. Chamberlain was not President of the Board of Trade in 1879. It was a Conservative Government.

10508. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) The committee point out that here is a great difficulty in establishing a satisfactory examination. At page 47 they say: "But considering the great difficulty of establishing a satisfactory examination, considering also that the western barges and the sailing barges, requiring at least equal skill, are admirably navigated by men who are simply selected for the purpose by their owners, and are not required to pass any examination; considering also that the best way of securing good and skilful service is in general to throw the responsibility on the employer, and to leave him perfectly free to select whom he pleases, we are not disposed to recommend any test examination or preliminary proof of qualification. We are confirmed in our opinion by the practice on other rivers, namely, the Clyde, the Mersey, and the Tyne. The physical and other features of those rivers differ from those of the Thames, but in all of them skill and experience are required, and on none of them is there any monopoly or any attempt made to ascertain the qualifications of the men employed on the navigation by previous examination. On all of these rivers the results appear to be satisfactory. We are informed by Captain Moodie that at New York also, where there is an immense and well-conducted barge traffic, the business of the bargemen is perfectly free. We recommend therefore that the navigation of barges on the river be thrown open entirely, leaving the men employed in it subject to penalties in case of misconduct or breach of bye laws, and the owners liable also to civil damages in case of injury. If this be done the men will be relieved from original payments, amounting to £3 16s. 6d., and an annual payment of 3s. now made to the Company." I take it that you agree with almost every word that I have read?—Yes.

10508*a*. You want to press that on this Commission, with the authority that you have as an owner of barges on the River Thames?—Yes.

10509. (*Chairman.*) Have you anything else you wish to say, Mr. Smith?—There is one matter in connection with my previous evidence that I should like to refer to. It is at Question 2549. I find I was wrong in my statement that some of the superior Custom House officers received overtime and did not visit our premises. That statement was made under a misapprehension as to the facts. All who receive overtime come to our premises at one time or the other.

Mr. GEORGE LIVESEY called and examined.

Mr. G Livesey.
8 June 1901.

10510. (*Chairman.*) You are chairman of the South Metropolitan Gas Company?—I am.

10511. Which company was one of the promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill of this session?—Yes, it was.

10512. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—The company uses about 1,200,000 tons of coal a year, about three-fourths being delivered direct from the steamer into the works, and the rest is barged to those works to which ships have not access. The company's supply of coal must be maintained at all costs and risks. If the lightermen strike, other men must be employed regardless of the question whether they are licensed. This happened in December, 1889, when the gas stokers struck, and the coal porters, the lightermen, and the seamen and firemen also struck in sympathy without notice. The Company had to supply their places as best they could. They promised (and the promise was kept) permanent employment to all suitable men who stood by them through the difficulty. In the case of lightermen the Company had to find other work for those who were unlicensed. I consider that the late most unjustifiable strike of lightermen was due solely to the fact that only licensed men can be employed. It seems obvious that had it not been for this the men would not have struck. But knowing that their places could not be filled they felt they were safe. They knew new men could not be engaged, and that their places must be kept open for them when they chose to return to work. This alone is a most complete condemnation of the system. It is even bad for the men themselves, and it was on this ground that the Company joined in the promotion of the Bill. Although the Company's lightermen did not strike and worked contentedly all through, the Company suffered serious loss and injury. Whenever a section of men in a trade do not join the strikers, special attention is shown towards them and their employers. I might say special malice; very often the men who helped the Company during their strike, especially those engaged on the river, were exposed not merely to continual hooting and insult, but to absolute danger by the strikers, and the Company's property was also damaged in every possible way. During the late strike (last year), eight of the Company's loaded barges, which were securely moored off the Company's works at Vauxhall, were cast adrift. Two were sunk and the greater part of the coal lost, another was carried against a bridge pier and was only saved from sinking by running aground. The remainder were picked up by a friendly tug. The men who worked the tugs were not licensed watermen. The loss to the Company was about £400 from this piece of mischief. The Company being responsible for their barges—they have nearly 100—are bound to exercise care in the selection of lightermen. I may say that ours (gas supply) is a dangerous business, and we have a very heavy responsibility, and are liable for damage caused by any of our workmen. We therefore know what it is to bear the responsibility of the employment of suitable men. The Company, of course, as required by law, employ only licensed men. But the licence of the Watermen's Company is not considered any recommendation. They do not regard it in fact, but select their men quite independently for their general capacity and their trustworthiness. The Company has three tugs. On the captains and their men the real responsibility of navigating the river lies, as the barges never go alone. They are always towed, consequently the lightermen have little or nothing to do in the navigation. But the Company is free to choose men from all the world to work their tugs. They ask that similar freedom should be granted in the case of the lighter. If this were done, the existing licensed lightermen would not suffer, provided they were trustworthy and capable men, and such men would undoubtedly secure priority of employment.

10513. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) You have said that the men who struck knew that their places could not be filled. I suppose the meaning of that is that they knew their places could not be permanently filled?—Yes, that is what I mean.

10514. Then you say the licence of the Watermen's Company is not considered any recommendation; that is, putting it impersonally. I should like to have your view as to that. Is it your personal opinion, or is it your company's opinion?—We do not regard it at all.

10515. That is your view?—Yes; we do not regard it at all. We select our men on other grounds.

Cross-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10516. In fact, are all the masters of your tugs licensed men?—They may be; I do not know; they are not necessarily licensed.

10517 You are not prepared to say that you have any master of a tug who is not a licensed man?—I am not prepared to say, but we have not selected him because he was licensed; we have selected him for other reasons.

10518. Because you found he was a competent man?—Yes.

10519. Did you give evidence before the House of Commons Committee in 1890 on the Thames Watermen and Lightermen Bill, which proposed the abolition of the system of licences?—I do not remember it. Perhaps I did.

10520. I have your evidence here?—Yes.

10521. And to the same effect as the evidence you have given to-day. You were called as a witness in support of the Bill which proposed to abolish the system of licensing of the men?—Yes, I suppose so. I had forgotten it.

10522. (*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) It might have been Mr. Livesey's father?—No, my father has been dead 30 years. I have given evidence a good many times, and I had forgotten that I was called.

10523. (*Mr. Horace Avory.*) And you did particularly give evidence upon this question of the strike, did you not, then?—Yes, I was full of it then. That was immediately after it.

Mr. THOMAS HOPKINS WOODWARD called and examined.

Mr. T. H. Woodward.
18 June 1901.

10524. (*Chairman.*) You are partner in the firm of Messrs. Henry Gray, junior, who carry on business in the City of London as lightermen and bargeowners, and are in a large way of business?—Yes.

10525. You desire to give evidence before us with reference to the licensing of lightermen on the River Thames?—Yes.

10526. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—I have been in the business all my life, and am well acquainted with all its peculiarities and requirements. The existence of the present restriction as to the master lightermen's right to employ whom he thinks proper, is a serious drawback to the trade, and one which creates difficulties at all times for the masters, and sometimes, as in the case of last year, for the public and the bargeowner's customers generally. Not quite all, but a very large part of the enormous water-borne trade of London has to pass by water, and it is an objectionable and dangerous fact that the whole of this trade is under the control—for evil if the men should be so disposed—of these 7,000 or 8,000 lightermen. In addition to the existence of the company there is also a lightermen's union, to which I do not object, but the fact is that although the court of the company do not restrict in any way apprentices being taken, a system has grown up under which the work of an apprentice is more or less regulated, so that the apprentice is for the bargeowners of less value than he would be, and some few firms refuse in consequence to employ apprentices altogether. There are excellent men amongst the licensed lightermen working on the river, but there is an undue proportion of men, who not being subject to the healthy competition which would follow a general right to employ, not infrequently show an indifference to the interests of their employers which is very annoying, and the employer being limited in his selection of men, is compelled to overlook deficiencies which in other businesses would not be condoned. Speaking generally, employers do not take apprentices owing to the terms of the indentures being quite out of date, and the owners object to

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burden themselves with responsibilities which have no compensating advantages. Experience is certainly necessary in this business, but the experience to be of value must be general, and the man who has had experience both in barges of all kinds and going to sea and loading and stowing ships and so on, is a better man for the purpose of the master lighterman and the public generally than the man who has simply gained his knowledge under the present system of apprenticeship, and nothing else. For the purpose of the trade of the port it seems obvious it is wrong that a restriction should exist which yet permits a lad of 16 to be in sole charge of a dumb barge, yet such is the case under Section 52 of the Watermen's and Lightermen's Act, and even that is capped by the greater absurdity that a man who has arrived at mature age, and has a great deal of experience, and has the full confidence of his employer who is responsible for his acts, must be turned out and cease to work if under the terms of Section 66 of the Act a lad of 16 expresses himself willing to accept the usual compensation, although such lad may be unknown to the employer and in his opinion not fit for the job. In the one case you have the employer satisfied with his servant and his servant's character; acquainted with his history and prepared to leave his interests, which may be very large, in the hands of such a man. In the other case you have a boy of 16 of whom the employer knows nothing, whose experience may be of a very inferior character, but who has been found qualified upon examination by the court of the company. I am sure that such an examination in the hall of the company is of no practical value. The barges of my firm probably carry as a regular thing the most valuable cargoes in the Port of London, and I have no hesitation in saying that my firm and the large majority of master lightermen would be glad to see the whole system of apprenticeship and licensing removed, and I would have no hesitation in employing unlicensed men. The Port of London is in keen competition with the outports, notably Hull, and is distinctly placed at a very great disadvantage owing to the fact mainly of the possibility of something arising with these licensed men which will cause a delay or additional expense in connection with goods in the port. In no other port does this restriction exist, and that it is unnecessary I submit is shown by the fact that barges passing through the Port of London are free of the restriction although they are strangers more or less to the port, whilst barges trading within the port and therefore at home, are compelled to employ these men. I call attention to the fact that no advantage is gained by the master lighterman either in economy of working, in security of property, or in reduction of liability by being made subject to this serious restriction. The use of tugs for moving barges by steam has now become almost universal, and all employers more or less use tugs; those who do not possess them, hire them. It is the practice of my firm to tow 90 per cent. of their barge traffic, and for this 90 per cent. of business the knowledge required by the workman is in no way due to the system of the Watermen's Company apprenticeship and freedom.

10527. (*Mr. Peel.*) I suppose sometimes you do navigate barges on certain journeys by your own men because there are no lightermen ready?—Yes, frequently.

10528. No lightermen offer to come on board?—There must be somebody on board to navigate them.

10529. Yes, your own men; but you very often do it with your own men without these licensed watermen being on board, do you not?—They are all licensed.

10530. You have your own men on board?—But they are all licensed.

10531. Were you here while Mr. Smith was giving his evidence?—Yes.

10532. Do you agree with all he stated?—Absolutely.

Cross-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10533. How long have you been a partner in the firm of Gray and Company?—Since March.

10534. Since March of this year?—Yes.

10535. Was Mr. Robert Gray the senior partner of that business in 1890?—Yes.

10536. Do you know that Mr. Robert Gray was one of the few witnesses called before the Committee against the Bill of 1890?—I do know that.

10537. And he gave evidence against that Bill?—Yes.

10537a. Have you any reason to suppose that Mr. Robert Gray, the senior partner, has altered his opinion since then?—Yes.

10538. Is he coming here?—No.

10539. You speak about an apprentice of 16 taking charge. As a matter of practice lads are not apprenticed, are they, until they are about 16 years of age?—It is possible to apprentice a youth at 14 years of age.

10540. I know it is possible, but I ask you as a matter of practice, is it not within your experience that they are not apprenticed until they are 16?—No, earlier. I should say between 14 and 15.

Re-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

10541. Is Mr. Robert Gray still a member of your firm?—No.

10542. Has he retired?—Yes.

10543. When did he retire from your firm?—On March 31st.

10544. At the time when you came into the firm?—Yes.

10545. Were you in the employ of the firm for many years before you became a partner?—No. I was manager for Mr. Humphrey for 25 years.

10545a. (*Mr. Horace Avory.*) That is the same firm as Mr. Smith's?—Yes.

10546. (*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That was at Hay's Wharf, was it?—Yes.

10547. But there you had a great deal to do with the lightering business?—Yes, for over 30 years.

(*Chairman.*) Mr. Baggallay, you are responsible, I think, for these witnesses. The witnesses we have had to-day are sufficiently representative, in our opinion, to explain to us fully the case for the bill. Do you think there is any use in the reiteration of this evidence? See 11384; 11446; 11545.

(*Mr. Baggallay.*) There are only two further witnesses whom I would ask you to call, and they are very short. One is Sir Edwyn Dawes. I should rather like to have his evidence before you. The other witness is Captain Hume, who has been for a long time the official conservator of the River Humber under the Board of Trade and superintendent of the docks at Hull. I think it would be advisable to have his evidence shortly as to the experience on the Humber, where they have free navigation, and where there are a great many difficulties in the navigation as well.

Captain DAVID EDWARD HUME called and examined.

Capt. D. E. Hume.

10548. (*Chairman.*) You have recently retired from the official position of Conservator of the River Humber which you held under Board of Trade appointment of 1887?—Yes, I retired in December last year. The appointment commenced in 1887.

10549. To what effect is your evidence?—It is with regard to the custom as to lighterage adopted in the River Humber. Prior to my official appointment there I was Superintendent Dock Master of the Hull Docks for 14 years.

10550. Will you be kind enough to proceed with your evidence?—I was a Commander in the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's service, and prior to that I was Staff Commander in the Egyptian Navy. I acquired my earlier experience under the P. and O. flag, and was for about two years in the London, Belgium and Brazil Royal Mail Service from London, sailing out of the Victoria Docks. I have also had experience in the ports of Liverpool and Southampton, having commanded vessels sailing to and from Liverpool, and having been an officer on board ships sailing to and from Southampton. For the last 30 years I have been one of the Junior Brethren of the London Trinity House, and for 13 years one of the official Nautical Assessors for the Hull Admiralty Court, and a Commissioner of Pilots for the River Humber for a period of 12 years. In consequence of these appointments

and wide and varied experience I am well acquainted with the requirements of navigation for inland, river and canal purposes, and I know the barge system in London almost as well as that of Hull. In Hull I have had much close personal acquaintance with the system, and I am able to say, that, notwithstanding the peculiar difficulties and dangers of the port, it works remarkably well, alike in the interests of the merchants, traders and shippers. It has assisted materially in the development of the port. The Port of Hull has within the last 25 years developed enormously. If necessary I can give the amount of increase in the tonnage from time to time during that period. The late re-arrangement of the dock system has largely assisted this development, but the lighterage system and its admirable working has been continuously helping the port, with the result that the transhipment of cargo from dock to dock, or ship to ship, or ship to warehouse, has been facilitated both in its economy and working. Further than that, the lighterage system of transporting goods from Hull upwards to Goole and other places, and the canals connected therewith, and downwards to Grimsby and other places, have all been admirably worked by the existing system, and it is astonishing how the business involving the transport of a vast tonnage of goods goes on year after year with exceptionally few casualties. The Port of Hull is, as compared with the Port of London, surrounded with difficulties. The Port of London is an ideal port for navigation purposes. The River Thames has a good depth and could easily be made deeper. The tide is moderate in its current compared with the Humber, whilst the river is so protected as to render the navigation fairly free of risk and danger. The Humber, on the other hand, being 9,000 feet wide opposite Hull, and very much wider lower down, is greatly affected by meteorological and atmospheric disturbances. For traffic of this description it is one of the wildest rivers in England, the tide flowing at the rate of four to five knots an hour, and the tidal range being, say, about 21 feet at spring tides. The Humber has a navigable channel of over 30 feet depth from the sea upwards to the Hull Docks. The barge traffic is limited to the dealing with cargo in and about the docks, which occupy a river frontage of 4 miles, and the transport as before mentioned of the goods upwards and downwards in the open river. There are wharves and quays in the neighbourhood of Hull, but these are situated in the River Hull, a tributary of the Humber. The river transport goods traffic is done by craft called keels. The lighters are used for the internal work of the docks, and these are moved either by towing but chiefly by hand, being propelled by boat-hooks. The keels sail from the docks upwards. A large number are towed, and that number is increasing. Hull has but few steam keels. The lighters vary from 50 to 250 tons burden, and the keels are about 70 tons burden. The only authority which applies to the craft is that of the Port Sanitary Authority as to the accommodation for the crew, and the dock bye-laws which have to be obeyed as to the navigation of lighters. The men forming the crew of the craft usually work the cargo in and out. No rule exists either in connection with the Humber or the docks as to the number of men or their qualification for manning the craft. There is no restriction of any kind, the owners employing whom they think proper. The same legal responsibility of common carriers attaches to them as in the Thames. The men who are in charge of the craft, whatever their capacity may be, whether master or mate, have to pass no examination or be members of any guild, nor have they to serve any apprenticeship. In fact, the barge owner on the Humber is as free as to the employment of his men as is the barge owner in Rochester. I am of opinion that it is a great advantage in any port to have the labour free in all possible respects, and to all comers. Knowing the Thames as well as I do, I am able to say that there is no reason, so far as the safety of life or property is concerned, or protection of navigation, why the barges of the Thames should not be as free for their crews as the barges of the Humber. The inducement on the part of the owners to protect their own position in the matter is such that they will always choose the best possible men. On the Humber there is never any lack of men, as any intelligent respectable man accustomed to maritime work is fit and competent to navigate a lighter. In this respect, London is analogous to Hull. Both ports have a large floating population on the steamers and vessels engaged in the coasting and Continental traffic, and the men who work these steamers and sailing craft are equally competent either to load a ship or navigate a barge, and it seems reasonable that the barge owners should have the option of employing the pick of these men. The earnings of river men are, as a rule, much better than the wages of a sailor, and, in addition to that, the man has the advantage, while engaged in river work, of living at home with his wife and family. The present state of the law in the Port of London practically prohibits the barge owner from employing this kind of man at all in barges worked within the limits of the Watermen's Act, and, in my opinion, this is a hardship both on men and masters. In the event of trade disputes, good and competent men hesitate to interfere, and restrictions such as exist on the Thames are a disadvantage to the public; and, in addition to that, so far as I can judge from the Act of Parliament, there would be a difficulty in getting other men to undertake suddenly the work, supposing there was a strike.

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10551. Can you tell us the distance from the sea to the docks at Hull?—Twenty-one miles.

10552. And how much of that channel beyond 30ft. depth, to which you have referred, is due to dredging?—None at all; it is Nature alone. I may say it is a good deal over 30ft. deep as far up as Killingholme, that is, above Grimsby.

10553. So far as that particular difficulty is concerned, it would seem that the Port of Hull is not so much surrounded by difficulties as the Port of London?—From the depth of water, certainly not. That can be remedied.

10554. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) That is at low water springs, of course?—Yes.

10555. Which port, in your opinion, is most dangerous for navigation by barges—Hull or London?—In my opinion, the Humber is very much wilder, and more open to heavy swells, and more difficult to navigate barges in than the Thames. The Thames is more enclosed.

10556. Then you consider it a much more dangerous river for barge navigation?—From a barge navigation point of view, I do.

Cross-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10557. Is there, in fact, any navigation of barges on the Humber except by towing?—Yes; keels we call them, not barges.

10558. Is not that done by towing?—It is becoming more and more so, but still a great many do sail from Hull to Goole, a distance of say 30 miles.

10559. Is there any navigation by oars?—No. Oars are seldom or never used on the Humber.

10560. You speak here of it being done by hand?—That is the internal dockwork from dock to dock.

10561. The same thing, I suppose, is done here. The internal dockwork is done in the same way here, is it not?—Presumably so. Some of the keels or lighters have to come outside the dock into the river, and some of them hook round if they do not tow round, or they drop round with the tide.

10562. You have no experience there of navigation by oars?—Practically none, except the watermen, of course.

10563. I mean the goods traffic?—There is practically no navigation by oars.

Sir Edwyn Sandys Dawes, K.C.M.G., called and examined.

10564. (*Chairman.*) You are senior partner of Gray, Dawes and Company, shipowners?—Yes.

10565. You are also a director of the British India Steamship Company, Chairman of the New Zealand Shipping Company, and a partner in other shipping companies using the Port of London?—Yes.

10566. You have been good enough to come here to give evidence with reference to the system of licensing of lightermen in the Port of London?—Yes.

10567. We suggest to you that you should first give evidence with regard to that subject, and afterwards we shall be glad to hear any general evidence that you

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Sir E. Davies, K.C.M.G.

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may have to offer on the subject of the inquiry. Now will you be kind enough to proceed with your evidence with regard to the lightermen?—Having such large interests in connection with the trade of London, and in the loading and discharging of steamers of the various companies I am associated with in the port, I have experienced losses and inconvenience in carrying on business owing to the late strike among the lightermen of the port. The effect on the trade of the port in connection with the refusal of the men to work the barges was very grave, owing to the practical difficulties in the way of getting other men to undertake the work of transporting the barges. Goods were delayed in shipment and delivery for several weeks. The quays and wharves became blocked with goods, and much trade was diverted from the port, as also serious expense was incurred in the rent and charges owing to the delays. Transhipments through the port were for some time stopped, as the master lightermen could not undertake to receive and deliver the goods. I am of opinion that the restriction of employment to a small body of men is unnecessary. Speaking as a shipowner, I am satisfied that the work could be done better, with less friction, and in every way more effectively, if the employment was thrown open and owners of barges allowed to employ the men whom they find the best qualified for the work. In this part of my evidence I refer only to the troubles that arose during the strike, but it is not by any means a new grievance. We have had difficulties of various kinds with lightermen owing to the especial privilege which they possess. That especial privilege practically makes them masters of the situation. If a lighterman refuses to work we cannot put any other man in. No man, however well qualified he may be to do the work, will expose himself to the risk that he may be turned out at a very short notice. I remember on one occasion during the dock strike we had a barge laden with Government stores for India. These were kept for some weeks, the lightermen not permitting them to be taken out of the barge, although we had no grievance or trouble with them whatever; and to our misfortune the Government charged us with demurrage, although we were absolutely helpless. That is the position shipowners are in in the Port of London, whilst there is increasing competition with the Continental ports. Formerly we used to get very large quantities of continental goods to London for shipment, but the Dutch, the Germans, the French have now their own lines of steamers from their own ports to Australia and India and China, which defects in the Port of London help to encourage. During the lightermen's strike in London, continental goods brought over by the General Steam Company to be transferred to steamers for New Zealand, Australia, and India (I am speaking of the lines that I have to deal with) could not reach the outward bound ships in time for transhipment, and the traffic had to be discontinued. I personally took a great deal of trouble in interviewing master lightermen, and they said that they were perfectly helpless. They told me that they could not get men to take the place of the men on strike, because they could be turned out at any time. To some of these master lightermen I said, "Face the difficulty. Put other men in, and be pulled up in the police court. Make the public aware of the disadvantage under which the trade in this, the greatest seaport in the world, is being worked." There were various conferences in my own room with master lightermen, but they all gave me to understand that the difficulties facing them were too great. They said that the business was a dangerous one; that if they came into collision with an organised body of men situated as these privileged lightermen are the risk would be very great. They pointed out that their craft and the goods they were responsible for were so vulnerable that it was wiser to submit to the temporary loss, and endeavour to get relief by legislation. Rather than lose our trade, I then sought the help of the Shipping Federation, an institution that has been as helpful to the men as it has been to the masters. The Shipping Federation was willing to provide men, and there were numerous applications from the outports, subject to two conditions. One was that there should be some permanence of employment, and the other that there should be police protection. We discussed this very seriously for some time, but had at last to give it up because the Watermen's Society might at any moment order them out. A good deal has been said about the qualifications of these men. Of course, we must have on the river men who know their work, but so it is with the crews who man our ships. Our captains, our mates, our engineers, and crews all have to prove that they are qualified for the work that they have to do, but having been engaged, they work with us, and from the time that they enter our employment there is almost invariably the greatest cordiality between ourselves and them. We employ also some hundreds of men in the docks, and whether they are union or free labourers, we do not care so long as they do their work, and for several years since the dock strike things have gone on smoothly. I say that it is wrong that the trade of this great Port of London —my own trade for instance which is in competition with foreign lines—should all be hampered by an old world monopoly, mischievous alike to employers and employed.

10568. Now will you tell us what you have to say with regard to the general question?—The New Zealand Shipping Company, of which I am chairman, are the owners of a fleet of 17 steamers of the aggregate tonnage of 101,791 tons, 13 of which are trading between the Port of London and New Zealand. I am also authorised to speak on behalf of the Shaw, Savill and Albion and Shire Lines, representing 21 steamers and 9 sailing ships of 138,343 tons, employed in the same trade. My experience of the shipping trade of the Port of London extends over a period of 36 years, and for seven years, namely, from 1881 to 1888, I was a director of the London and St. Katharine Docks, during which time the Royal Albert and the Tilbury docks were constructed. During these 36 years an extraordinary development has taken place in the trade of the Port of London, and especially in regard to the size of the ships visiting the port. I believe I am correct in stating that up to the year 1865 it was the exception for any steamer exceeding 2,000 tons gross register to visit the port. The first steamers that my firm employed in the Indian and Australian trades varied in size from 2,000 to 3,000 tons, with a draught of water not exceeding 22 ft. to 23 ft. At the time of the construction of the Royal Albert Docks it was believed that the facilities then provided would meet the requirements for many years to come, and the construction of the Tilbury Dock by the East and West India Dock Company was regarded with dismay by the London and St. Katharine Dock Company. On completion of the Tilbury Dock a sharp competition arose between these two dock companies, exceptional inducements being offered to shipowners to berth their ships at Tilbury. Yet in the comparatively short space of 13 years it is found that both docks are fully occupied, and that there is a deficiency of accommodation, so much so that old occupants of the docks with a growing business are being deprived of some of the space and facilities they had previously enjoyed in order to make room for newcomers. I have read the evidence given by Sir Thomas Sutherland, Mr. Becket Hill, and Mr. Williams, and generally agree with all they have said, and particularly with the suggestion of Mr. Becket Hill that if there was a barge canal in the Royal Albert Docks, the discharge of steamers would be greatly facilitated. The shipowners' most pressing needs are: (1) another large and commodious deep-water dock, provided with all modern appliances for rapid discharging and loading.

10569. Will you tell us where you would suggest a site for that dock?—That would be of little value coming from me. It needs much more expert knowledge of the subject than I profess to have.

10570. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You would prefer to have it nearer the Albert Dock, would you not, if you could, in preference, to further down the river?—We should like to bring the ships as near to the trade as we can. The advantage of the Albert Dock is that it is not too far for carts and vans. The docks lower down are under the disadvantage that the goods cannot be taken by road.

10571. (*Chairman.*) Now will you tell us what the other most pressing needs of the shipowners are?—(2) Additional dry docks for cleaning and repairing; (3) increased shed accommodation and more powerful modern cranes in the existing docks, also improved facilities for getting goods away by barges; (4) the deepening of the channels of the river to 30 ft.; (5) sorting sheds for refrigerated produce; (6) greater freedom for the employment of lightermen. Now I should like to say a few words on the question of deepening the river to 30ft. Sir Thomas Sutherland, in the excellent evidence he submitted to the Commissioners, appears to me to have restricted his general ideas as to the requirements to

the depth of water in the Suez Canal, through which all the Peninsular and Oriental and British India steamers have to pass; but in the case of steamers to and from America, Australia and New Zealand no such limitation exists, and the tendency is to increase the size and draught of water to the utmost limits of the port. I express the hope that we shall regard 30 feet as the minimum depth. I may mention the fact that, for instance, the White Star Line steamers trading to Australia are now 11,000 to 12,000 tons, drawing 32½ ft. when fully laden; the New Zealand Shipping Company's steamers, 9,000 tons and 28 ft. draught of water. Already it happens frequently that the latter are resting on the mud in the docks when loading, and have to be restricted in weight of cargo and coals. These limitations are injurious to the trade of the Port of London and to the community at large, for, given a sufficiency of cargo, the larger the ship is the more economically she can carry. A very important interest connected with the steamers I am here to represent is that of refrigerated produce imported into London. This trade only commenced in the year 1882, and you will see from a table which I will hand in the steady increase of the New Zealand exports, nearly all of which come to London.

(*The witness handed in a table showing the increase in the exports from New Zealand from 1882 to 1899. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 9.*)

All the steamers regularly trading between London and New Zealand are provided with freezing machinery and insulation for carrying 40,000 to 100,000 carcases of mutton or an equivalent of beef or dairy produce. The discharge of this produce is attended with considerable delay and expense and a certain amount of injury owing to insufficiency of cold storage and also to the difficulty of sorting out the numerous marks. The great need of one or more sorting sheds for facilitating the work has long been felt and urgently pressed, the New Zealand Government having gone so far as to offer to contribute towards the cost of construction and maintenance of such sorting sheds for New Zealand produce. Negotiations at different times have been conducted with the London and St. Katharine Docks Company for providing these at the joint expense of the New Zealand Government, the meat exporters, and the shipowners, but so far without success. This matter is not only of very great importance to the Colony of New Zealand, but to the British consumer, who is becoming year by year more dependent on foreign supplies of meat. I hand in a table showing a summary of the frozen meat exported from New Zealand for the six months ending the 31st December, 1900.

(*The witness handed in the table. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 10.*)

I also hand in a table showing the exports of frozen meat from New Zealand from 1882 to 1900.

(*The witness handed in the table. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 11.*)

10572. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are all those tables compiled by Dalgety and Co. ?—I think the first is from the official reports of the New Zealand Government; the last is compiled by Dalgety and Co. I would mention that I have only here put in the trade of New Zealand, but the meat trade from Australia is very large, and also large quantities come in from the Argentine. It would be a very great help if sorting sheds were provided, and it may possibly be useful to bear in mind that if ever we should be in difficulty with regard to imports of food into the country, these sheds would serve as additional storage, and be helpful to that extent.

10573. They would come in very useful?—Yes, they would come in very useful, without being at the public expense, because meanwhile we want them for turning over and sorting the marks, which needs to be done in a refrigerated shed, so that the meat shall not thaw and become damaged.

10574. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) With reference to what you have said about the shipowners' most pressing needs, I presume another one that you have not included is rapid despatch?—That I thought I had implied. It is despatch more than anything else that we want, owing to the increasing value of the ships that we employ.

10575. And that applies, of course, to detention in the river as much as to discharging the ships in the docks?—It does.

10576. Have you seen the report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission of 1894 as to deepening the river?—No, I have not.

10577. I was going to ask you if you approved of that, but you virtually say the same thing by saying that you want the channel to be deepened to 30ft. That, of course, is as far as the Albert Dock?—Yes.

10578. Are you acquainted at all with the so-called American bill of lading?—In a very general way; but I am not engaged in the American trade.

10579. The only question I wanted to ask you with regard to that is whether you consider that the ships get quicker despatch from the American bill of lading than they would from the ordinary one?—I do not see how a bill of lading can come into the question, because, regardless of the bill of lading, we begin to discharge our ships as soon as they come alongside the wharf, and continue that discharging until it is completed, paying the dock company for giving the goods back to the lighters of the merchants who have made their entries within 48 hours of the ship's arrival. The difference of the bill of lading is merely a question of expense to the shipowner.

10580. But you have that expense?—Yes, we have that expense.

10581. And unless you go to that expense you cannot have the facility of putting the goods on the wharf?—No, someone would have to bear the expense.

10582. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to the privileged watermen, your companies, I suppose, trade to other ports besides the Thames, do they not?—Not in England.

10583. Then you have no experience of the barge traffic on the Clyde, the Mersey, or the Tyne?—Very little.

10584. You gave evidence before the Commission of 1894?—I think not.

10585. Yes. I have all the evidence before me?—Then my memory is at fault.

10586. And I had as Chairman the honour of asking you a great many questions?—I had quite forgotten it.

10587. I was in hopes that you had refreshed your memory as to what you had said then, because I wanted to ask you whether you are still of the same opinion as you were in 1894 as to the necessity of deepening the river?—I hope I did not say anything on that occasion contrary to what I am expressing now.

10588. Your evidence was very strong that the river required to be deepened?—We have had a larger advance in the size of ships in the last six or seven years than at any other period, consequently the need is still greater.

10589. You stated this in one of your answers: "The larger the ships the more inconvenience we feel in London under the present state of things." I am referring to your answer to Question 1823?—I say the same now.

10590. You said "It was bad enough when we put in our letter of 1887, but in 1887 we never thought of building steamers to carry 10,000 tons of cargo." I was going to ask you whether this matter had not been agitated by the shipowners ever since the year 1887?—That is the case.

10591. And I think I am right in saying that Messrs. Gray, Dawes and Co. signed the letter of the 26th January, 1887, to the Thames Conservancy Board, urging the deepening of the river?—Yes.

10592. If you will kindly refer to page 126 of the evidence before that Commission it might be useful to see the signatories to that letter: The Secretary of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co., Gray, Dawes and Co., John Swire and Sons, Donald Currie and Co., McDiarmid, the Manager of Shaw, Savill and Albion Co., the Manager of the National Steam Navigation Co., the managers of the Glen Line, and without going through them all, I may say practically all the principal owners of ships in London. But very little has been done?—Very little. I am not aware of anything in the way of deepening.

10593. We have lately had a programme put forward

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by the Thames Conservancy, but very little has been done to realise it at present?—That is so.

10594. Then in 1894 you expressed the same opinion, speaking on behalf of your two companies?—Yes.

10595. The two companies that you now especially represent have a tonnage of about 240,000 tons, I think. I mean trading to London. You said 101,000 tons for the New Zealand Shipping Company and 138,000 for the Shaw, Savill and Albion and Shire Lines, making roughly 240,000 tons?—Yes.

10596. That, I suppose, is the tonnage of the ships, and does not represent the number of voyages into the Thames?—No; it would merely represent the tonnage of the ships.

10597. You would have to multiply that by some figure to show the number of ships making journeys in and out of the Thames?—About 2½ in the New Zealand trade. That is, they would make 2½ voyages per annum.

10598. That would represent 600,000 tons of vessels used in the Thames annually in your two companies alone?—Yes.

10599. And in 1894 you advanced the desire of having 30 ft. of water up as far as the Albert Dock?—Yes.

10600. You said: "It is far from creditable that the greatest city of the world should have its approaches in such a lamentable state. We know how the Clyde has been improved, and I hear a great deal about the improvements of the Continental ports, but why London should lie back and fall behind in the race I do not know." And, I suppose, from having the pleasure of seeing you here to-day you are still as strongly of that opinion as you were before?—Yes.

10601. It is now seven years since you gave that evidence in 1894, and little or nothing has been done?—That is the case.

10602. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) In case these great improvements in the river take place or are taken in hand, would you advocate a Trust on the same lines as the one at Liverpool, or not?—That is a question I have some little hesitation in answering, because I do not know enough about these Trusts. We have always got on extremely well with the dock company, and if the dock company was supplying our wants we should be quite content. If the dock company is from any cause unable to do it some other body must if the Port of London is not to fall behind.

10603. I only wanted to know if you had formed any opinion on the subject?—Sir John Wolfe-Barry called attention to this petition that was sent in in 1887. It is signed by nearly all the important shipowners in London, and it would be very interesting to see the tonnage or rather the size of the ships that they were employing then and the size of the ships that are being employed to-day. I venture to say we should find that the ships have more than doubled in size in that interval. At the later date in 1894 I spoke of a tonnage of 10,000 tons as the maximum, but we have already gone considerably in advance of that. There are steamers carrying 14,000 tons and even the British India Company has made a contract within the last few days for a new ship to carry 11,000 tons.

10604. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You have pointed out very clearly that considerable expenditure is required on the dock and the port generally. Have you formed any opinion where the money is to come from?—I have simply read the various suggestions that have been made more or less at this inquiry.

10605. You have not personally formed any opinion?—No.

10606. Sir Thomas Sutherland said: "Do not put it upon the ships"?—It seems to me to come to pretty much the same thing. If you put it on the ships we put it on the freight. If you put it on the goods it is not on the ships.

10607. Sir Thomas said: "If you put a high rate upon the ships you would discourage the shipowners from taking freight for that port, because the shipowner has to pay the money out of his pocket in the first instance." Do you think there is much in that argument?—It is a question not answered very easily. There are two classes of shipowners. There are those who are in regular trades with ships going backwards and forwards and seldom deviating, and in that regular trade it is possible to make the rates of freight to cover all these charges. There is another class of ships disrespectfully spoken of as "tramps" that are open to go to any part; and in the case of these vessels the shipowner would take the freight which pays him the best and send his ship where his charges were least.

10608. Then to that extent you would say that assuming a certain amount of annual charges would be incurred it should go upon the goods rather than upon the ships?—To that extent it would be better that it should be upon the goods rather than on the ships.

10609. The shipowner, I suppose, has a considerable amount of power in deflecting his ships from one port to the other. It is not merely a question of consignor or consignee?—It rests with the shipowner, and the shipowner is governed by the balance of profit and loss that is shown.

10610. And the rates that he sees staring him in the face?—Exactly.

10611. Have you any experience about trading to Antwerp with cargoes partly for Antwerp and partly for London?—Nothing that would be of any value. It is a diminishing quantity. Many years ago we used to send our steamers to Antwerp to be partially loaded. But the position has been reversed. The Antwerp trade has passed into the hands of the Continental lines, which now come and poach at our ports. For instance, a good many of them come to Middlesbrough. Now the London lines have been driven out of the Continent, and they take Middlesbrough. I mention Middlesbrough as a port where the Continental lines have retaliated. They have taken from us what we used to get by sending our ships to foreign ports, and now send their ships into our ports.

10612. You cannot give us any comparative statement of the case of identical ships going to Antwerp, and going to London, can you?—No.

10613. Then the present tendency of things is that Antwerp is the principal port for a certain quantity of traffic, and the balance of the cargo does not come to London; and London is the principal port for a certain quantity of traffic, and the balance does not go to Antwerp?—That is the case.

10614. There is not much taking of part-cargo in either case?—That is so.

Cross-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10615. You emphasise, apparently, the difficulty that arises from a strike. Is that really at the bottom of your grievance about the lightermen?—It has, certainly, been emphasised by the strike; but I went a little bit further than that. I said that it is an old grievance; that the position is an unsatisfactory one.

10616. It is inconvenient to you, I suppose, when the dock labourers strike?—Not in the same way. When the dock labourers struck, we had no difficulty in getting outside labour, and that outside labour remained with us, and after the dock labourers came back, we were the very best of friends. But the position with regard to the lightermen is an entirely different one.

10617. When the lightermen are on strike there is no difficulty about getting other men, is there?—We cannot promise those men permanent employment. What men want when they change employment is to remain.

10618. I thought you said that as soon as the dock-labourers' strike ceased, you took the dock-labourers back, and you were all good friends?—That is true, but we did not part with the men we had taken on.

10619. Then you could not have taken all the old labourers back?—I could not give you the figures, but we kept such men as desired to stay with us, and the dock labourers who came back worked with them, and from that time to this we have got on extremely well.

10620. And so with the lightermen. The lightermen who were on strike came back to work, and you have

got on very well. It is a fact, is it not, that the lightermen have only struck twice in the last 40 years?—I could not tell you that.

10621. Do you know to the contrary, or do you suggest to the contrary. It has been stated this morning here that they have only struck twice in the last 40 years?—I wonder at their striking at all.

10622. You have said in your evidence that you think the owners ought to be allowed to employ men whom they find the best qualified for the work. How do you ascertain the qualifications of your captains and mates whom you employ on your ships?—I had better tell you how we take them. We take young men with their qualifications. The lowest grade of certificate is that of second mate.

10623. Where do you get the certificate from?—The certificate is granted by the Board of Trade.

10624. So I thought. Then in that case you rely in the first instance on a certificate of the Board of Trade as to their competency? You do not take men for your ships as officers to navigate your ships unless you have a certificate of their competency?—Quite so, but there is no restriction as to numbers. Any young man can go up to the Board of Trade and say, "I have had my sea experience and I wish for your certificate." He gets it as a matter of course.

10625. But he has to satisfy the Board of Trade that he is competent before they grant the certificate?—Certainly, but there is no limitation as to numbers.

10626. What limitation is there as to the number of lightermen who might offer to be apprenticed and get their certificates. There is no limitation, is there?—They are a very limited body.

10627. But in law there is no limitation of the number. Do you not think that the law of supply and demand applies to this as much as to anything else?—No.

10628. If there was a demand for more lightermen do you not think there would be a greater supply?—All my information goes to show that there is an insufficiency of lightermen owing to restrictions.

Re-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

10629. One question about the examination of the Board of Trade for certificates. That does not relate to the actual navigation part, does it, but rather to the scientific side of navigation; that is to say, capacity for doing the mathematical and scientific part?—There are two examinations—one for seamanship and the other for practical navigation.

10630. There is the practical seamanship too?—Yes.

10631. With regard to the number of licensed men do you happen to know about the rules of the Society of Foremen Lightermen with regard to the taking of apprentices?—I do not know the point you are referring to. I see that they take apprentices.

10632. You do not know anything about the rules of the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen of the River Thames?—No.

See 11004.

10633. With regard to the examination for seamanship that is not surely an examination as regards practical seamanship. It is a question of what you would do if, for instance, you had an emergency. It is more or less an oral or paper examination, is it not?—It is a very practical examination for everything connected with the working of a ship apart from navigation. You have two distinct examinations. A young man has to begin with seamanship and finish with navigation.

10634. Is there any analogy whatever between the work into which that examination goes in the case of a captain, or a mate, or a man who wants to be either one or the other, and the work which has to be done by a lighterman on the River Thames?—Very little. There was a time, of course, when it was much more important, but as lighters now are mainly towed, a man needs to have very little seamanship qualification. But I would say this, that the shipowner has opportunities (not that shipowners want to become lightermen), of selecting men; there are always a number of men who are willing to take longshore work instead of going to sea, in whose case with a very moderate examination they would be quite able to undertake the management of barges. The owners of barges may be trusted not to put their valuable property into the hands of men who are not qualified to look after it, and in my opinion the owner of the property is the best judge of the man he employs.

Cross-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

10635. You say the restriction of the employment to a small body of men is unnecessary. I want to clear that up. Do you say that if the present restriction were removed the number of men employed in lightering work on the river would be larger?—I should say so, certainly.

10636. Then it is almost the same thing under the present system. There is really a shortage of men?—That is the information I get.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

10637. As I gather with regard to the suggestion of charges, if charges were put on the ship you of the regular liners would be able to maintain the charges and still get them back on the goods at the other end. You would put it into your freight and get it on your goods, and, therefore, the consignor at the other end would have to charge this rate. That would be practically the same thing as in the case of a tramp steamer, would it not?—Not exactly.

10638. The tramp steamer would not be able to keep up rates, you think?—No, not so easily as the regular liner.

10639. That is the distinction you draw. That is the view you take?—I refer to the different systems existing in the regular line and the tramp steamers, but I hardly like to express an opinion different to Sir Thomas Sutherland. I think he looked at the matter all round much more than I did. My mind has been given more to my own particular business.

10640. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) On the subject of examination I suppose the man in charge of a barge is more comparable to a leading seaman or a quartermaster than to a mate of one of your big ships?—Yes.

10641. You do not have any examination for them, do you?—No.

10642. You select them from your practical knowledge of their ability to do the work?—Quite so.

Mr. Benjamin Joseph Jacob called and examined.

10643. (*Chairman.*) You are a retired master lighterman?—Yes.

10644. You wish to give evidence on behalf of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

10645. Will you be good enough to proceed with your evidence?—I have been a member of the court of the Watermen's Company for the past 14 years, and was until last year senior partner in the firm of Benjamin Jacob and Sons, lightermen and steam tug owners. The firm then owned 80 barges, and are also tug owners. I had been extensively engaged in the business for 48 years, and was a partner in the firm for 23 years, having previously worked as a journeyman lighterman for 25 years. The duties of the court of the Watermen's Company may be briefly stated thus:—Two members taken in rotation attend what is commonly called a rota court every Thursday. Two members of the court must be present together at these weekly meetings, when the general business of the company is transacted and licences are granted to apprentices. If complaints are made against members of the company, either by the public or by other members, the complaints come before the rota court, who issue summonses which have to be heard before the court of complaints. The court of complaints is a meeting of the whole court, which is usually held on the last Thursday in every month. It is at this court that the judicial functions of the company are exercised, and the summonses which have been granted by the court at the rota court meetings are heard and adjudicated upon. The number of them varies considerably, and consist most commonly either

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of using abusive language or infringing the acts or bye-laws of the company by working craft without the requisite licensed lightermen on board, working boats not being licensed, or when carrying a number of persons in excess of that expressed in the licence granted by the court, neglecting duty, and occasionally instances of overcharge by watermen are met with, but they are exceptional. The business of the court is conducted in a methodical and painstaking manner, and in my opinion substantial justice is done. The company have no power to enforce their own convictions. In case of need they apply for assistance in this respect to the Lord Mayor or other magistrate of the district where the offence was committed. Before those tribunals sentences properly pronounced by the Watermen's Court can be enforced.

10646. Did you write the statement of your evidence yourself?—With the assistance of the clerk. It is similar evidence to what was given twelve months ago before the House of Lords. At the Rota Courts, masters who wish to apply for a two years' license for their apprentices in accordance with the provisions of the Act of 1859, attend, and master and apprentice are examined as to the qualifications of the apprentice to take sole charge of a barge. The master has to produce a certificate, signed by himself and six other freemen, that the apprentice has served the whole period in craft, and that he is competent to take sole charge. The examination is a real enquiry, and the inspector of the district where the apprentice has been at work is always in attendance. The Court are in many cases not satisfied as to the competency, and order the apprentice to work for a further period before making a fresh application. The licensing of pleasure boats and watermen's skiffs, as to their carrying capacity, is also done at these weekly Courts. Complaints of masters against apprentices and apprentices against masters are also heard on these occasions. The fees payable are £1 8s. for binding, £2 6s. for the freedom, and 2s. 6d. each for the licenses. An annual fee of 3s., called quarterage, is paid by each freeman. The members of the Court also have to attend a Court held on the second Tuesday in every month for the purpose of binding apprentices and granting freedoms, licenses, and contract licenses. At these courts the apprentice and his parent or guardian attend with the master. A certificate of birth has to be produced proving that the apprentice is not under 14 or above 20 years of age, and the parent or guardian has to give his consent. The period of apprenticeship is for five, six or seven years. A copy of the indenture is given to the master and to the apprentice. A notice is also given to the apprentice that he will be expected to be able to swim before obtaining his two years' license. The average age of an apprentice, when bound, is about 16 years and 4 months. Two years' contract men, under the provisions of the Act of 1864, now incorporated in the Conservancy Act of 1894, are also contracted to the masters at these courts. They must be over twenty years of age, and produce a certificate of birth in proof thereof. Apprentices who have served the whole period of their apprenticeship also obtain their freedoms on these occasions. The master has previously to attend and sign the register consenting to the freedom, and the apprentice has to obtain the signatures of six freemen to the effect that he has during the last two years of his apprenticeship been continuously serving as a lighterman, and that they are of opinion that he is quite competent to act as a lighterman. The applicant must produce the certificate before the court, and after paying the fees and obtaining his freedom he is examined by the court, all the other applicants being excluded, as to his qualifications. If he is known to the inspectors, who are always in attendance, the examination is not severe, but in the event of there being any doubt the applicant is put through a very severe examination. As a proof of its severity I may mention that nearly 10 per cent. are put back or refused the lighterman's license. The court is an open one, and other freemen attend, the hall being at times crowded. An objection can be raised by anyone present, or lodged previously in writing. The examination is a real and serious enquiry into the service qualification of an applicant, and the inspectors, who are acquainted with all the apprentices in their several districts, make the court aware if they do not know an applicant. The regulations with reference to the applicant for a two years' contract license are similar, except that the applicant in this case must obtain the signature of twelve freemen to the certificate of competency. The representations made that the licenses are not guarantees of competency are entirely false. The court in the most bonâ fide manner endeavour to discharge their duties and to take care that none but properly qualified men are authorised to work on the river. They do this not only for the benefit of the public, but for their own safety as the employers of licensees. Under the provisions of the Act of 1859, with respect to the renewal of licenses every three years, the court have the power if any case comes before them of refusing to renew the same, in addition to the general power of suspending a license for misconduct or incompetency. The court have in some instances suspended licenses for misconduct, but they have never had occasion to revoke a license on the ground of incompetency discovered subsequent to the granting of the original license. In the event of a felony being committed by any Freeman, his license is always cancelled, and he cannot obtain it again without making application to the full court in writing, accompanying such application with testimonials as to reformation and offers to find work for the applicant in case the license is renewed. There are several cases where applications have been deferred for different periods, and others where licenses have never been renewed. I have always been accustomed to employ the trained Freemen of the Watermen's Company and their qualified apprentices to navigate my barges to and fro. The court of complaints, held from time to time by the court of the company at Watermen's Hall (and which has been established since 1827 under the sanction of Parliament), for deciding disputes and inflicting fines for any breach of duty of the company's Acts and bye-laws, works well and efficiently, and provides a quick and inexpensive mode of settling questions arising between the Freemen, and saves much valuable time and law costs in litigation which would otherwise be incurred by resorting to the ordinary tribunals; in fact the river police bring the cases which come under their notice for infringement of the company's Acts and bye-laws before this court instead of before a police magistrate. Prior to the Act of 1827 the company was not incorporated. It was incorporated by that Act. It remained in that condition until 1859, when most of the provisions of the Act of 1827 were repealed and practically the company became re-incorporated under the Act of 1859. Up to 1859 a master could only have a limited number of apprentices; by that Act he can take any number, and since 1864 it has been competent for any barge owner to take an unlimited number of contract men. In 1864 a Bill was introduced, called the Conservancy Bill, the object of which was to throw open the river to any person, skilled or unskilled. The object was not attained, but a provision was inserted allowing men who proved that they had worked under a contract for two years in the river to become licensed, and they are called contract licensed men. The result of that law remains that a man must be either a licensed Freeman of the company or a licensed man who has worked for two years under contract. Another attack was made upon the company and the privileges of the Freemen in 1870, which failed. In 1890 a Bill founded on the recommendation of the Thames Traffic Committee of 1879 was brought in by the same interests which promoted the Bill of this year. The Bill of 1890 was thrown out after being thoroughly threshed out by a strong Committee of the House of Commons. I hand in a copy of that Bill.

(*The witness handed in a copy of the Thames Watermen and Lightermen Bill*, 1890. *See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 12.*)

I also hand in a copy of the Petition presented against that Bill by a number of master lightermen, bargeowners, wharfingers and others.

(*The witness handed in a copy of the Petition. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 13.*)

I also hand in a copy of the Special Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Bill.

(*The witness handed in a copy of the Special Report See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 14.*)

The conditions of the traffic and navigation on the Thames are practically the same now as they were then, except that the traffic becomes more congested year by year, and the navigation consequently more difficult, and the same reasons which influenced that Committee in favour of retaining the licensing system still hold good. In 1871 a bill was brought in to alter the constitution of the court of the company by providing for the election of the court by the Freemen from among their own body, and for two members of the Watermen's Company to be placed upon the

Thames Conservancy. That bill was thrown out by the Committee to whom it was referred. A precisely similar bill to that one (excepting the appointment of two members on the Thames Conservancy) was in 1892 brought in by the same persons as those promoting the bill of 1871, but was thrown out by the Committee without hearing the case of the company. A similar bill was brought in in 1899, but thrown out by a Committee of the House of Lords. In 1893 a bill was promoted by the company and passed, providing for the measuring and registration of craft and the measuring and registration of pleasure boats. The effect of this Act has been to remove the former complaints which existed with reference to false registration, and has practically done away with the accidents which used to occur through pleasure boats being overcrowded. Complaints were made before the Thames Traffic Committee, 1879, that the Court refused to elect barge owners as freemen under the provisions of the 25th section of 22 and 23 Vic. cap. 133. All barge owners who apply are now admitted, and over 40 have taken up the freedom of the company, and two have been elected in the Court. While the great body of the men are fairly well conducted, and are as honest and skilful a body of men as will be found engaged in any labour of so arduous a character, yet, looking at the hard life they have to undergo and the temptations to which they are subjected, it is, in my opinion, essentially necessary that a proper system of control and management should exist for the maintenance of order and regularity amongst the men, and for the enacting and carrying into effect the necessary regulations and bye-laws for their conduct on the river. The members of the company's court are freemen of the company who have been actively and personally engaged in the various departments of labour on the river both as lightermen, bargemen, pilots, etc., and who by industry and attention to their duties have raised themselves to be employers of the working lightermen and watermen. The members of the court derive no pecuniary or personal benefit or advantage whatever from the discharge of their duties (beyond a limited sum allowed for travelling expenses, not exceeding 5s.); they have arduous and difficult duties to perform, involving on the part of some of the members of the court very frequent and long attendances at the hall of the company; they have the duty of examining and reporting upon all persons applying to be licensed as apprentices, and thereafter on their applying for certificates when they desire to obtain their freedom, granting summonses, boat licences, settling disputes, managing the charities, and attending the various committees which meet from time to time; and all these duties they discharge gratuitously, and simply from a desire to promote the benefit of the company and the trade of the Port of London. Certain provisions have been made by which a fund generally known and called "The Poor's Fund" has been created and accumulated. Under the authority creating that fund Sunday ferries were established by the company at various plying places and public stairs between Vauxhall and Limehouse, and the proceeds arising therefrom were from time to time received and disbursed for the benefit of the persons entitled thereto. On the erection of bridges and public improvements (such as Blackfriars, Waterloo and London Bridges) many of the Sunday ferries which had previously existed and been in full operation on the sites of the bridges or near thereto, and were producing a large income thereby, became useless and were in fact destroyed, and large sums of money have accordingly been received by the company from the promoters of these undertakings by way of compensation for the loss of such ferries, which moneys have been invested by the company in the public funds. The dividends arising from such funds, as well as the incomes produced by the existing Sunday ferries, have been and now are disbursed, under the supervision and management of the court, in small pensions among the poor, aged, and decayed freemen and their widows, and about 500 persons are at the present time participating in the benefits derived therefrom. The income arising from the Poor's Funds invested is now between £1,400 and £1,500 a year. In addition to the foregoing, the company are also trustees of a small fund belonging to the watermen of Westminster, created under the same Acts of Parliament which empowered the company to form Sunday ferries for the benefit of the poor, aged, decayed, and maimed freemen of the said company of the said parish. On the erection of Vauxhall and Westminster Bridges, where ferries formerly existed belonging to what was known as "The Westminster Chest," the sum of £2,760 18s. 1d. Consols was received as compensation for the loss of these ferries, and such sum was paid to the company and invested by them as trustees for the Society of Westminster Watermen, and the annual income produced thereby is paid over by the company to the stewards of such society, to be disbursed among the poor persons entitled thereto. There is also, belonging to the company, an asylum for the aged, decayed, and maimed watermen and lightermen and their widows, situated at Penge, in the County of Surrey, and occupying two and a quarter acres of freehold land, and contains 47 substantial almshouses. The said almshouses could contain 94 inmates, the average being 65. The married couples receive 9s. per week, and the single men and women 6s., besides coal, medical attendance, and medicine. This charity, founded by the contributions of members of the company, aided by those of some of the public, is supported by annual subscriptions and donations, and by income arising from the funds already collected. This charity is quite outside any duty imposed by Act of Parliament, and no funds of the company are used for its maintenance. Six of these almshouses were built in 1895 at a cost of £1,400. Some years ago the late William Vokins, Esq., conveyed 12 other almshouses, situated at Ditchling, Sussex, to the company for the benefit of the aged and infirm freemen, and endowed the same by his will. For the benefit of the inmates of the almshouses at Penge, and also the inhabitants of the immediate neighbourhood, a church was some years ago erected through the exertions and contributions of the court and their friends, in which free sittings are provided for the pensioners of the asylum and the residents in the neighbourhood. The above-mentioned almshouses are supported as well by donations and annual subscriptions received from master watermen and lightermen, barge owners, merchants, and corporations engaged in the commerce of the Port of London, and from others, as from the charity's funds, and amount to a large sum annually. The "others" include the working men of the River Thames. They contribute very liberally to these almshouses. The court consists of members from all parts, and is a fairly representative body, and when a vacancy occurs effect is given, if such is possible, to representations as to electing working freemen. During the last nine years the court have elected three working lightermen and one pilot as members of the court and, in my opinion, they sufficiently represent the interests of the general freemen of the company. I am of opinion that the present licensing system is necessary to the interests of the public and the trade of the Port of London. The injustice of depriving the lightermen of their privilege is manifest. The course of legislation during the last 40 years shows that the question of the necessity to employ skilled labour on the River Thames has been carefully inquired into, and on four successive occasions (1859, 1864, 1870, and 1890), at an expense of about £10,000. Parliament, after carefully enquiring into the matter has declined to throw the river open. In reliance on this fact the freemen of the company have assumed, as they were entitled to do, that the rights and privileges of the company were definitely established and approved by Parliament. They have consequently made pecuniary payments to entitle them to membership in the company, and moreover have served protracted periods of apprenticeship under arduous circumstances and at great cost of time and labour. The injustice of depriving the lightermen of these rights and privileges guaranteed to them by Parliament without receiving any compensation is obvious. A still more serious objection arises from the injurious effect it is likely to have upon the interests of the public. The conduct of the traffic upon the Thames is attended by so much danger that it can only be successfully conducted by those who are possessed of considerable skill and experience. It is to be observed moreover that the mischief which results from the employment of incompetent men cannot be confined to their operation, to the navigation, to the wrongdoer, or to those who are properly responsible for their want of skill. Another employer, who may have exercised all proper care in placing his craft in the hands of thoroughly competent men, may find himself involved in a collision and thus suffer a very heavy loss through the carelessness or incompetency of someone navigating other craft, who, though admittedly in the wrong, and liable therefore to make good the result of his error, may be wholly unable to do so through lack of means. The present system has

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the great advantage that it offers the best precaution against the employment of incompetent men. Nothing will create the required skill and competency except a continuous service upon the river, and nothing will ensure this experience so fully as a well regulated system of apprenticeship. Under his indenture the apprentice cannot play truant at night time or in bad weather, and it is precisely at these times that the most useful experience is obtained. It is because the system of apprenticeship ensures that during the long apprenticeship the apprentice shall work all weathers, and at all hours, and under all circumstances, that it offers the best possible guarantee that the man who has passed through the training has acquired the experience and skill necessary to carry on the occupation, in which want of skill may be productive of enormous loss and perhaps peril, not only to himself and the craft under his control but to passenger steamers and all using the river. Another advantage is secured by the present system in the close acquaintance possessed by the officers of the Watermen's company with the freemen and apprentices. With few exceptions all thus engaged are known to the officers of the company, and all without exception are registered in the company's books. In case, therefore, of any misdemeanour or negligence, the wrongdoer is easily found and rendered amenable to the jurisdiction of the company's court or of the ordinary Courts of Law. This is very important, as the opportunities for theft and the temptations which constantly beset them are greater than in any other occupation. The work of a lighterman in dumb craft is quite different to that of the men in sailing craft. In the latter case they are permanent hands and reside in the craft, they always have two hands, and the mate, who is very often the son of the captain, acquires the necessary experience before he is made captain. These sailing craft from the Medway always take a freeman on board to assist them through the bridges. A proof of the absolute necessity of skilled labour was shown in the late strike, when if it had not been for the Association of Foremen Lightermen remaining loyal to the masters, the latter could not have dealt with their work in the smallest degree and must have been beaten. The privilege has always acted as a great deterrent to strikes on the river, as the men have recognised that they would jeopardise their privileges in the event of striking. Strikes of any magnitude have only occurred on two occasions during the last 40 years. The number of convictions for theft, etc., are remarkably small. The number of licensed men is about 5,863. The number of apprentices, 1,676. The number of contract men holding licenses is 359. The number of dumb craft registered in the books of the company on the 31st December, 1900, was 10,205, and their tonnage 704,421, and of sailing craft 913, tonnage 61,808. The number of new craft registered from 1st January, 1899, to 31st December, 1899, was 433, tonnage 41,614, and from 1st January, 1900, to 31st December, 1900, was 482, tonnage 41,116. The fee for measuring and registering a barge is 5s. The income of the company averages about £3,200, and the expenditure £3,130. The accounts are audited by an auditor appointed by the Thames Conservancy, and are submitted to the Board of Trade. The number of lives lost by drowning during the last eight years has been 104, showing that there is considerable risk to life which would be greatly augmented in case of inexperienced men taking charge of craft. Two hundred and fifty-three barge owners signed the petition against altering the present system of licensing in 1890, when the bill for throwing the river open was before Parliament, and the same number of signatures could be obtained on the present occasion. The promoters of the Thames Lightermen Bill propose that the river should be thrown open, but do not suggest any provision for carrying on the company's functions, as Section 84 of the Company's Act enacts that "for providing a fund to defray the expenses of the company every freeman shall pay 3s. per annum." In the event of the licensing system being done away with it would be impossible to levy these fees. I am strongly of opinion that if it were impossible to insure there would not be any question of doing away with the licensing system. The insurance companies always insert a condition into their policies that they shall only be liable in the event of craft being manned by licensees.

See 10777

10647. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Do all the marine insurance companies insist upon that stipulation?—As far as our barge owners insurance is concerned, they insure under all circumstances as long as there are competent men on board.

10648. Have you any statement by insurance companies to refer us to, showing that they insist upon that stipulation?—Not here.

10649. How do the insurance companies act in other ports than London where there are no licensees?—I am not aware of that.

10650. Are the goods uninsured?—The goods are all insured.

10651. The goods would be insured in those cases in other ports where there are no licensees, and I suppose we may assume that if these privileges are withdrawn the insurance companies would still find a way to insure?—Possibly they would require a higher premium.

10652. You have no evidence that the premium would be higher, have you?—The only evidence we have is that we find it is a very difficult thing at the present time to get insured at all.

10653. How is that?—There is so much risk.

10654. What is the risk?—There is the risk of collision. There is a great risk for this reason. Under the Compulsory Pilotage Act the pilot is only responsible to the extent of £100 if he runs down a craft and is found guilty of incompetency, and the barge might have £3,000 or £4,000, or £20,000 worth of goods in her. They could not recover from the owner of the vessel which runs her down if there is a compulsory pilot on board her.

10655. As far as I recollect no barge owner before has stated as one of his grievances that he finds it difficult to insure?—I am rather surprised at that.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) This witness is a barge owner, I understand, himself.

10656. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) This is the first case where we have had a statement to that effect made. I should like you to add to your statement by mentioning what the premium of insurance is?—It varies from 10 per cent. to 20 per cent.

10657. On the goods?—On the goods and craft together—against all damage.

10658. Is not that a very serious charge upon the traffic in the Port of London?—Yes; it is so crowded; there are constantly accidents. It is very rare we go a year without having to make very heavy claims against our insurance company for above what our premium is.

10659. Are you quite sure that the premium is 10 per cent. upon this traffic passing in the Port of London?—I am quite certain of that.

10660. Is not that much heavier than any other charges upon the traffic of which we have heard?—I have no doubt it is. I have no doubt any master lighterman could tell you that it is quite as high as that.

10661. Are we to take it that 10 per cent. of the goods passing in barges in the Port of London are lost?—I mean the charge on premium is 10 per cent.; the cost for the premium on insurance is 10 per cent.

10662. 10 per cent. on the value of the goods insured?—Yes, what we are insured for, whatever the amount is.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) The premium is 10 per cent.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I think it is in the time policy.

10663. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) You mean the annual premium of insurance on the barge?—Yes.

10664. But not 10 per cent. on the goods conveyed?—No, I do not say that. We pay so much money for a year, an annual policy to cover all risks. It is so much per ton of the carrying power of the craft.

See 10863.

10665. Is that because the barge is liable to the full amount?—Yes. The lighterman is entirely liable.

10666. He is liable to the ship, although the ship itself is not liable?—That is so.

10667. You gave us the number of dumb craft registered and other figures?—Yes.

10668. Are we to take that as the actual figure of craft in existence and at work in the Port of London?—You may take that as guaranteed, taken from the present craft licences according to the registration numbers on our books at the present time.

10669. But are all these craft in existence?—Yes, otherwise the barge owner would have to pay for licensing them every year. These are licensed every year and registered through the books of the company every year.

10670. And those are the actual numbers existing?—

Those are the actual numbers from the books of the company at the present time.

10671. You say that the number of convictions for theft, etc., is remarkably small?—Very small.

10672. Can you tell us the number?—I cannot tell you the number. The number is very small. We have only had to suspend about half a dozen licences, I suppose, for some years past. I am sorry to say we shall have to suspend one which was a case tried and conviction obtained at the Newington Sessions last week of a freeman being convicted of stealing some rope from one of the steamers. His licence will have to be suspended at the next court.

10673. Have you many cases of theft reported to you?—Very few amongst the lightermen themselves. There are other men going about who are constantly on the look-out, but during the last few years the police surveillance has been so good that there are very few thefts about the river at all among any class of men.

10674. You speak of the guarantee of having a good class of men always attending to the barges in bad weather and at night time, and so on?—At all hours and in all weathers.

10675. We have had statements made to us before the Commission that barges are very frequently left unattended altogether?—That is when they are moored in a tier or at a buoy, or safe alongside a steamer ready for the next morning's work, or at a granary. It would not do to have the men on board constantly; you could not possibly do the work; it would mean double the money if we had men on board always.

10676. But are they not unattended sometimes in the docks when it is desirable that a man should be in attendance?—You are never supposed to have a man on board in the dock for the simple reason that you would find him dead very possibly in the morning in the winter time. The dock people do not allow any fire on board a barge in a dock. I have been nearly frozen myself when I have been there.

10677. Then you justify the absence of men in attendance on barges of which complaint has been made?—If it is in a dock, unless they have a valuable cargo, when it would not be well to leave it unattended.

10678. I suppose you have heard complaints of apprentices being allowed so much about the docks and in public-houses, and not attending to the barges?—I am sorry to say that the good old rule has become almost extinct. When I was a lad no freeman would allow an apprentice to enter a public-house where he was; he would be likely to get a kick behind him and be sent out sharp if he went into a public-house where there was a freeman; but at the present day it is not so.

10679. You are aware that lately complaints have been made by associations of workmen and others that the apprentices upon these barges are leading a life which is not altogether desirable?—I presume, in all trades, there are some apprentices who lead a life which is not altogether desirable. I always understood that boys will be boys, and when they are between a boy and a man they are worse still.

10680. That is all you can say about it?—They are not worse on the river than they are anywhere else. They want looking after and properly training, and to be treated well, and they generally turn out pretty well.

10681. You say that the conduct of the traffic upon the Thames is attended by so much danger that it can only be successfully conducted by those who are possessed of considerable skill and experience?—Yes.

10682. Did you hear the evidence which was given by Mr. Hume to-day as to the comparison between the Humber and the Thames?—I heard some of that evidence. There is a great deal of difference. I believe there is no river like the Thames, where they navigate under oars.

10683. The danger you speak of arises entirely from that circumstance?—Not entirely. A tug that tows barges behind her has to be very careful as they come up through the Pool sometimes; and even going through the bridges they have to be careful. There is a great deal of skill required on the part of the captain of a tug to know his duty in towing craft.

10684. As to the necessity for skilled labour, is there any greater necessity for licensing with regard to lightering than there is with regard to carmen in the City of London, for instance, driving their waggons and conveyances through that difficult traffic?—Yes, for the simple reason that a carman can stop within a few yards; he can see where danger is; but a man with a barge of between 50 and 60 tons, or going up to 100 tons, cannot stop; he cannot bring up quickly.

10685. The business of a carman involves what one may call very difficult navigation?—I do not consider a carman has anything to do as difficult as a lighterman has, or anything like the risk.

10686. You told us that the Committee of 1890 decided for certain reasons to retain the licensing system. Can you tell us what those reasons were which influenced the Committee?—They came to the conclusion that it was necessary for a man to be proved to be a man of skill and ability.

10687. They did not state their reasons in the report, did they?—No, I do not think they did; they only threw out the bill.

10688. So that all they decided was negative to a certain extent, and they did not give an explanation of the reasons for coming to their decisions?—I do not think they stated any reasons.

10689. We are not able to compare the reasons which acted upon their minds except by inference?—No, I do not think so.

10690. I wish to know if you have any statement of the reasons that you can give us which acted upon their minds. You refer to the reasons; you say they were influenced by the same reasons?—I do not know what their reasons were. They were the same parties that brought the bill up. They wanted to throw the river open because they thought, I have no doubt, that they would get the work done much more cheaply, and they would not be under the necessity of employing licensed men.

10691. You have spoken about renewing licenses?—Yes.

10692. And that sometimes you refuse to renew them on the ground of incompetency. Can you tell me, first of all, are there any permanent licenses?—They have to be renewed every three years.

10693. That applies to all licenses?—All licenses for the river. Every three years they must be renewed.

10694. So that a man may lose his license from misconduct, but in addition to that the company have power not to renew the license?—Yes.

10695. Can they do that without assigning any reasons?—They would not be so unjust as to do it without assigning a reason.

10696. Have you ever refused to renew the license of a holder of a license because he had engaged in a strike at one time, refusing to work for people and then, when he changed his mind, went back and did the work. You support the members of the company, although they possess these privileges, in the practice of refusing to work. Is that so?—No; certainly not support them in the practice of refusing to work.

10697. Do you renew the licenses?—Yes, because it is a license of competency. A man might refuse to work and might be thoroughly competent for work. We have no jurisdiction over whether a man declines to work or not.

10698. Is it not a case of misconduct for a man holding a privilege of that kind to refuse to do the business?—I cannot say it is misconduct. He has a perfect right to go to work or to refrain from working. It is his freedom as a subject, and it would be interfering with the liberty of the subject to say, "You shall work," or, "You shall not work."

10699. But he claims a very special position—he claims that nobody else is to be allowed to do the work?—It is one of those difficulties that all trades have to put up with during a strike.

10700. Would it not be fair if the Government in consenting to the licensing of these people, required as in the case of cabmen in the City of London, that they should not refuse a fare if the money is offered to them?—I think it comes under a different heading to that.

10701. In the absence of any public enactment would it not be a fair thing for the Watermen's Company, if

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it wishes these privileges to be supported, to insist that the members of the company are not to refuse a fare?—A waterman cannot refuse a fare; if he is plying for a fare he must not refuse a fare.

10702. But we have had it in evidence that the lightermen practically do the same thing; they refuse employment?—They can decline employment surely. After a man has engaged to do a job, if he refuses then he may be liable to punishment if he neglects a duty after he has undertaken it, but we have no power to compel a man to take on work.

10703. But it is a reasonable thing generally, and it is very often enforced, that when Government gives a special privilege to a class of people, such as cabmen, and they are plying for hire, they should not be allowed to refuse a fare?—The case is somewhat different. At all events we have no power in the court to do that. Our Act of Parliament will not allow us to carry it to that extent.

10704. With regard to your judicial powers I think you mentioned that some of your sentences have to be enforced by an appeal to the Lord Mayor or to a magistrate?—Yes, we have no power to enforce our convictions. We impose fines and penalties, but there is no appeal against it. The magistrate confirms our decision.

10705. Are these fines and penalties imposed upon people who are not members of the company?—No, we have no power over anyone who is not a member of the Watermen's Company.

10706. This is entirely confined to members of the Watermen's Company?—Entirely.

10707. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have stated that the court have in some instances suspended licenses for misconduct?—Yes.

10708. But they have never had occasion to refuse a license on the ground of incompetency discovered subsequent to the granting of the original license?—That is quite correct.

10709. Are we to understand that no complaints have been made of incompetency from employers of labour?—There might have been complaints, but when the case has been tried we have found that the complaints have not been proved.

10710. Therefore during a considerable period of years you have had no case of incompetency in some 5,863 men?—Just so.

10711. (*Mr. Peel.*) You say that you inflict fines sometimes on the members of the company?—Yes.

10712. If they do not pay those fines do you ever refuse them their licenses?—No, we take them before the Mayor, and they know that, and it is very seldom we have to do so. They know our power and they know they would get convicted.

10713. You said 14 years was the minimum age for starting apprenticeship?—Yes.

10714. Then the apprenticeship lasts 5, 6 or 7 years?—Yes.

10715. Therefore a young man must be 19, 20 or 21 before he has sole charge of a barge?—No, he takes his 2 years' license. After he has been apprenticed 2 years and proves his competency he is allowed to work as a Freeman of the company.

10716. Are there many of these boys of 16 in sole charge of a barge?—No, very few, because they are seldom apprenticed before they are 16. They generally are about 18 years of age before they have charge of a barge.

10717. Eighteen would be the minimum age in practice?—Yes.

10718. This examination through which they are put, I suppose, is an oral examination?—Yes.

10719. There is no practical test to which they are put at all?—Yes; sometimes we are doubtful whether a man can navigate a barge single-handed, and we put him back to take charge of a barge with another man on board. In fact, any member of the court is quite willing to allow him to go on board one of his barges with one of the members of the court's men and see whether he can really navigate or not.

10720. And is that frequently done?—That has been done about a dozen times within the last two or three years.

10721. These freemen who have to speak to his competency are, I presume, men who can testify that they have seen him working a barge?—They are. If we discover that they know nothing about it we summon them before the court and reprimand them, or if it is a very flagrant case we inflict a fine. We have power to do that—that is, if we see that they have signed indifferently—given false witness, in fact.

10722. Is there any particular set of questions that are asked at these examinations? Do the men know beforehand the sort of questions that will be put to them?—No, not at all. They would not know what questions were going to be put to them.

10723. That depends entirely upon who happens to be chairman at the time?—Yes. We generally, first of all, make ourselves acquainted with what part of the river they have been working most. For instance, if they were working up from the Albert Dock to London or from there up through the bridges and on to Brentford, I should say, "Now bring me a barge out of the Albert Dock or Victoria Dock and show me which way you will shape her course for coming up the river"—or for going into another dock, or anything of that sort. If they could not answer those questions satisfactorily we should put them back.

10724. And you might, of course, if he did not answer them satisfactorily, put the man on the barge if you were uncertain and see if he could do it practically?—Then we should let him go with another man aboard and we should give him an opportunity of proving his competency on board a barge by doing it.

10725. Your licence when granted extends to the whole river. It is never limited to any specified portion of the river or any distance—between two docks, for instance?—No, but we have endorsed a licence to that effect. When we have found that a man has not worked above London Bridge we have said, "Fully competent to navigate below London Bridge," so that any employer wishing to see his licence can see that he has not been used to going through the bridges.

10726. With reference to this two years' contract licence, do you put these men through an examination in the same way?—The same examination entirely.

10727. And you have a large number of freemen to speak to their competency?—Yes; they have to have twelve instead of six.

10728. Why is that large number?—Because he is only two years navigating in the river instead of five or seven.

10729. In that case is there any limit of age upwards or downwards?—He cannot contract under 20 years of age. He has to serve an apprenticeship under 20. It is generally men who have been at work, in fact, nearly all their lives on the water, but who have missed their apprenticeship—have been unable to get apprenticed to anyone; so that when they come in on full contract they are perfectly capable of working. They have been on craft all their lives. There are several mates of barges or captains of barges from the Medway who wish to work their barge upon the River Thames, and they serve two years on contract so as to make them competent and qualified.

10730. You do not agree that the experience of the bargeowner would be sufficient to induce him to select perfectly qualified men. If it was thrown open you would not trust them to select properly qualified men?—You could see their licences, but you cannot find out the difference until you put them on board a barge and you find some accident happen. A man might come to you and say, I know how to navigate a barge, and I can do this, that, and the other, and he might get up a series of answers to questions, but he might deceive you entirely until you get him on board a barge, and then find that he knows nothing at all about it.

10731. (*Mr. Ellis.*) As I understand, the powers, duties, and functions of your company rest upon the Acts of 1859 and 1893?—Yes.

10732. Your company promoted a bill in Parliament which became an Act in 1893?—Yes. I think that was for measuring and registering craft and boats.

10733. For that purpose only?—Yes.

10734. Did you meet with any opposition in getting that Act?—Very little indeed. I do not know that there was any! I do not think there was any difficulty

about getting that Act. There had been so many losses of lives through boats being allowed to be let out capable only of taking three or four persons and having seven or eight in them.

10735. Am I to take it that, so far as Parliament is concerned, you are satisfied with your position?—Yes, I think so.

10736. You have no other bill before Parliament?—No.

10736A. Have you a copy of your last balance sheet?—I have not one here at present.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I think it would be convenient to have that.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I have one here up to June, 1900.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Is that the last?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Yes.

10737. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Will you put a copy of it in?—Yes.

(*The witness handed in a copy of the Accounts of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames from the 1st July 1899 to 30th June 1900. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 15.*)

10738. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Will you tell me what expense is involved in becoming a freeman?—There is £1 8s. for the freedom and 2s. 6d. for each licence. A man has two licences: he has a waterman's licence to allow him to work boats, and a lighterman's licence to allow him to work craft. Each of these costs 2s. 6d.

10739. Are these fees annual fees?—The annual fee is only 3s.

10740. And the £1 8s. and 2s. 6d. for the freedom, and the 2s. 6d. for the licences, are first payments?—Those are first payments.

10741. With that exception, once a freeman you continue a freeman for 3s. a year?—Yes, the man is always a freeman, but he has to have his licence renewed every three years.

10742. Take your own case. How much expense have you actually been put to by being a freeman?—I was out of my time when I was 21 years of age. It would be 3s. a year for about 45 years.

10743. Your court only has power to hear complaints from members against members?—That is so.

10744. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Are you familiar with these accounts?—Not very, without looking at the balance sheet.

10745. At all events, they are audited accounts. Am I right in supposing that the total invested sum you have amounts to between £51,000 and £52,000?—Yes, you can take as perfectly correct whatever you see on the balance sheet.

10746. I do not doubt that for a moment. That is the capital sum of money that your company have?—Yes.

10747. Can you give me at all what is the value of other property that you may have—freehold land or property other than invested money?—No, I could not tell you. We have property at Penge, and the Ditchling Almshouses and land.

10748. That is the total capital sum possessed by your company?—Yes.

10749. It is invested money?—Yes.

10750. Almshouses and land at Penge?—Just so.

10751. Then I notice in your funds a church repairing account?—Yes.

10752. Does that arise out of your statutory obligations?—It comes out of the asylum fund. We have always contributed to that. I do not know that we are obliged to do it.

10753-4. In this invested money there is everything that has arisen from the construction of these bridges to which you referred, paid you by way of compensation for the abolition of the ferry?—Just so.

10755. Then you have told us that certain provisions were made originating this poor's fund. Were those certain provisions in pursuance of statutory obligations; were you obliged to do them by Act of Parliament?—I could not answer the question.

10756. You cannot tell me whether that poor's fund owes its rise to an Act of Parliament, or whether it was voluntary?—We received that money on behalf of poor men who are thrown out of work, and we are in duty bound to invest it on their behalf. *Mr. B. J. Jacob.* 18 June 1901.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I do not know whether your Lordship after the adjournment would say something as to the order in which speeches by counsel should be put before the Commission. It seems to me in a case of this sort it is purely a matter for arrangement with regard to what will be most likely to help the Commissioners. I know that my friend Mr. Balfour Browne is anxious to sum up for the docks. On the other hand the public authorities might possibly have some claim to come last. It may be convenient if, either after the adjournment or later on, the Commission thought fit to express some view. See 10863.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

10757. For how many years were you apprenticed?—Seven.

10758. You have told us your time was up when you were 21?—Yes, I was apprenticed when I was 14 years and 3 months old.

10759. You were apprenticed at 14 not at 16 years of age?—Not at 16.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

10760. I should like to ask you something with regard to that question of insurance. What you take out is what is called a craft policy?—Yes.

10761. That covers so many craft for all journeys in the river between stated periods?—Yes.

10762. It is usually a 12 months' policy?—Yes.

10763. With a loss recoverable under the policy limited to whatever sum is named—£4,000, or whatever it may be?—Yes.

10764. You may have a cargo of much greater value at one time than that?—Yes.

10765. But the utmost amount you can recover on your policy is the fixed amount?—Yes.

10766. Merchants very frequently insure their own goods, do they not?—Some merchants insure their own goods in craft from shore to shore.

10767. It does not follow that the insurance of lightermen is the only insurance on goods?—No.

Re-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

10768. Can you tell me of any policy which you have ever seen containing a provision that the insurance company should only be liable in the event of craft being manned by licensees?—It is not expressed in their policy, but they make enquiries to that effect.

10769. You said that the insurance companies always insert a condition in their policies that they shall only be liable in the event of craft being manned by licensees. Is it in the policy or not?—I could not answer that question.

10770. Have you ever seen a policy with that in?—I can only state the fact that they are only navigated by licensees.

10771. Can you produce any documentary evidence, a letter or anything else, from an insurance company showing that they have refused to insure unless it is undertaken that the craft should always be manned by licensees of your company?—No.

10772. Are you aware that Lloyd's have presented to the Board of Trade a petition by a very large number of members in favour of the Bill which was promoted in Parliament for getting rid of this obligation to employ licensed watermen?—Very possibly it is so. See 10409.

10773. That does not seem quite consistent with your statement?—Lloyd's do not insure craft very often. They insure vessels.

10774. They do insure craft too, do they not?—I do not know of that.

10775. Where do you insure them?—With the Ocean Company principally, and there are plenty of other firms. See 10863.

Mr. B. J. Jacob.
18 June 1901.

10776. Can you produce any proposal for a policy in which this provision is inserted or on which it appears that the craft are to be so manned, or in which anything is mentioned with regard to the manning of the craft?—No, I do not say I can.

See 10646.

10777. With regard to this matter of the loss of life, which you have referred to, you said "The number of lives lost by drowning during the last 8 years has been 104, showing that there is considerable risk to life, which would be greatly augmented in case of inexperienced men taking charge of craft." Whose lives are included in that number, 104?—Licensed men and apprentices.

10778. Where have you got that figure from?—From our books. We register all fatal accidents on the river.

10779. Are they fatal accidents due to improper navigation. Do you separate those from other accidents or other causes of death?—We have no accidents from improper navigation. They are generally caused by collisions with steamers or by men falling overboard.

10780. Things which the licensed men cannot avoid?—They cannot avoid it, or else they would.

10781. And nobody else would avoid them?—I do not say that.

10782. You think then that unlicensed men might avoid them?—No, an unlicensed man would very possibly lose his own life.

10783. I see that Captain Vyvyan, when he was giving his evidence at Question 8570, said that the loss of life was about two a year. That would make the figure 16, if it is an average of two a year, from the running down of small craft, and so on. The question was, "Would 10 lives be lost per annum, speaking from memory? *A.* About two a year." Do you disagree with that?—I had three in a fortnight once.

10784. Of course, you might have three at one accident?—There is no guarantee about that. There is no rule. These are taken from our books.

10785. But these accidents are not things apparently which depend upon whether a man is licensed or not. They are accidents from running down by steamers, or something of that sort?—If an incompetent man is aboard a barge, the chances are he would very soon lose his own life. We do not allow any incompetent man to work.

10786. That is not an answer to my question. You have put it to the Commission that all your licensed men are practically competent?—Just so.

10787. And that the barges at the present time are all in charge of those men?—Yes.

10788. And you say you have these losses of life?—Yes.

10789. I ask you, do you attribute the loss of life in these cases to anything on the part of the men who are navigating the craft, or to causes from outside which these men cannot control—like the running down by a steamer or something of that sort?—Yes, sometimes they strike a bridge and get knocked overboard.

10790. It does not depend on the man who is navigating the craft, but it depends on some circumstance outside?—Just so.

10791. With regard to your examination: as a matter of fact you hardly ever do have a man taken on to the river for the purpose of examination, do you?—Yes.

10792. Is not your examination in Watermen's Hall?—Mr. Fletcher a few months ago allowed a man to go on one of his craft to prove his competency as we were not satisfied.

10793. But, as a matter of fact, your examination, in 99 cases out of 100, rests upon the examination in Watermen's Hall, does it not?—Just so. I could prove in a few minutes whether you could navigate a barge or whether you could not. Any man that was not able to do it I could soon prove was not competent.

10794. You say that the sailing barges take Freemen on board for going through the bridges?—Yes.

10795. You spoke of sailing barges from the Medway. Are you aware that they do not take men on board to go through the bridges?—Possibly the men are licensed men.

10796-7. No, the Medway people say they do not use these men when they are going through. I do not know what a hoveller is, but they sometimes take a hoveller for barges carrying 120 tons; though they generally have a tug?—They are termed hovellers. They earn their living by working these craft up through the bridges.

10798. They do not have them when they have a tug, do they?—No, there is no occasion when they have a tug.

10799. There are two conditions, then, under which they do not take them. They do not take them if they are under 120 tons, and they do not take them if they have a tug?—I have known plenty of them take them with 50 ton barges when they are not used to going up through the bridges. There is no rule without an exception. There are some of these Medway men who are so constantly up and down through the bridges and have been with hovellers for years that they know how to do it themselves; they know all the sets of the tides.

10800. You say it is unnecessary when they have a tug?—Quite unnecessary for an extra man. All that they have to do is to steer their barge behind a tug.

10801. Your Watermen's Company's rules require that the ordinary dumb barge (not a sailing barge which goes right through) has to have a man on board even if he is in tow?—Yes, one man always. It is very necessary for one man to be on board a barge in tow.

10802. But you require him to be a licensed man?—Yes.

10803. You have just told me that is unnecessary if you have another man on?—I can give you the reason. Suppose the barge was to break adrift from the tug, who is to manage her if she has not a competent licensed man?

10804. Who manages the Medway barges if they break away from the tug?—They have two men on board her.

10805. But they are not licensed men?—But they are men who understand navigation.

10806. May I put it to the Commission that capacity for navigating a barge does not depend upon a man's license. In the case of the Medway you have the evidence of that?—I have not stated so. I stated in my case that a lad who was with his father was brought up to it, and that practically he underwent the same thing. A lad with his father many years on a sailing barge has the same knowledge as a man who has been apprenticed.

10807. You spoke about the necessity for taking licensed men on board, because the traffic is a very difficult one in London, with risks of collision, and so on. As a matter of fact, when a barge is not in charge of a tug, and she is being navigated, she is almost invariably going with the tide, is she not?—She could not go otherwise.

10808. Then I may put it higher—she is always going with the tide?—Certainly.

10809. And all other moving traffic of the barge class is doing the same, is it not?—Just so.

10810. I only wanted that because you were comparing it with being so much worse than street traffic?—A barge does not go where you tell it.

10811. That entirely depends on how you tell it?—You would have to navigate it. You would have to row with the oars or it would not go where you wanted it.

10812. I suppose a horse would not go in any particular direction unless you used your reins or made a judicious use of the whip?—No.

10813. You cannot steer him like a motor car?—It requires skill.

10814. With regard to this question of licensed men. Licensed watermen, under your Act, who ply for hire, are obliged to go for regulated fares when required by any person, and are obliged to go to the point they are required to go to?—Just so.

10815. Your licensed lightermen are under no obligation in respect of their privilege to work, are they?—No, unless a man has taken a job; then he is bound to finish it.

10816. That is a question of his personal contract with his employer, but under your Act he is not obliged to render any service in return for his privilege?—Neither is a waterman, unless he is in the boat plying for a fare.

10817. If he is plying like a cabman plying on the street he is obliged to go for fixed fares, and he is obliged to go where he is told?—Just so.

10818. The licensed waterman is under no corresponding obligation?—No.

10819. He used to be under obligations until 1859, under the Impressment Acts, was he not?—He was never under an obligation to work unless he wished to do so.

10820. Was he not under an obligation till 1859 to impressment for sea service for the Royal Navy?—Yes; so he is now.

10821. You are not aware that that obligation was repealed by the Act of 1859?—I do not think you will find it repealed.

10822. Yes, it is. It is the 5th Section of the Act. I know your Watermen's Acts pretty well?—I will not dispute it.

10823. It is Section 5 of the Watermen's Act of 1859 which repeals the obligation?—I will not dispute it.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) That is so; I agree with my friend.

10824. (*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) There is another point I want to ask you about. Do you think you have any power to revoke a licence once granted to a lighterman, however incompetent he is?—Yes.

10825. Have you any power under your Act, that you are aware of, for that purpose?—We are the licensing body; surely we have power to revoke.

10826. You are obliged, under certain circumstances, to give a man a licence. You have power for the recovery of your fees, and for keeping a certain control over his conduct, to renew the licence. On the ground of his incompetency, or on any other ground, do you think you have any power whatever to revoke it?—We have done it in the case of convictions.

10827. You think you have the power?—Yes.

10828. I am not going to discuss the sections of the Act of Parliament at the present moment, but that is your impression?—Yes.

10829. You have referred to the Bill of 1899. You gave evidence against that, did you not?—Yes.

10830. Can you tell me who were the promoters of that Act?—The Amalgamated Association of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames.

10831. Are they a body which contained at that time about one-half of the whole number of licensed lightermen?—Less than one-third. There were not 2,000 men of the whole number that were subscribers, and many of them were against that Bill entirely.

10832. It was a very large number?—No, it was not one-third of the number.

10833. If it was one-third, 2,000, that was a considerable number?—There were 2,000 subscribers on their books, but there were a lot of them who did not subscribe to that Bill.

10834. You remember we opposed that bill?—Yes.

10835. I daresay you will remember that one of the principal things put forward was that they were proposing to get representation upon the board of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

10836. Am I right in saying that your case for the opposition there was that if they got, as they would do, a controlling voice on the board of the Watermen's Company, it would be used for the purpose of making the lightermen into one gigantic trades' union, which would imperil the trade of London?—It would.

10837. That was the case?—Yes.

10838. You have given some tonnage figures. Can you tell me whether those figures are the registered tonnage as measured under the Act of 1893, or are they the gross tonnage?—They are according to our measurement.

10839. They are the gross measurement?—Yes.

10840. It does not necessarily represent the carrying capacity, does it?—It is whatever the barge would carry level with the water.

10841. Can you tell me what proportion of that tonnage is owned by the members of the Watermen's Company?—No, I have not the figure. There are non-freemen barge-owners; they are all registered the same.

10842. This includes the whole of what belongs to the lighterage companies, and so on?—Yes, and wharfingers—all barges navigating with the port have to be registered.

10843. But you cannot tell me what fraction of that is owned by the company?—I could not tell you that.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

Mr. B. J. Jacob.
18 June 1901.

10844. Is the tonnage that you have given of 704,000, tonnage by measurement, or the burden tonnage of the craft according to your Act?—Our measurement is of burden tonnage really. It is measured so closely that I do not suppose a barge would carry more than half a ton more than what we measure.

10845. Is this it: tonnage by measurement of craft, multiplied by $\frac{5}{8}$, to be deemed the weight-carrying capacity or burden tonnage of craft?—That is it.

10846. Are those figures of 704,000 tons and 61,000 tons, in your evidence, the burden tonnage?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10847. My learned friend, Mr. Baggallay, has asked you about the bill of 1899?—Yes.

10848. That was before the House of Lords?—Yes.

10849. On that occasion, I believe, my learned friend so successfully advocated your interests that the bill was thrown out?—That is so.

10850. The Committee decided that the constitution of the court of the Watermen's Company did not require alteration?—Yes.

10851. He has asked you whether you have any power to revoke a licence. May I refer you and the Commissioners to Section 64 of the Act of 1859: "If any lightermen or watermen to whom a licence is granted in pursuance of this Act is guilty of such misconduct or acts of incompetency while working as a lighterman or waterman as in the opinion of the said court of masters, wardens, and assistants, to disqualify him either wholly or partially from holding such licence, such court may, after hearing all he has to urge in his defence, and subject to an appeal to the said conservators of the River Thames, who may revoke or modify the order of the said court, endorse, suspend, or cancel altogether any licence he may hold." Is that the answer to my friend's question?—Yes.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) It is the answer. I was not aware of this section. I had looked at the other sections further on about the proceedings in the court. I admit at once that that answers that point.

10852. (*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I want to ask a question about examination of candidates. It is suggested that you very seldom put a candidate to a practical test on the river; but, in fact, are you assisted always in your deliberations by the reports of your inspectors?—We only refer to the inspectors as to their knowledge of the candidate.

10853. Are the inspectors employed constantly on the river?—Nearly half the week. Half a week in the office doing their reports and half a week afloat.

10854. Is it their business to make themselves acquainted with the apprentices who are at work on the river?—They know nearly all of them in their different sections.

10855. Before granting the licence do you have before you the reports of your inspectors as to the man's capacity?—They are always in the room and we refer to them. We say: "Do you know this man?" and they say they do or they do not.

10856. With regard to the strike to which so much reference has been made, as a matter of fact at the last strike how many lightermen out of the total number went out on strike?—I should think nearly two-thirds of them.

10857. One third did not go out?—One third did not go out.

10858. Were they the foremen who did not go out?—Some of the lightermen as well; in fact, the only reason why our lightermen did go out was that they were so mixed up with others and they were afraid to keep in.

10859. From your experience on the river would there be a possibility of a strike whether the men were licensed or not?—All bodies of men combine and strike. When there is combination there is generally a strike if they do not get their own way.

10860. Would the abolition of the licences in your opinion abolish all strikes on the river?—No, certainly not.

10861. Now one question about the bill of 1896.

Mr. B. J. Jacob.
18 June 1901.

You have been asked by one of the Commissioners if you could give the reasons which influenced that Committee, but as they were not expressed I suppose you cannot do that. May I take it from the report that there were only three witnesses called on behalf of the Watermen's Company in opposition to the bill? Do you know that as a fact?—I think that was a fact.

10862. Mr. Robert Grey, Mr. H. E. Braine, and Captain Mills?—I am not aware of any others from my memory.

10863. Is it a fact that at the conclusion of their evidence the Committee said, through their Chairman, "The Committee have decided that they will not trouble counsel against the bill to call any further witnesses or to address the Committee. They have determined that on the evidence now before them the preamble is not proved, but they will make a special report." The special report has been put in this morning. That is so, is it not?—I believe so.

See 10664. I can now hand in a copy of the river craft policy of the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation.

(The witness handed in a copy of the River Craft Policy of the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation, Limited. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 16.)

(*Mr. Harper.*) My lord, I will now hand in a copy of the special case and judgment in the case of Borrowman, Phillips and Company v. Wilson. That was the case which was referred to in evidence yesterday, and also

See 10106. a copy of the judgment which I promised to hand in.

(Mr. Harper handed in a copy of the special case of Borrowman, Phillips & Company v. Arthur Wilson in the High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench Division. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 17. Also a copy of the judgment in the case of Borrowman, Phillips & Company v. Wilson in the Royal Courts of Justice, April 7th, 1891. See Appendix, 27th Day, No. 18.)

(*Chairman.*) Before we adjourned, the learned Counsel, appearing for the London County Council, asked us for some expression of our wishes with regard to the order in which we would hear the speeches of the learned Counsel later on. See 10756.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) Would you hear me upon that, my Lord, before you decide?

(*Chairman.*) Yes, as I know you are a very busy man.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I was only going to say this. I think really, strictly speaking, I have the right to the last word. I am not speaking, of course, of seniority —I want to conceal that as much as possible now—but we are practically the promoters. As your Lordship knows, this all arose out of our bills, and your Lordship thought that the right course to pursue was to have Mr. Scott practically first, and I see that upon the 6th of May, when the contentious business was commenced, and when Counsel were allowed to appear before this Commission, Mr. Scott was called as the first witness. Therefore we opened. Now we ought to hear, I think, the criticisms that are to be made upon us before we are called upon to say anything. Therefore I should suggest, notwithstanding what my learned friend has said, that we ought to have the last word.

(*Chairman.*) It is only fair to say that the learned Counsel did not make any suggestion as to the course of procedure. We are quite willing to leave the matter to you gentlemen who are representatives of the various bodies for whom you appear. We leave it to you to come to some satisfactory arrangement between yourselves before the 1st of July.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) If your Lordship pleases.

(Adjourned to Monday next, June 24, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

Monday, 24th June, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. HORACE AVORY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., and Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. JOSEPH SHAW appeared on behalf of the North London Railway Company.

Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the Short Sea Traders' Association.

The Hon. J. D. FITZGERALD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers for the limits extending from Lombard's Wall to Gravesend Bridge in Kent; the Commissioners of Sewers from Gravesend Bridge to Sheerness in Kent; the Commissioners of Sewers for Havering and Dagenham and other levels in Essex; and the Commissioners of Sewers for Rainham and other levels in Essex.

Mr. RICHARD DEERING recalled and further examined.

Mr. R. Deering.

24 June 1901.

10864. (*Chairman.*) You are managing director of Messrs. James W. Cook and Co., Limited, wharfingers and bargeowners?—Yes.

10864a. You have already appeared before this Commission representing the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners?—Yes.

10865. You appear now in order to give evidence with reference to the licensing system of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

10866. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say on that subject?—In the evidence that I gave before the Commission on the 20th March last, nothing was said by me as to the working lightermen, nor was my opinion asked as to whether I considered the present system of licensing men by the Watermen's Company necessary for safe navigation of the river both in regard to life and craft, or whether I agreed with the witnesses who had preceded me, viz., Messrs. T. W. Jacobs, jun., and Richard Lambert, who were in favour of throwing the river open. As a lighterman who served an apprenticeship on the river, I am certainly of opinion that apprenticeship and licensing are both more necessary nowadays than ever they were. My reason for saying this is that ships and barges have greatly increased in size during the last few years, thus rendering navigation much more difficult. In the old days of paddle steam vessels for coasting and continental purposes, with stems curved round, if a barge were in the way the steamer turned astern, and the wash from her paddles would send the barge away, and if she did strike, the curved bow very frequently would take the gunwale of the barge and do some damage to that, but not cut her down to the chine as is the case with the present steamers with straight stems, or stems that rather protrude at the lower part further into the river than the upper part. The consequence is that screw steamers, which are not so easily turned astern, when they do strike a barge, the bottom part of the stem chines the barge, and the damage is much more serious both to the craft and the goods laden in it. I was apprenticed to the water when I was 14 years of age. I served six years, and I obtained my freedom directly I was out of my time. I then worked as a lighterman for three years, and then went into tugs, and in due course obtained the command of the tug "Rattler," which was one of the largest barge tugs at that time. After that I was foreman to Messrs. A. Frey and Co., then assistant manager for that firm until 19 years ago, when I joined Mr. Ross in the firm of Ross and Deering, so that my time has been employed on the river the whole of my life. I have paid particular attention to the system of having licensed men in all barges working on the Thames, and there are, in my opinion, many reasons why the men should be under some control, such as is now in existence. The fact that there is only such control on the Thames is answered, I think, by the fact that there is only one Thames in the Kingdom, and whilst I think Thames men could do the work of all the other rivers, yet if you brought men from the other rivers, they would not be able to do Thames work. I have been on the Ouse and the Mersey, and have conversed with the lightermen on those rivers, in order that I might form an opinion on the subject,

Mr. R. Deering.

24 June 1901.

and in answer to my inquiries, I have been told that they could not undertake to work London barges on the London river. During the recent strike, men from other rivers, and also men from fishing vessels were brought to London to navigate barges, but none of them would attempt to take a barge under oars for navigation. In the case of contract men, they as a rule have worked for years on the river in some capacity, other than navigating barges, before they enter into their contract, and the master who takes contract men always satisfies himself that they are trustworthy, and have a good knowledge of navigation, otherwise it would never answer his purpose to contract them. I have during my career only had one contract man, and he has given up work on the river and returned to working on barges in the docks as a watchman and barge loader. In my opinion the Watermen's Company is to all intents the Scotland Yard of the Thames, and just as the police license busmen and cab drivers, so the Watermen's Company grant licences for the lightermen and watermen on the river. It is necessary to have a firm hold on the men. The largest proportion of the goods are and must always be lightered by lightermen, and as a class they are men who are very honest and can be trusted. They have day and night, and often on dark nights, the care of goods which have not been tallied into their barge and which might be purloined, and looking to the value of the cargoes that are afloat and the number of men employed as lightermen, the robberies are very very small, in fact I consider the present day lighterman would compare favourably with any tradesman for honesty. There is another matter. Nearly all the dutypaying goods are sent to bonded warehouses for weighing for duty, and they have to be lightered in the custody of lightermen with duty unpaid. My firm does a large quantity of dutiable goods, such as tea, tobacco, etc. I may mention we have carried for one firm 3,500,000 chests of tea since we have been in business, not one pound of which has gone to the scale for duty until it has passed through our hands. These are put in our barges in bond and the duty is not paid until delivery at the bonded warehouses. I have never had a complaint from the Customs that these unpaid duty goods have been in any way tampered with, which I think speaks volumes for the present system and the safety of the revenue. I believe 95 per cent. of the tea is carried in craft to the warehouses. All the rum and 90 per cent. of all the tobacco that comes to London passes through the hands of the working lightermen before it comes to scales to weigh or be gauged for duty. In my opinion every care is taken by the Watermen's Company to ensure men who obtain licences being capable and fit for the duty, and in any case of a man applying, even with his papers fully signed, about whom the Court, of which I am a junior member, has any doubt, he is required to navigate a barge under oars in the presence of one of the company's inspectors before the licence is granted to him, although he may have passed his theoretical examination. In a case of dishonesty the licence is immediately cancelled, but if the guilty man can get an employer to say he will employ him, on an application to a full Court in writing, and on his giving proof that since his discharge from prison he has been working and getting an honest living, the Court will renew his licence. At the same time the inspector of his district knows it, and he keeps an eye upon him and reports to the Court if he considers he is acting in at all a suspicious manner and not working honestly for his living, but likely to lapse into dishonesty again. To sum it up, my opinion is, the licence is absolutely necessary. In my opinion, if the river be thrown open, I consider the risks which my firm would run alone with their laden craft, from untrained men navigating barges, would be enormous.

10867. Why do you suppose that if there were no licences the barge owners, who are responsible for the goods would employ untrained men?—Some firms might take any man who offered his services because he would be cheaper; and the expense of insuring with trained men now is enormous. A barge load of tea is frequently worth £5,000, and the Customs can call upon us to pay the duty on it notwithstanding it may have been sunk, and, apart from the damage to which the barge itself might be subject, my firm might also be made liable for large amounts presuming that the barges by reason of incompetent men being in charge were allowed to drift foul of steamers. The latter's damages would have to be borne by my firm, and as there is no limit to the liability of a lighterman, except the extent of his means, unlike shipowners whose limit of liabilities is £8 per ton on the gross tonnage, without deduction on account of engine room, for a steamer, and her registered tonnage for a sailing ship. In the case of an apprentice being neglectful of his duty, on being brought before the Court he is admonished and warned to be careful, and that generally has the desired effect upon him, because he knows that if he continues the course of conduct that he has begun, he may never get his licence, and he is also liable to a penalty under the Act. In conclusion I may say that, unless some regular system of licensing and of inspection such as now carried on be established, I am at a loss to conceive how the trade of the river is to be carried on with safety for all interests.

10868. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Did you give evidence before the Board of Trade Committee on the Navigation of the Thames in 1879?—No.

10869. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You talk about barges being navigated under oars. That number is decreasing every year, I presume?—The short distances and the smaller craft will always be navigated under oars. You cannot keep a craft three or four hours after high water waiting to be finished. For instance, you must leave three or four hours for Tilbury—before the tide is out.

10870. For short distances, I presume you mean a distance of a mile or less?—Yes, but when you have towed six barges to their destination you may not be able to get them all alongside at once. You have to leave the barges at a tier in charge of a lighterman. It is not always possible to get right straight alongside a place that you are bound to with your barge.

10871. You talk about having untrained men. I presume if the Charter was done away with the same men would work on the river. They would not all depart, would they?—But certain people might start in the business in a small way, and they would employ the cheapest labour they could get. If they did any damage they would not be able to pay it. At present our expense for insurance is enormous. In my firm we do not take the risk of carriage of goods of any kind or description. Notwithstanding that, in order that we might be guarded against wilful negligence or something of that sort, we have to pay six guineas per cent. for a policy of £6,000; but we have to take the first £100 risk on each transaction, so that if we had lost this week £100 each on half a dozen barges, although we are insured, we should have to take the first loss of £100 in each case, and the distinct understanding is that you do not insure yourself out of that risk of £100. And that is the first-class underwriters of Lloyd's with whom we have done insuring for many years, and against whom we have never had a claim; but for all that we cannot get the risk taken for less than six guineas per cent. That is for a twelvemonth on the bulk of the goods we carry.

10872. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you to give security to the Customs?—Yes, we have a bond.

10873. How much is that in proportion to the business?—I think our bond is £100,000.

10874. So that that is a serious responsibility?—If we had a barge of tea sunk to-day, and they called upon us to pay the duty to-morrow, we have to do it. Suppose a barge goes out of sight, and is never seen again, as does happen sometimes, we have to pay.

10875. Have you had any trouble of your own with the lightermen at any time?—During the last strike. That is the only trouble since 1889.

10876. Had you to employ people in place of the lightermen who struck?—Our foremen stuck by us and we had to muddle through, but only about 10 per cent. of the lightermen of the Port of London stuck together. The bulk of the men who struck are what we call watchmen, not freemen. They came out in a body right through from first to last.

10877. And not the lightermen?—Only 10 per cent. of the lightermen in the Port of London struck.

10878. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Did you give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee in 1890?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Daldy.

10879. A system of licensing carried on by a port authority would be equally satisfactory, would it not?—That would depend upon whether the party who applied for a licence had qualified himself before he applied for it. How is he going to qualify if he is not apprenticed? They begin in my firm by going into the

docks for the first six months before they are apprenticed. Then they come out in the river and assist to row the foreman or manager about in a skiff for the next six months.

10880. May I take it from you that that is the only objection you see to this system of licensing being transferred to the port authority?—My objection is that there should be nobody licensed unless they have gone to work on the river as a boy.

Cross-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

10881. All you want, I think, is that the men who work the lighters shall be qualified?—Certainly.

10882. What the security is for getting that qualification is not a matter of importance. You want that they shall be qualified—that is the important thing?—What I really want is what you persuaded the Select Committee of the House of Lords in the early part of last year—to keep to the present system, because in your opinion after many years it could not be improved upon.

10883. I did not argue for that?—You so far persuaded that Select Committee that they advised that the bill should not go to a second reading.

10884. I quite agree, but was not what we persuaded the Committee then this: That the licensed lightermen were not a body who ought to have the preponderating influence on the Court of the Watermen's Company?—That was one of the things.

10885. That was then proposed, was it not?—The idea was, I think, to make a general thing of it such as is suggested now.

10886. I happen to have my speech in my pocket. Somebody has kindly reprinted it. I have been looking at it. What I want to know is this. Let us keep to the point. You want a security that the men shall be duly qualified. That is the principal thing?—That is a very important point.

10887. You get properly qualified men who come up with the sailing barges from the Medway, do you not?—My experience of those men is if they lower the mast and have to come under oars they engage a freeman of the Watermen's Company to assist them not by rowing but by steering their barges up the river.

10888. Are not the men who come up in charge of the western barges qualified men?—In what way, licensed or unlicensed?

10889. I am speaking of the Medway barges first. Are they not qualified?—They are qualified to handle their barges by letting go the anchor and sheering about, but they are not qualified to handle barges without rudders.

10890. Do not they sail their barges right up from the Medway to the Port of London?—They do, but they have rudders.

10891. Do not they row them up, after they have got to the Pool, themselves?—In most cases they engage a lighterman or a man who is called a hoveller to take the rudder while they run the barges.

10892. In some cases of the big ones, where they go through the bridges, is not that the case?—Big and little, you invariably see them.

10893. The Lee barges come into the Thames?—Yes.

10894. And out?—Yes.

10895. They do not have to have any licensed men?—No, they have not.

10896. Are not the men who work those barges qualified?—They are at it from boyhood.

10897. That may be, but they are qualified without being licensed men?—But they navigate their own barges, and no other.

10898. Do not the men with the barges which come from the west come down navigating their barges without help?—They take help below the bridges occasionally.

10899. Right through to London Bridge they do without them, do they not?—They do.

10900. Is it not a fact that they are obliged to take them at the present time below London Bridge?—I believe it is by Act of Parliament. I cannot tell you that.

10901. Their exemption only goes as far as London Bridge?—That is so.

10902. If they take them below that is not necessarily an admission of the incompetence of their men to navigate the barges, but it is simply that they are obliged to take them, having regard to the requirements of the Watermen's Company?—I do not know that ever they have applied for exemption.

10903. But they have got it?—I do not know that they have applied for it.

Re-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10904. Reference has been made to the strike. Can you give us some more particulars about the actual number of lightermen who were out on strike?—Between 9 and 10 per cent. of the licensed men. The whole of the labourers came out, as far as I know.

10905. But the whole of the foremen remained at work?—With one or two exceptions.

10906. Was there any proposal to refer the dispute to arbitration?—I believe there was.

10907. What was the question that they came out on strike about?—Departure from Lord Brassey's award by some of the employers, I believe, was the first cause.

10908. That was the origin of it?—Yes.

10909. A question about overtime?—Yes.

10910. I want to ask you about the Humber. Reference has been made to the barges working on the Humber. Have you experience of the working of the barges there. Can you give us any information about it?—Captain Hume's evidence seemed to be so at variance with what I had heard that I went down to Hull last week, and chartered a steamer and went along the navigable channel everywhere.

10911. Having seen it, what do you say?—There is no comparison whatever with the Thames. The only navigation there that the men did without a tug or a sail is to tow the barge along the river bank like a horse tows a barge along the Regent's Canal. There is not a buoy in the river. There is not a sign of a ship ever having been there to let go her anchor and load up in the stream. I saw the dock master, who had been there 35 years. He had never seen a barge under oars. I thought that very strange, so I went into the docks, and went over the barges. Not only have they not got an oar, but they have not a rowlock to put it into. I asked him if he had ever seen a barge under oars in the Humber. He said: "I have been here 35 years, and I have never seen such a thing."

10912. There is no navigation under oars?—None, whatever.

10913. From what you saw, would any man who was qualified to work barges on the Humber be qualified to work them on the Thames?—No; he would know nothing at all about it.

10914. You are a member of the Court of the Watermen's Company?—Latterly.

10915. A junior member?—Yes.

10916. Reference was made to Mr. Robert Grey, who gave evidence before the Committee in 1890. Did he remain a member of the Court up to the time of his leaving business?—Yes.

10917. It is said that a great deal of towing is done now-a-days, but in fact do the tugs always have one licensed man on board?—Yes.

10918. In practice?—Always. I never knew a tug to be worked without a licensed man. Most firms have two licensed men to relieve the captain, in case he might be taken ill, or something of that sort.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is that obligatory or optional?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) That is a question which has not yet been decided. In the only case in which the question was raised, proceedings were taken under the bye-law, which required two men at least to be on board, and the Court held that that was not necessary. The question whether one man should be on board has never yet been decided in a court of law. The Company have been waiting the opportunity to take proceedings, but the occasion has never arisen.

10919. That is so, is it not?—I never knew a tug to be worked on the river without a man having a licence.

Mr. CHARLES JAMES FIELDER re-called and further examined.

Mr. C. J. Fielder.

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10920. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the firm of Messrs. Fielder, Hickman and Co., Lightermen and Barge Owners?—Yes.

10921. You desire to give evidence now with reference to the licensing system of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

10922. Will you be good enough to proceed with that evidence?—In the evidence that I gave before the Royal Commission on the 20th March last, I was not asked my opinion as regards the present system of licensing men by the Watermen's Company. I attend to the outdoor department of my firm's business in and about the various docks and the River Thames. I have had altogether 23 years' experience: 5 years as an apprentice, 7 years as a freeman working in the craft, 3 years as a foreman, and 8 years as a master lighterman. During this time the traffic on the River Thames has increased very considerably. The number of steam tugs, vessels and barges has increased very largely, both in size and number, and I am of opinion that, owing to this fact, great skill and training are necessary for safely navigating all classes of vessels, particularly barges, of which a large number are moved under oars both day and night and in all weathers. My firm has 55 barges of the gross burden of 3,300 tons and employ regularly about 25 freemen and apprentices of the Watermen's Company of the River Thames. Our usual course of business is to work our craft as much under oars as possible consequently only a small proportion of our barges are towed. In so working we send one freeman and one apprentice with craft loaded or light up to 70 tons carrying capacity; barges over 70 tons carrying capacity, two freemen. By working our business in this manner we are gradually teaching the apprentices their business and enabling them to become practical freemen. At every tide, say one hour before and one hour after high water, the upper and lower pool are very much congested with craft of every description, and navigation is often very difficult and risky. I am of opinion that men of skill and experience are imperative, and are especially necessary at that time to be in charge of all classes of craft. The river and sea-going pleasure steamers which often carry nearly 1,000 persons each, arrive at and depart from this part of the river; consequently the risk to life and property, if craft were allowed to be in charge of inexperienced persons, would be enormously increased, and cause a grave and serious public danger. Considering that a large proportion of the cargoes lightered are very valuable, and are generally left solely in the lighterman's charge, the number of cases of neglect and dishonesty is small, which goes to prove that the men as a body are competent, reliable and honest, and I certainly am of opinion that they are quite up to the standard of the average working man. I think that the Watermen's Company who have the granting of the men's licenses, make the best use of the means at their disposal to ensure that the men they license are competent, honest, and respectable. In fact, when I applied to the company for my freedom, I was examined in 1883 by the master and a member of the Court before it was granted. The supply of good licensed men is, however, somewhat limited, in view of the rapid growth of the river traffic; if a larger supply of competent men were available, having of course a certificate to prove their capacity after trial and examination as at present, I should be glad, so as to ensure a greater choice when extra men are required, and those now possessing the freedom would not in that case be so independent as they are at present.

See 11310.

10923. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have alluded to the great increase in the size and number of barges. Have the numbers of the freemen increased proportionately?—I should think they had.

10924. Can you give us any figures at all?—No, I must leave that to the Watermen's Company.

10925. You have said it is the usual course of business to work out craft as much under oars as possible. That is very natural, but that is very seldom done I presume in the case of long distances?—For any distance under 12 miles it is our practice to send them under oars. From London Bridge to the Royal Albert Docks, which is nearly 12 miles, we send them frequently under oars: in fact I should think quite 70 per cent. of our craft are under oars always.

10926. This is rather a contradiction to what we have already heard as to lighters being towed?—Perhaps the previous witnesses have accustomed themselves to towing a great deal more than we have, but I was brought up as a practical man, and I have always felt that it was only right to keep up the standard of men, and I have given every encouragement I could to sending the craft about under oars.

10927. Then you have alluded to the river and sea-going pleasure steamers carrying 1,000 persons. Do they carry your men or anybody connected with the river?—I think they are all licensed by the Trinity House.

10928. That is a different thing altogether?—Yes.

10929. You have said that the supply of licensed men is very limited. To what do you attribute that if the pay is good?—Only twice in my whole experience have I ever been actually unable to get men. Once, when I was in my apprenticeship, I was sent out to find men, and had to come back and could not find them; and recently it has occurred once.

10930. You were speaking of the present day. You said the supply is somewhat limited in view of the rapid growth of the river traffic. The question I want to put is why with the good pay which I presume these freemen get you think there are not more applications and a larger number forthcoming?—I suppose it is because the employers have never availed themselves of the facilities that there are to take apprentices or two years' contract men.

10931. It seems a curious thing that in a port like the Thames you should only have about 6,000 freemen when the requirements appear to be increasing every year?—I think a great deal of that rests entirely with the employers or with the bargeowners. They are at liberty to take as many apprentices as they choose, and they are also at liberty to take what are called contract men—that is to say, men who are apprenticed for two years—but I do not think that they avail themselves of that. I do not think you can attribute the scarcity of men to anybody but ourselves. The remedy is in our own hands. If we liked to take the apprentices they would come out as freemen, but we neglect that, and trust to the men keeping up the supply of labour instead of taking the matter into our own hands.

10932. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You tell us that in your opinion the Watermen's Company do the best with the means at their disposal. Do you wish us to infer that you would like them to have other means at their disposal?—No, I do not wish you to infer that. What I wish you to infer is that before a licence is granted by the Watermen's Company they take every means that is in their power to ascertain that the men are competent.

10933. I quite understand that. You think the means at your disposal are sufficient?—I do.

10934. Are you familiar with the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons of 1890?—No.

10935. I will just ask you one question with reference to their recommendation. They recommended: "That any person should be eligible for a lighterman's licence if found on examination to possess the necessary qualification, it being no longer necessary that he should be an apprentice to a freeman or to the widow of a freeman, or to a bargeowner employing a freeman or a licensed lighterman." Will you give us your opinion on that recommendation?—I do not think it would make much difference to us if we could make sure that the men were competent, but as there is no other system ensuring competency but the Watermen's Company I feel bound to uphold that, more especially as we have been so successful under it.

10935a. But if under any other system the area was widened and the end secured you would not object to it, I gather?—I do not think we could object to that. I think all that we require is competency.

10936. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Have you the regulations as to apprenticeship? Are they going to be put in?—They are contained in the bye-laws of the Company, which I will now hand in. You will find them at Section 37.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the Bye-Laws of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames. See Appendix, 28th Day, No. 1.*)

10937. Can you tell us about what average pay these lightermen obtain?—It varies considerably. The average for our men is £2 17s. 6d. a week, but it varies considerably in different firms.

10938. Is the pay always by the week or by the number of trips?—The men are paid by the number of days and nights. They are paid, say, 6s. per day and 6s. per night. A day's work is 12 hours and a night's work is 6s. a lump sum, for one job. It often takes the whole of the night—sometimes three or four hours or five or six hours, as the case may be.

10939. But the average earning would be £2 17s. 6d.?—Yes. Of course I am speaking of the regular men in our employ.

10940. You are only talking of your own firm?—Yes, and the men who are regularly employed.

10941. Would that be a fair estimate for most of the men, or do you think it would be more or less?—I could not give you an average for the whole number of men; I could only give you an average for the men who are constantly in employment.

Cross-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

10942. One of the grievances you have, if you have one at all, is that perhaps there are not quite enough men to work the lighters?—I do not know that that is a grievance; it has only occurred twice, but still the fact remains that on two occasions we could not get men.

10943. If there is a remedy wanted, as I understand, it is in the direction of being able to get more men?—Competent men.

10944. I am assuming they are competent. I am not discussing now how they are ascertained to be qualified, but if you want a remedy at all it is in the direction of having a greater number of competent men?—Yes, if there is a remedy, but I must call your attention to the fact that the remedy lies with ourselves. If we do not avail ourselves of the opportunities that are here before us we cannot blame anyone else for it.

10945. Of whom are you speaking when you say it rests with "ourselves"?—Master lightermen and barge-owners.

10946. It rests with them, does it?—Undoubtedly.

10947. I suppose you are supported by the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen; you are one of the Committee of that Society, are you not?—Yes, I am one of the Committee and one of the founders.

10948. I see your name on the Executive Council?—Yes.

10949. Is not one of your rules, rule 6, framed for the purpose of restricting the taking of apprentices?—No, I do not think it was framed with the object of restricting the taking of apprentices. I will tell you what I think it was put there for. A foreman lighterman stands in a unique position; he only superintends his master's work and he would be unable to properly teach an apprentice by taking him on barges under oars. Therefore we thought it was only wise that we should stipulate that he shall only have one at a time. *Mr. C. J. Fielder.* 24 June 1901.

10950. You have restricted a foreman, who is a member of your society, from having a second apprentice until the existing apprentice shall have served three years?—That is so, but you see a foreman lighterman travels the whole of the area where the barges are, and he does not go under oars with the barges himself; he therefore has not an opportunity of teaching the apprentices the business.

10951. How would that apply in the case of a widow; she is not restricted?—No, not at all. We are not responsible for widows.

10952. This would not restrict any person who is a member of your society?—No, but before a widow could take an apprentice I should think she would come to men like ourselves, who would take the lad and teach him.

(*Chairman.*) I see the next witness represents the society to which you refer, Mr. Baggallay. As we have a witness coming from that society, perhaps it would be better if you restricted your questions to the general part of Mr. Fielder's evidence.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes, my Lord. There is one other point I should like to put to this witness.

10953. Is not that, as a matter of fact, a restriction on the production of licensed lightermen?—Yes, with this qualification; we thought that as the foreman was not under way in the craft himself, he really was not capable of teaching three or four apprentices. We thought that one at a time would be quite sufficient for him.

Re-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

10954. Is the object of that to secure that the apprentice shall be properly taught?—Undoubtedly.

10955. Is that the only object?—That is the only object.

Mr. GEORGE HENRY ARDLEY called and examined.

10956. (*Chairman.*) You are foreman lighterman to Messrs. Hinton and Horne?—Yes. *Mr. G. H. Ardley.*

10957. You represent the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen of the River Thames?—Yes.

10958. You desire to give evidence with reference to the Watermen and Lightermen's Company?—Yes.

10959. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say?—I have been foreman lighterman to Messrs. Hinton and Horne, who are coal merchants in a large way of business, for the past 17 years. Their fleet consists of 40 barges. We always have craft on hire. I have had as many as 80 on hire, but the average working is from 50 to 60 barges all told. I have belonged to the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen of the River Thames ever since it was registered, and I have been selected at a meeting of the society to give evidence before the Commission. If the river were thrown open there would be great risk to life and property. We have frequently to employ chance men, who are termed jobbers. We put them on to work a barge from one given point to another, and rely on their certificate that they are competent. If there were no licence, a man employed over night might foul a steamship and do a large amount of damage between then and the morning, and the foreman would get all the blame for employing such a man, although there would be no opportunity of judging of his fitness or identifying him subsequently. In these days of extreme pressure and telephones we receive orders up to 8 p.m., and the work coming in up to that time has to be arranged by the foreman. It is needless to state my principals are never there at that time. A point in Mr. Jacobs' evidence, given on the 20th March, to which I take exception is that he states a lad of 16 can navigate the largest barges; this is a fallacy. I refer to the Thames Conservancy Rule No. 27, by which barges over 50 tons burthen when navigated under oars must have two competent men. An apprentice can form the second hand, but there must be a lighterman in charge. A good foreman always puts an apprentice with an old and tried freeman, who teaches him his business, and when he is able to go alone he is put into the smallest craft to work his way up. If there were no apprenticeship there would be no opportunity of training the lads and keeping them under one's own eyes. I know the value of skilled labour, as I lightered for my employers rather better than 80,000 tons last year, and five-sixths of that work was done under oars. I only employ a tug on special occasions, or if going to Brentford. My main work is moving about from Messrs. William Cory and Sons' derricks and Regent's Canal to the Pool, as my employers, amongst other work, lighter coal to nearly all the steamers in the most crowded part of the river, viz., the Pool. Another matter is an apprentice is bound to work, or he can be brought up before the Court and punished. If the river were thrown open discipline would be at an end, and in bad weather, ice, and snow, there would be difficulty in getting the men to work at all, as there would be practically no governing authority. I object to Mr. Jacobs' statement "that the great majority of craft are towed," as a large proportion of craft are worked under oars. I should point out that the river is becoming more congested year by year, and that navigation therefore becomes more and more difficult.

10960. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Why are not some more tugs employed. Is it because it is cheaper to navigate by oars?—Yes, it is a matter of perhaps 2s. or 3s. a barge.

Mr. G. H. Ardley.

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10961. It is a matter of money?—Yes.

10962. You say the river is becoming more congested year by year, and the navigation therefore becomes more and more difficult?—Yes.

10963. Is the practice of towing increasing or diminishing under those circumstances?—I do not think it is diminishing. Large firms have tugs; the tonnage increases and the barges get larger, and therefore they have a tug to do the business.

10964. For what length of journey do you think towing becomes better?—Take the long distances from London to Tilbury, or London to Brentford, or London to the Albert Docks, or Dagenham and different places like that.

10965. Something like 7 or 8 miles?—Between London and Tilbury is 26 miles. From London Bridge to Brentford is 13 miles.

10966. You said Albert Docks. Would you take London Bridge to the Albert as a distance over which it would pay to tow?—It would pay you to tow beyond Albert Dock, if you could not go down with the tide.

10967. I thought you gave the Albert Dock as an instance to which it would pay to tow from London?—With big barges (the craft are increasing now) and sometimes with bad weather, or easterly winds, you would not get down under oars, therefore you have to have a tug.

10968. As barges increase in size does the difficulty of navigating with oars increase?—No; I am navigating 100 ton barges under oars.

10969. With two oars?—Yes.

10970. Is the difficulty any greater with large barges than with small barges?—Of course, there is a little more work. If you put a couple of men in a 100-ton barge they can get about.

10971. Suppose they happen to get in the way of a steamer?—They can back astern, or lay their barge up and attend to it properly.

10972. They have not the same control over a 100-ton barge, have they?—No, not quite.

10973. Do you find any want of labour?—No. At Regent's Canal Dock on Saturday afternoon I could have got a dozen lightermen if I had wanted them. In fact, they asked me for jobs.

10974. According to your experience, is there no want of licensed men?—I have never had any trouble to get the men personally.

10975. Supposing a barge comes up from down the river under well qualified men; does it seem reasonable to you that they should be obliged to take a man on board that they do not want?—It is a matter of safety to bargeowners' property. If a man comes up with a barge from the Medway and he does not think he is quite competent to take this barge up through the London traffic, he employs what we call a jobbing man or hoveller.

10976. But supposing he chose to come on without sails?—He could come along.

10977. Where would he be obliged to take a licensed man on?—Coming through the Pool; the most crowded part of the river.

10978. Do you say he can navigate up to the Pool, but not through the Pool?—As a matter of fact, there is no licence, I believe, in reference to a sailing barge. A man with a sailing barge coming from Rochester sometimes comes to the Port of London one day and goes away and is not back for another week or ten days. Of course, that man is not so competent in getting his barge about, therefore he employs what we call a jobbing man to assist him.

10979. There is an enormous amount of traffic in bricks and sand which comes up from the Medway?—Yes.

10980. Constantly?—Yes.

10981. And these men can come up to some point in the river without a licensed man?—As a matter of fact all these men are brought up from boyhood on the barge, first as a boy and then as mate.

10982. You mean on board a sailing barge?—Yes; it is practically an apprenticeship.

10983. They serve their apprenticeship to the men who navigate those barges?—It is practically an apprenticeship, although there is no licence attached to it.

10984. Those who employ these men to navigate the sailing barges are employing men who have gone through an education—I will not call it apprenticeship—on similar barges?—Yes.

10985. And they gradually work up to be mate or captain?—Yes.

10986. And they are very well qualified to navigate their barges?—Below a certain point.

10987. I think you said you thought the Pool was the critical place?—Yes, going through the Pool.

10988. Supposing they go only as far as the Pool they can navigate without any danger?—It all depends. They take these men for their own protection and safety.

10989. Do you say that they could navigate safely up to the Pool, but beyond the Pool you do not think they ought to be allowed to navigate without a waterman freeman?—I do not think so.

10990. Witnesses have told us that the man who comes on board is no use, but they are obliged to take him because they have no choice. Is that your opinion or do you think that they are really useful to them?—The men are very useful to these sailing bargemen.

10991. What do they do when they come on board. Do they take the rudder?—They pilot the barges along the same as an ordinary pilot does for a steamship.

10992. Do the ordinary bargemen who come up from the Medway take the oars?—Yes.

10993. To that extent they assist the bargemen by doing work which somebody must do, that is to say they work the rudder?—Of course they have the knowledge of coming through these different parts, therefore they take the rudder.

10994. At any rate, up to a certain point you see no difficulty in navigation?—Yes, there is some difficulty in navigating the River Thames certainly.

10995. Of course there is difficulty in navigating any river and particularly a river like the Thames?—Yes.

10996. I think you say somewhere about the Pool is the place where the navigation should be in the hands of licensed men?—Yes, I think so.

10997. (*Mr. Ellis.*) As I understand you are here as the representative of the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen?—Yes.

10998. I want a little information about that Society, if you please. Is it what we ordinarily call a trade's union?—Yes, a trade's union. We formed this society to protect our employers to a certain extent.

10999. Is it registered?—Yes, it is registered.

11000. When was it registered?—I could not tell you the date.

11001. Give me some approximate date?—About 10 years ago.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) It was registered in October, 1889, I am told.

11002. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You have rules?—Yes.

11003. Have you a copy of them?—Yes.

11004. Will you hand that in?—Yes.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the Rules of the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen of the River Thames. See Appendix, 28th day, No. 2.*)

11005. Do you publish a report?—Yes.

11006. Have you a copy of that?—Yes, I will hand it in.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the Balance Sheet of the Amalgamated Society of Foremen Lightermen of the River Thames for the half-year ending April, 1901. See Appendix, 28th day, No. 3.*)

11007. Does this society comprise all the foremen lightermen who are eligible?—Yes, certainly.

11008. You are aware an ordinary trade's union does not always comprise everybody who might come in?—Yes, members who like to apply for membership.

11009. What I want to get at is whether there are any outside this who are eligible?—Yes. If any other foremen wish to come in they can come in.

11010. Are there any who do not wish to come in?—A very few.

11011. What is the number of your men?—Over 300.

11012. How many do you suppose there are outside?—Very few.

11012a. Ten, twenty, or thirty?—Not more, I should think.

11013. This is an ordinary trades union and a benefit society, I see as well?—Yes, for the protection of our old and maimed members.

11014. How long have you personally been a member?—From nearly the beginning; about 10 years, I suppose.

11015. Are you one of the officers?—I am their treasurer, but I have not got the figures quite at my fingers' ends in reference to the balance sheet.

11016. Was there any question as to the evidence you should give before this Commission. Was it settled for you?—It was settled by my executive council, and it is all in our minute book.

11017. We can take it that your evidence represents the opinion of your society?—It has been put before my members; I am merely a representative; it is not a personal matter with me.

11018. You are a representative witness?—Yes.

11018a. (*Mr. Peel.*) When a barge is under 50 tons, and when it is towed, then one man takes charge of it?—Yes.

11019. Then that man need not be a lighterman, he might be an apprentice?—He might be an apprentice, certainly.

11020. I see you object to the statement that the majority of the craft are towed?—Yes.

11021. What is your idea about that?—I think from figures that I can produce, I could show a hundred firms who do not tow, or who simply tow occasionally.

11022. Whose practice is to navigate under oars?—Yes.

11023. Are those barges of a special size?—They range between 50, 60, 70, and 80 tons.

11024. And upwards?—Yes.

11025. To what size?—Craft range from 50 to 130 or 140 tons.

11026. Your desire to have skilled men on board applies chiefly to barges when they are under oars?—Yes.

11027. Not when they are towed?—I could not carry on my firm's business unless I had practical men.

11028. When they are being towed you would not put the same high requirements on the men?—Yes. I have to drop them off on different tiers, berth them at different wharves, and they have to be watched. If you put an empty barge inside a loaded barge you would have her side torn out, which means damage.

11029. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You told Sir John Wolfe-Barry just now that at a certain point a freeman has to come on board a sailing barge and take the rudder?—Yes.

11030. Suppose a sailing barge is under sail, does he still take the rudder and navigate her?—He would not sail a barge through a crowded spot such as the Pool.

11031. Therefore, as long as he is under sail he is of no earthly use?—I do not know that he is of no earthly use. He would assist.

11032. You have said if there were no licences a man employed overnight might foul a steamship and do a great amount of damage. Do your barges move about much at night time?—Yes, we do a lot of business at night time.

11033. Long distances?—Yes; Victoria Dock to the Pool, Chelsea Basin to Bankside.

11034. Then you have spoken about the difficulty of getting the men to work at all if there were no governing authority. I presume the governing authority were no use whatever in the strike, were they?—You cannot compel a man to work.

11035. Can you compel a man to work in this particular case?—With apprentices the mere fact of them knowing there is somebody above them puts them in fear and keeps them to this particular sort of the business. Unless you have some governing authority you cannot get a boy to get up at two or three or four o'clock in the morning unless there is somebody to rule him. The masters know this. The apprentices sometimes even run away from their masters; but the mere fact of having a governing authority puts fear in these boys, and brings them up to their business properly.

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11036. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With reference to the rules of your society about taking apprenticeship, I see that the foreman who takes one apprentice shall not be allowed to take any apprentice unless he is in a position to teach or cause to be taught such apprentice the practical business of a waterman and lighterman of the River Thames?—That is so.

11037. It is not necessary for him to teach the apprentice himself as we rather gathered from a former witness. So long as he sees that he is taught he fulfils his obligation to the society?—I believe that is so.

11038. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I see the date of these rules is 1893. Can you assure us that the rules are now what they were in 1893?—When we formed this society the rules were the same as they are now.

Cross-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

11039. A question with regard to your practice. Do you have a certain number of men who are more or less habitually in your employ as a foreman?—Yes; I have my brother under me as assistant.

11040. You are a foreman lighterman?—Yes.

11041. And you have a certain number of men who more or less regularly work for you?—Yes. My regular men.

11042. In filling up a vacancy if you want another man do you find out at all what the qualifications of the man are as regards his capacity for navigation?—The licence is the guarantee.

11043. Is that the only thing you look to or do you go at all by your own knowledge of the man or by what is recommended to you by other people?—Certain men that I know work on the river, and if I want one of them I employ him as my man.

11044. You do ascertain to a certain extent for yourself and use your own judgment in selecting a man you employ as one of your regular men?—In nearly all cases.

11045. And you do not rely implicitly upon the licence of the company?—I take it this way. If I go to Victoria Dock and I want an extra jobber or two, I say to a man willing to take my barge to Bankside, or to certain steamers at different points, "I suppose you are a lighterman?" He says: "Yes;" I say: "Well, I should like to know; I want to be certain that you are a lighterman"; then I ask him to produce his certificate, and that is the proof.

11046. That I can quite understand; when you are taking on a casual hand for a specific job you do have to rely in that case upon the licence as the only guarantee you can get; but with regard to the men you take on as your regular hands, those you use your judgment about?—Yes, I must say that.

11047. In other words you do not rely implicitly upon the licence which is granted by the Watermen's Company as evidence of his qualifications for your regular employment?—No.

11048. You rely on your own judgment, do you not?—In some cases we do certainly.

11049. For regular employment you rely on your own judgment over and above the licence. Is not that so?—To a certain extent I do.

11050. The Thames Conservancy Regulations require, as we know, one man to be on board in the case of a barge under 50 tons?—Yes.

11051. Two men in the case of a barge between 50 tons and 100 tons?—That is so.

11052. Three men in the case of a barge over 150 tons?—That is right.

11053. Unless she is being towed?—Yes.

11054. The Thames Conservancy Regulation requires that man No. 1 shall be a competent man?—That is so.

11055. It does not require that he shall be a licensed man of the Watermen's Company or that he shall have any other qualification except that he shall be a competent man. Is not that so?—I have not the rules of the Thames Conservancy here.

11056. I know what the Watermen's Company require, but so far as the Thames Conservancy Regulation goes it is this, is it not. It is No. 27 of their bye-laws: "Any lighter navigating the river shall

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when under way have at least one competent man constantly on board for the navigation and management thereof"—it is only a competent man. The employer, of course, has to see to that; the other men have no qualification at all; is that not so?—By the reading of that, but not in practice.

11057. Let me ask you about this towing practice. You say that a large number of barges are navigating under oars?—Yes.

11058. I take it that when you say that, you mean the barges or lighters which work the short distance traffic just in and about the Pool?—Oh, no.

11059. Nearly all the barges which come up past Westminster and go up the river, are towed, are they not?—Taking it from the Pool to Brentford, you would not get them there under oars; you would at some time, of course, but in bad weather they are towed.

11060. Am I right in saying that nearly all the barge traffic which goes up the river beyond London Bridge and goes past Westminster is towed?—Not all the traffic.

11061. I said "nearly all." I have myself seen them working with sweeps past Westminster, but as a matter of fact, the greater part of them do go under tow?—For the long distances.

11062. Is it not a fact that nearly all the traffic that comes up from the Albert Docks to the Pool is towed?—If you take the tonnage it might be, but I do not know about the number of craft.

11063. I daresay you might find some small craft which go certain distances under oars, but am I not right in putting it to the Commission that the bulk of the traffic which goes between the Pool and the Albert Docks is towed?—Yes.

11064. Does it not come to this; that what is moved about under oars may be in number very considerable, but it is principally the traffic which is going to and from the ship's side in the Pool to the wharf or in and out of the docks?—The bulk of it, I daresay.

11065. And that is chiefly the small barge traffic, is it not?—My craft run from 70 to 80 tons.

11066. But the larger barges are almost all under towage even there?—The large barges are.

11067. With regard to these sailing barges, you rather put it (I do not think intentionally) that the sailing barges when they come up have to take a man on board. As a matter of fact, whatever a sailing barge may do in the way of taking an extra hand in certain cases when they are coming up, they are not obliged to take any extra hand, are they, if they are going right through?—Not according to the law.

11068. If they take an extra hand it is a voluntary act on their part. I admit that they do for certain purposes, and in certain states of the weather, take a third hand on to get through certain bridges, but that is a purely voluntary act on their part, is it not?—It is for their own protection and the safety of their property.

11069. They want three hands for a big barge going through the bridges in certain states of the weather, and so on?—They want another because the navigation is difficult in different states of the tide.

11070. But there is no obligation on them to take another?—Not according to the law.

11071. If they take a man there is no obligation on them to take a licensed man?—I believe that is so.

11072. Now with regard to the western barges. The barges which come down from the west are under no obligation whatever to take a man unless after they have passed all the bridges and come below London Bridge?—That is so.

11073. What is the most difficult part of the navigation of the river. Is it at the bridges?—There is the congestion of traffic. This is increasing every year.

11074. At certain times there may be some congestion, but, taking it as a rule, is it not the tide or the weather when they are passing the bridges which causes the difficulty?—Not in all cases.

11075. But is not that the principal difficulty?—There is some difficulty, it is true, but that is not the principal difficulty, I think.

11076. Will you tell me what is the principal difficulty. The hoveller is a man who is taken on board to help through the bridges, is he not?—Yes.

11077. But all these western country barges now are generally towed?—Many of them are.

11078. Mostly all of them are towed. Is it not the bridge navigation which is the greatest difficulty on the river?—Yes, it is.

11079. In the Pool, though you may have a great deal of traffic and some congestion, the traffic (so far as it is not being towed), is all moving with the tide, is it not?—It is all on the move.

11080. It is all on the move in the same direction?—Yes.

11081. Whether it is the wind or the tide which affects it, it is all moved by the same common motive power?—The tides come up and down, certainly.

11082. It is all moving in the same direction?—Yes.

11083. Now one question upon your rules. By Rule 6 of your Society's rules you restrict the power of the foremen lightermen to take apprentices?—Yes.

11084. You limit it?—That is so by this rule.

11085. The widows who can take apprentices, and any other persons who are persons entitled to take apprentices, are not restricted as your members are by that?—No, quite right—by the reading of this rule.

11086. There is nobody else who is entitled to take an apprentice who is restricted in the same way as you have restricted your members?—According to this rule, certainly; that is so by this rule.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

11087. You have taken exception to a statement made by Mr. Jacobs that a lad of 16 can navigate the largest barges?—Quite so.

11088. Was your attention drawn to the 35th bye-law of the Watermen's Company before you made that statement?—I do not think so. I am taking the Thames Conservancy Act.

11089. Here is the bye-law: "In all cases in which it may be necessary or requisite, under such Act or these bye-laws or under the bye-laws of the Conservators of the River Thames, that for the benefit of the public using the river in boats, barges, or vessels, two able and skilful persons shall be employed in the management and navigation of passenger boats at Gravesend, and in vessels of more than 50 tons burden navigated on the river, one waterman or lighterman licensed in manner provided by such Act and bye-laws, or an apprentice licensed to take the sole charge of craft, and an apprentice actually bound in manner provided by such Act." Under that bye-law is it not a fact that a lad of 16 years of age who has got his licence may navigate a barge along with an apprentice who has just joined?—That is so, I believe.

11090. Then Mr. Jacobs was right, was he not, when he said that a lad of 16 could navigate?—You get so many bye-laws that you want the whole of the books before you.

11091. That is why I draw your attention to this bye-law. So that Mr. Jacobs was right when he said that a lad of 16 could navigate a barge?—Mr. Jacobs was taking it from that one; I was taking it from the other.

11092. Is it a common thing for a barge of 80 tons, we will say, with cargo on board, to be navigated under oars?—It is possible.

11093. But is it a common thing, or not?—It is not very common; sometimes they do.

11094. As a matter of practice, have you known it done?—It is done, certainly.

11095. Very seldom, I suppose?—No.

11096. Is it a common thing?—I am taking my own business. I can navigate a barge under oars with 80 tons, if you put it that way.

11097. Is it a common thing for a barge of 80 tons with a cargo on board to be navigated under oars on the river?—It is a common thing.

11098. Is 80 tons the limit?—No; these barges are of different sizes.

11099. Is it a common thing in practice for a barge over 80 tons with a cargo on board to be navigated under oars?—It is in my case. I am speaking of my own particular business.

11100. Do your barges exceed 80 tons?—I hire barges over 80 tons.

11101. Over what distances do you take barges?—I take from Victoria Dock to the Pool. That is 7 miles.

11102. Under oars?—Under oars.

11103. Up to what tonnage have you taken a laden barge under oars that distance?—You are putting a question to me which I can answer. I have navigated, with my brother, a barge with 130 tons in it.

11104. Under oars?—Yes.

11105. With how much cargo on board?—With 130 tons of coal.

11106. How far have you navigated that?—Seven miles.

11107. Have you done that more than once in your life?—Yes, I have.

11108. Frequently?—Frequently. I am not telling you any fairy tales, I am a practical man in reference to navigation.

Re-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

11109. Tell me if you can verify the document which I now hand you, as a list of barge owners who are now navigating barges under oars?—Yes, I can. I got this list out myself.

11110. How many names are there in that list?—There are 100 barge owners on this list, large and small.

(*The Witness handed in a list of Bargeowners on the River Thames who navigate under oars. See Appendix, 28th day, No.* 4.)

11111. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Do they navigate entirely under oars; do they never tow?—Occasionally, in bad weather they do.

11112. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) May I ask whether that list comprises those navigating solely under oars?—Not wholly under oars.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) They use towing in the case of bad weather.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) To prevent misunderstanding, let us have this clear. The witness told us that the bulk of the traffic within certain limits was towed; it had nothing to do with bad weather so far as that is concerned; he did not mean us to gather that it was only in bad weather.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Quite so, but I understood he was speaking only of the long distance journeys when he spoke of towing.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Apart from bad weather, for long distances the barges are towed.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Yes, and the barges of the bargeowners shown in the list he has handed in were towed under these conditions from time to time.

11113. (*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Do you mean that these gentlemen whose names you have given use towing when they are going long distances?—Yes.

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11114. (*Chairman.*) May we take it that those gentlemen whose names you have given us represent the majority of bargeowners?—Yes.

11115. What percentage would you say to the whole number of bargeowners?—Nearly half, I should think.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) If your Lordship will permit me to say so, I think that to make that valuable what is wanted rather is how many barges that represents out of the total number of barges. The mere number of bargeowners does not tell much; it is really the number of barges out of the aggregate number of barges that is important, and to a certain extent whether they are large barges or small ones.

11116. (*Mr. Horace Avory.*) What do you say to that, Mr. Ardley. Out of the total number of barges in use on the river, what proportion is habitually navigated by oars. Take the whole number of barges in use on the river?—I should say half, I think.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Rather than use the word "habitually," say they have no other means of propulsion than oars or towing; they are not habitually, I take it, navigated by oars if it suits the bargeowners to tow them.

11117. (*Mr. Horace Avory.*) May I take it that they are habitually navigated by oars for the short distances?—Yes.

11118. Do you think that the system of navigating by oars for the short distances will continue?—Certainly. It is a matter of cheapness. I could get a barge brought by hand for 5s., and it costs me 8s. for a tug.

11119. Is it likely in the future that the system of navigating by oars will be entirely abolished?—I do not think so.

11120. About how many of these western barges are there that have been spoken of?—Very few now that come down under oars; they tow right through.

11121. Rule 3 of your society, I see, provides, among other things, that one of the objects is to endeavour to settle any dispute that may arise between master and man?—Certainly, that is so, and I think we have done so.

11122. Have you, in fact, used that power in any case?—Yes, we have.

11123. In the case of the last strike that has been spoken of?—I think we have protected our employers very well.

Mr. Harry Gosling called and examined.

11124. (*Chairman.*) You are General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames, with which Society is affiliated the Society of Watchmen of the Port of London?—Yes.

Mr. H. Gosling.

11125. You are also an Alderman of the London County Council?—Yes.

11126. You now appear before us as representing the Society of which you are secretary?—Yes.

11127. You desire to give evidence with reference to the licensing system of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

11128. Will you be good enough to proceed with that evidence?—I am a lighterman, and have been fully qualified since 1882. Prior to that I had been apprenticed for seven years. My chief business was in the timber trade, my work being the general navigation of the river. I am now the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames. I have been secretary for the last eight years, and am now appearing for the members of that body and am instructed by them. The said society is a trade union consisting of 22 branches, extending from Kingston to Erith, and is managed by a committee of delegates elected by the members. The society at the present time has 4,000 members, of whom 3,400 are lightermen and apprentices, and the rest watchmen. There are about 5,000 licensed lightermen and 1,700 apprentices working on the River Thames. A man can only become a lighterman in two ways (1) by serving a five, six, or seven years' apprenticeship, (2) by serving a two years' contract to some bargeowner or lighterman. Apprenticeship is applicable to a man who begins this calling early in life; the contract men are those who desire to obtain a license after they have passed the age of 20. At the present time a lad can be apprenticed at the age of 14, and after he has worked for two years, if he understands his work and satisfies the Court of the Watermen's Company that he is competent, his master can obtain an apprentice's license, which enables such apprentice to do such work as in the discretion of his master he is able to perform. But the apprentice only gets his full license on completion of his indenture, and provided the Court are satisfied that he is competent. The present tendency is not to apprentice boys until they are 16, and therefore apprentices' licences are not granted until apprentices are 18, nor full licences until such apprentices are 21. The Court always has an examination or evidence of competence before granting a licence, and I have myself opposed the granting of a licence on the grounds of incompetence, and on my satisfying the Court that the applicant was not competent, the licence has been refused until such time as the

See 11197.

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applicant became qualified. The advantage of this system of training and licensing is that all the lightermen on the river have a common knowledge that can only be acquired by a continuity of service, and by each of them having been associated with the same system, and trained upon the same river, and any system that allowed men to come and go as they chose, would introduce danger and difficulty. At the present time a lighterman devotes the whole of his time to his trade; the result being that he works day and night, winter and summer, and obtains an experience that cannot be acquired in any other way. The successful navigation of the Thames is due to the fact that the methods of navigation adopted are common property and well understood not only by each lighterman but by the pilots, steamboat captains, and all others using the river, and this is more important as the navigation of the Thames cannot be controlled by any set of rules, but varies in every reach and with every wind and tide. If the present system were abolished and the barge-owners left free to employ whom they pleased, the risk to navigation would be materially increased, as the incompetence of one man is sufficient to throw out the whole of the navigation in any particular reach, and cause both delay and danger. The owners' risk can be covered by insurance, but the risk of personal injury to the lighterman cannot be covered, and the men on the river are strongly of opinion that any such course would increase the dangers of their trade, and make their lives less secure, as well as delay them in the carrying out of their work in what is admitted to be a very crowded river. The Court of the Watermen's Company have a better knowledge of the navigation of the Thames and its requirements than any other body; it is a class of navigation that is entirely distinct from everything else, and one that only a body actually in touch with the river and its requirements can competently deal with. Whatever alteration may be made in the management of the river for the improvement of the port, it would be advisable that those navigating the river should be licensed, and that they should be licensed by a body with the knowledge and experience of the Waterman's Court. The feeling of the men on the river is that the standard of competence should be raised rather than lowered, and that the navigation on the river should be subject to a regular night and day supervision.

See 11290.

11129. Was this evidence which you have just given read and approved at a meeting of your society?—Yes, it was prepared and submitted to a mass meeting of the men, specially called for the purpose, and approved by them.

11130. When was that?—Within the last three months. I am not sure of the date.

11131. Have you a book of rules of your society?—Yes.

11132. Will you please hand it in?—Yes.

(*The Witness handed in the Rules of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Watchmen of the River Thames. See Appendix, 28th day, No. 5.*)

11133. Will you also hand in a copy of your accounts?—Yes.

(*The Witness handed in the Report and Accounts of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Watchmen of the River Thames for the year ending 31st December, 1900. See Appendix, 28th day, No. 6.*)

(*Witness.*) I have prepared further evidence, which I should like to put before the Commission with reference to the strike, and with reference to the River Humber.

11134. Have you yourself been on the Humber?—I have been there several times.

11135. Lately?—I was there last week, and I was there in Whitsun week.

11136. Did you go up with Mr. Deering?—No, I did not. I saw him there, but he did not see me. He did not know I was going.

11137. Can you tell me the number of licensed men on the Thames now out of employment?—It is about 700 or 800, and of those that are employed, not all are working upon their license; that is to say, they are doing work in which the license is not necessary.

11138. Do you mean dock work, for instance?—Yes. There were on Friday about 100 or 150 men working in the docks as watchmen at a lower rate of wages than they would get if they were working as freemen outside.

11139. Are you acquainted with the Port of Hull?—Yes.

11140. Can you tell us anything with reference to the lighterage work there?—The lighterage work on the Humber is only along a straight piece of wide river about two miles in length, from the dock entrance into what is called the Harbour at Hull, and up about 2½ miles of harbour.

11141. How is the work done along that 2½ miles?—With hitchers—that is to say, boat hooks.

11142. That is towing?—It is towed along with lines.

11143. Is that with steam?—No, manual labour. In the Humber it is with steam; the craft are towed there by steam.

11144. Is the work inside the docks at Hull similar to the dock work in London?—Yes, but in moving from dock to dock or place to place the Hull work is of a much more simple character than in London, because the docks have direct communication locks with the river. In many cases you do not need to go into the Humber at all to get from the docks into the harbour at Hull. There are communication locks leading into the harbour itself.

11145. How many lighters are there in Hull?—About 600, as against 10,000 on the Thames.

11146. How many lightermen are there?—There are about the same number of lightermen, as against 6,000 or 7,000 on the Thames.

11147. In your opinion, would the work at Hull be considered of a simple character by a Thames lighterman?—Yes, it would, compared with the Thames work.

11148. Do you think there is more difficulty and risk on the Thames?—Yes, there is so much more ground to cover; there is so much more to know.

11149. Can you tell me the view of the men on the river about strikes?—I do not want to say anything more about the strike than is absolutely necessary, because we are very good friends now, and I do not think we want to stir it up, but the unanimous opinion on the river is that the only way to prevent these disturbances is a permanent conciliation board with an independent chairman.

11150. Can you give me any idea of the number of lightermen that were out at the last strike?—Nine hundred was the highest number of freemen. They were not all of them out long. There were about 200 apprentices out, I think. The remainder of the men who were out were watchmen—unlicensed men.

11151. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) There are about 6,700 lightermen and apprentices?—Yes.

11152. If 900 of the lightermen were out on strike that would be a much larger proportion than 10 per cent., would it not?—Yes; 900 were not out for very long, because the other firms came and took some of them.

11153. Still, you do not quite agree with the statement that the proportion out on strike was 10 per cent.?—No. Those are the actual figures, taken from our books.

11154. You say that the number of members of your union is 3,400?—Yes.

11155. And the total number of licensed men and apprentices is 6,700?—Yes.

11156. That would show that, roughly speaking, you have about one-half the men in your union?—About half.

11157. Have you a larger proportion in your union of the men actually employed as lightermen at this moment on the river, or how does that stand?—The tendency is for the unemployed men, of course, to leave; they lapse.

11158. Including in that number the men who are in some other occupation. They cease to be members of your union when they cease to be employed—is that so?—No, it is not so. They remain members so long as their contributions are paid. If a man is out of work the usual consequence of that is that he is not able to pay.

11159. So that you may have a certain number of men in your union who are not actually employed as lightermen?—Not a considerable number. The 700 men that I was speaking of are men who are looking for work, but trade is very bad indeed just now. They are looking for work and are unable to get it. I mean in that sense they are unemployed.

11160. I wish to know whether the men who are engaged in dock work and other employment of that kind more or less permanently still remain members of your union?—Not permanently employed in the docks; I do not suggest that; but they are working in the docks now at a lower rate because there is so little work outside for them to do.

11161. Have you any reason to complain of the apprentices at any time; are they properly trained and looked after?—We have always worked in the direction of getting better training for the apprentices, and one of our very strong objections used to be the age at which they commenced to work. Although the law has not been altered, owing to the assistance which the Board of Trade gave to the matter I think the age has been considerably raised. We thought it was rather too dangerous work for young lads; it was better that they did not come to the river at all until they were 16, and practically that is now the rule.

11162. Things have been better since a few years ago when the subject came to the notice of the Board of Trade?—That is so.

11163. (*Mr. Peel.*) Is there no other society or union of these men besides your own; I mean of the 3,300 who are not in your society?—There are one or two small local societies, I think, but the recognised trade's union is that one, and that is the only one I know of.

11164. There is no other large body outside yours?—No other large organisation at all.

11165. You say that the feeling of the men is that the standard of competency should be raised?—Yes.

11166. Are they not satisfied with the standard which is admitted by the Court?—If there is to be any alteration in it they suggest that the examination should be more strict.

11167. Do they think it ought to be more practical than it is?—No, I think the men are generally satisfied that the examination gets the result that is wanted, but if they were asked to make a suggestion as to how it should be improved they would suggest that it should be more practical.

11168. What would your own view be?—The finest test that I know of is to ask a man to do the work, and to look at him.

11169. And you think that ought to be put more in force than it usually is at present?—I should suggest that.

11170. Can you give any idea of the number of these contract men?—You could get that exactly from the clerk of the company; I think it is 300.

11171. When these men enter into a contract they are often, I suppose, put in charge of a barge very soon after the contract begins to run?—Not sole charge.

11172. Most of them have had experience of the river before, have they not?—Yes, but not in sole charge of craft.

11173. But still they have had experience of the river which would make them very soon competent?—Yes.

11174. You have taken objection yourself at the Court to men being made members of the Company?—Yes.

11175. Was that on the ground of incompetence or on the ground of bad character?—On the ground of incompetence.

11176. Never on the ground of bad character?—I have never personally objected so far as character was concerned.

11177. These objections are made sometimes, are they not?—Yes, I believe the Court look after that kind of thing very well indeed.

11178. Men are sometimes refused on that ground?—Yes.

11179. I should like to have your opinion about the difficulty of navigation. Is it a question of getting through the bridges, or the congestion of the traffic. Which would you put as the higher?—You cannot take any part of the river and say that is where the trouble is. The trouble is all over the river. You want to know the river well from end to end to be thoroughly competent.

11180. Do you say the special difficulty is in getting through the bridges?—I do not say that is the special difficulty. It is a difficulty, but not greater than in many other places. The difficulty is not every day the same, and that is the greatest difficulty of all. To-day you may find it all right in a certain place, and think you are going all right; to-morrow it may be very difficult there, and that is where the local knowledge is wanted so much.

11181. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Your Society is a registered society, I presume?—Yes.

11182. The rules which you have put in will show that?—Yes.

11183. And you make a return to the Registrar of Friendly Societies every year?—Yes.

11184. Are you familiar with the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons of 1890?—I know of the Report.

11185. I was going to ask you the same question that I put to another witness—whether you confirm their recommendation. It is this: "That any person should be eligible for a lighterman's licence if found on examination to possess the necessary qualification, it being no longer necessary that he should be an apprentice to a freeman, or to the widow of a freeman, or to a barge-owner employing a freeman, or a licensed lighterman." Have you any observation to make on that?—I suggest that if that were adopted you would at once lower the standard.

11186. You object to that?—I do object. I say the least time in which you can become competent is that suggested by the contract system.

11187. You do not concur in that?—I do not.

11188. I have here the copy of your rules. It is dated 1900. Is this the most recent?—We are just re-registering and submitting a new copy of rules, but there is nothing in the new copy, I think, that can affect anything which this Commission may want to know.

11189. What alterations you are proposing to make are outside the purview of this Commission?—Undoubtedly. They are with regard to subscriptions and that kind of thing.

11190. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Is there any limitation by the rules of the Society as to the number of apprentices that a man may take?—No, there is no limitation as to the number he may take, but we require our members to give notice to the Society that they are going to take an apprentice.

11191. As a matter of fact in ordinary practice how many apprentices does a man have at one time?—That is rather hard to say. Mr. Fielder, who was giving evidence here just now, had three at one time that I know of.

11192. I see that Rule 7 is this: "Any member of this Society wishing to take an apprentice must make an application to his branch and with the consent of its members he may take one, but no member shall sign any apprentice's paper out of his lodge." Then I see: "No member shall take an apprentice for a less period than five years." Are those the rules?—Yes.

11193. Does that mean that no member may take more than one apprentice?—Yes, undoubtedly.

11194. And further that he cannot take that apprentice without the consent of the members?—That is so.

11195. As a matter of fact is the consent of the members always given to a man taking an apprentice when he wishes to take one?—I do not remember a case where it was refused.

11196. Therefore, we may take it that usually it is conceded?—Yes.

11197. I do not quite understand one portion of your evidence. You said this: "Apprenticeship is applicable to a man who begins this calling early in life, the contract men are those who desire to obtain a licence after they have passed the age of 20. At the present time a lad can be apprenticed at the age of 14 and after he has worked for 2 years if he understands his work and satisfies the Court of the Watermen's Company that he is competent, his master can obtain an apprentice's licence, which enables such apprentice to do such work as in the discretion of his master he is able to perform." Does he get a licence as apprentice at the age of 16?—His master gets a licence. See 11128.

11198. But it applies to the lad?—Yes.

11199. Is he then entitled to navigate a barge by himself?—If he gets the licence he is. But the tendency now is that he is not apprenticed until he is

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16, and therefore he does not get a licence until he is 18.

11200. I know what you say about commencing at 16, but I am talking of the rules for a moment. By the rules if he gets an apprentice's licence he is then allowed to navigate a barge?—If he gets a licence.

11201. Am I right in saying that up to a certain tonnage he may navigate that barge by himself?—Yes.

11202. What is the tonnage?—50 tons.

11203. Up to 50 tons by the rules of the Watermen's Company, and your Society, a barge may be navigated by a lad of 16 in sole charge?—That is so, but of course there is always the reservation that it is subject to the discretion of his master, and I should not consider his master very discreet if he allowed him to do it.

11204. But subject to the discretion of his master he may be put in sole charge of a barge of 50 tons?—Yes.

11205. Above 50 tons he is not allowed to do it?—That is so.

11206. And you say that at present the tendency is to increase the age, and therefore he would not be put in sole charge until he was 18 years of age?—That is so.

11207. Or at some age between 16 and 18 years?—Yes.

11208. You said that there was want of employment now among the licensed men?—The trade is very bad.

11209. Is that due at all to the strike and to other men having come in and remaining in?—No. I think it is the season of the year when trade is bad.

11210. As a matter of fact have all the men who went on strike got back to their old places?—Practically the whole of them, licensed and unlicensed.

11211. Do you consider that a lad of 16 is competent to navigate a barge of 50 tons through the most crowded parts of the traffic of the River Thames?—I think there are very few of them who are, and very few of them who do. It is a thing you hardly ever see or hear of. There are just one or two pretty smart boys who have been with their fathers and apprenticed exactly when they were 14 years of age and got their licences when they were 16, but it is very rare indeed. It is hardly to be seen.

11212. Suppose we take 18 years of age. Is a man who has served two years' apprenticeship, having been apprenticed at 16 and then put in charge at the age of 18, competent to navigate a barge of 50 tons through the most crowded part of the Thames?—You cannot say until you have seen him do it. I should like to see him do it before I gave an opinion upon that.

11213. I am talking of the average man. I am not talking of a highly competent or an incompetent man, because the rule applies to everybody?—The rule does not apply until they have been licensed. Therefore the Watermen's Company have to be satisfied that they can do it before they give a licence.

11214. Subject to that, do you think a man of 18 is competent to navigate a barge of 50 tons through all the traffic of the Thames?—No, I do not think he is. What usually happens is that he does work through the easiest parts first.

11215. Would you forbid it?—I should. I should like to see stricter regulations. I have always been against the employment of persons so young in sole charge of a craft.

11216. What age would you like to see a man before he is put in charge of a barge?—20.

11217. Therefore you think the rules of the Watermen's Company are very lax?—I do not think the rules of the Watermen's Company are very lax, but I think there is improvement wanted, and that should be in making them stricter.

11218. How many licensed apprentices are there now qualified to do this work, assuming their master puts them to it?—I could not say. There are about 1,700 apprentices, but how many of those are qualified I could not say. The Watermen's Company could give you that.

11219. That would be on the records of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

11220. Is it a large number?—I could not say at all.

11221. Is there much difficulty raised by the Watermen's Company in giving licences to those who have served two years?—Yes, they are rather difficult to get. We have gentlemen like Mr. Jacobs and Mr. Deering, who know something about the work, and you have to satisfy men like them that you are competent before you get the licence.

11222. How do they satisfy them they are competent?—Generally by examination, and sometimes by sending their officers out to see what they do. But you must remember that the officers are always on the river, and the officers first of all report to the Court what they know, and the officers are men who have worked in the trade and understand it.

11223. First of all are they asked questions in the Hall of the Watermen's Company?—When I presented myself to the Court for my apprentice's licence——

11224. That is a long time ago. Give us something later?—It is very much the same thing now. One of the officers of the Court who knew me and had seen me afloat told the court that he considered I was competent to take a licence, and then one or two members of the Court asked me one or two questions they thought I should answer, and then they gave me my licence.

11225. Were those gentlemen who had seen you afloat bargeowners or men who constantly saw you?—He was an inspector of the company who knew me well.

11226. The company then is guided entirely on that particular point of practical knowledge by the report of the inspector?—Not entirely, but they take their evidence.

11227. How long does the examination take on practical matters?—It depends a good deal upon who you are and how you are shaping, I should say. Some of them they send back for six months.

11228. How long did it take in your case?—Not very long. I was pretty well known there and had worked with my father and grandfather.

11229. May I ask at what age you got your licence?—About 16½, I think.

11230. You do not think you were quite qualified to navigate a 50-ton barge?—I certainly was not, and was not allowed to do it. I was always under the control of my master.

11231. But if your master had chosen to put you in charge of the barge there was nothing else to stop him?—No law to stop him.

11232. The law was in your favour if you had the licence of the Watermen's Company?—Yes; but my master was my father, so there was no fear of him giving me anything to do that was not proper.

11233. He had a personal interest in your safety?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

11234. The licence given to an apprentice to work after the two years is a licence to him, is it not. He may work if he chooses. For instance, supposing you had kicked over the traces and had never paid any attention to your father, and had chosen to work for anybody who had offered work, you would have been entitled to do it, would you not?—I must confess I did kick over the traces, and my father called me back.

11235. He had sufficient authority?—Yes.

11236. As a matter of fact, the licence is a licence to the apprentice, and not to the master who employs the apprentice?—No, the licence is to the master.

11237. Section 52 says this: "It shall be lawful for all apprentices bound to a party authorised by this Act to take apprentices to have or take the sole charge of any boat, barge, or other vessel provided such apprentices shall have worked and rowed upon the said river as apprentices for the space of two years at the least, and upon their being found qualified to act upon examination by the said court, and upon obtaining a licence of the said court." That is a licence to the apprentice?—Yes, but you must read more. You want to read the licence itself.

11238. Do you mean to say that the Watermen's Company grant a licence which is not in accordance with the Act?—You told me once before that I am not to discuss law with you; I hope you will not put that to me.

11239. You do not know about that?—I do not know anything about law at all.

11240. Let us come to the practical working of the thing. At 16 you say he can get his licence. Now, supposing he was apprenticed to a widow, he would be

entitled to go to work because he could not be working with the widow on the barges?—Those who are apprenticed to widows (which are very rare cases) are generally cases where the husband has lost his life in the employ of a firm and the firm take the apprentice and take charge of him.

11241. That may be so, but as a matter of fact the apprentice, after he had reached the age of 16 could get a license, and would be able to work independently if he wished to do so?—No, he is never able to work independently.

11242. Is that limited by the terms of his apprenticeship, it might be that?—He is always subject to the control of his master or mistress.

11243. If your father had chosen to put you on board a lighter, he could have put you on board a lighter which had not got a licensed man on board, even though the man already on board was a competent man, and you could have ousted him. He might have been a man competent, we will say, to navigate a western barge, or a Lee barge, or a Medway barge. Your father could have put you at the age of 16½ on board, and ousted that man from the control of the vessel, could he not?—I do not know whether he could. He would not have done so. I never heard of that kind of thing being done.

11244. With regard to this question of the sufficiency of the examination, you gave evidence in 1899 in support of the Bill of that year, which was promoted by your society?—Yes.

11245. Was that a Bill for altering the constitution of the Watermen's Company by putting on eventually a majority of representatives directly elected by the licensed men?—Yes.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Was that Bill read a second time?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes, and it went to Committee in the House of Lords and was rejected. A somewhat similar Bill, which Mr. Wootton Isaacson had charge of, was brought in in 1892. That was rejected in the House of Commons.

11246. You made certain allegations against the Watermen's Company on that occasion, in order to justify your proposals to alter the constitution?—Yes.

11247. One of them, if I recollect aright, was that the examination was not an effective examination. You wanted the examination of the man to be licensed to be made more stringent?—We have always wanted the examination to be stringent.

11248. Then I am right; that was so?—I do not quite like the way you put it. What we really wanted was to keep up the standard of efficiency to the very highest point.

11249. You considered that the Watermen's Company as then constituted was not doing its duty from your point of view with regard to the examination for licensed men?—I do not like your saying, "Not doing its duty." I say we want the standard of efficiency to be as high as we can get it, and we thought if we had representation upon the Court that would ensure it.

11250. They were not obtaining by the means which they adopted, at all events, that high standard of efficiency which you thought was desirable?—They were not obtaining a standard so high as we should like to get.

11251. I will take it in that way; it is a paraphrase. That was one of the grounds upon which you proposed to alter the constitution?—Yes.

11252. Another ground, I think, was that you thought that the Watermen's Company ought not only to undertake the examination, but that they should undertake the education of the licensed men also?—The technical education—yes.

11253. You thought the Watermen's Company even ought to educate these men before they licensed them. I mean technically educate them with regard to working their barges and so on; I do not mean ordinary school education?—I think so now.

11254. That it ought to be a training school for licensed men as well as an examination board?—I think so still.

11255. And that you put forward because you were not satisfied with the present system of examination and licensing as regards turning out men?—The tendency all over the country is to technically educate workmen, and we wanted the Watermen's Court to undertake that.

11256. There were other minor matters?—There was another very important matter.

11257. I am not going to forget it; there was another very important matter, which was this: that you proposed by that bill to raise the age at which men should be given licences?—Yes.

11258. By two years?—Yes.

11259. There was a smaller matter, which was that you wanted them all to be required to learn swimming, I think?—Yes.

11260. As regards the lightermen these were the three important matters: raising the age by two years; making the company act as a school and technical education department in the working of the craft; and making the examination more effective so as to get higher efficiency?—Yes, and better provision of gear.

11261. That was with regard to the craft themselves?—Yes.

11262. You wanted cooking stoves, did you not, in the barges?—No, we wanted sanitary inspection in the cabins.

11263. With regard to the number of men you say are out of employment at the present time (I think you said about 700), did you include among those licensed men, men who are no longer working upon the river as licensed men, or wanting the work?—No, I am leaving those alone altogether. I do not know how many of those there may be.

11264. There are a very large number of men who are licensed to work who have long since retired from the active work of licensed men, and are now barge owners or wharfingers or have got other occupations altogether, are there not?—I should not think there is a large number.

11265. All the members of the Court must have been licensed men?—Yes.

11266. You must be a licensed man before you can be a freeman, must you not?—No, you may be a freeman, and never get a licence.

11267. As a matter of fact, most members of the Court have been licensed men, have they not?—Yes, I should say they have. I cannot speak with any authority.

11268. You never work yourself now, I take it?—No.

11269. Yours is an official position with the Society?—That is so.

11270. Now I will ask you just one question with regard to Hull. In the barges which you have mentioned you were not including the keels, were you?—No, I was comparing the number of lighters there that are doing the same work that the 10,000 are doing here.

11271. There are a very large number of keels there, are there not?—There are a great number.

11272. Are not the keels, as a matter of fact, the equivalent on the Humber of the London barges?—The London sailing barges.

11273. Sailing barges and dumb barges too?—No.

11274. They do very much the work that is done by the sailing barges and the dumb barges?—No, not at all.

11275. You do not agree?—No.

11276. When did you first visit the Humber?—I have been there on and off for about four years.

11277. There are also a considerable number of barges and keels which go to Hull, are there not, from the inland navigations?—Yes, in the same way that it is so here—canal traffic.

11278. Over and above those which are merely at the port of Hull itself?—Yes. There are two classes of craft. There are those which can be compared to the dumb barges here, and there are those which can be compared to the canal traffic and the coasting work here.

11279. Last year when the strike took place is it not a fact that in many cases the barges were left out in the river unattended?—No, that is not true.

11280. You state that that is not true?—Yes.

11281. Were you on the river at that time?—I know what was going on; I was about the river side.

11282. What do you mean by them not being left.

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Do you mean that they were moored, or what?—No man left his employment in any one case that I know of while that strike was on who was not properly entitled to leave his employment; whose contract had not expired—and the weekly men gave a weekly notice in every case that I know of.

11283. Take the case of Messrs. H. Gray, Junior's, barges. Are you not aware that the men were withdrawn without notice or warning, and that the barges laden with coffee and ivory and other valuable things were left unprotected in open river?—I say that is not true. No man came away from his work without notice.

11284. What length of notice?—Whatever notice he was entitled to give. If the men had a job on hand they completed it. No man who was not entitled to be done, and whom the firm were not entitled to discharge, refused orders.

11285. You say you do not know any such case as that?—No, I do not.

11286. With regard to the Union Lighterage Company, do you know whether any of their barges were left in the same way with commodities on board?—Only in the same way that they are left every night.

11287. And the men never came back, but left the barges with the commodities on board?—They do not go back now very often. The craft are left unattended very often.

11288. I put it to you that the barges of which I am speaking were left in the middle of a job in the open river?—I say no.

11289. You do not know of it?—I say if it had occurred I should have known of it.

11290. You said in your evidence that "at the present time a lighterman devotes the whole of his time to his trade; the result being that he works day and night, winter and summer, and obtains an experience that cannot be acquired in any other way." Do not the men who come up from Rochester and the Medway do exactly the same?—I should say the tendency is greater on the Thames than anywhere else that I know for men to follow up their work, and not seek other employments, because they know the work is there for them to do.

See 11128.

11291. I ask you whether as a matter of fact the men employed in navigating the Rochester barges and the Medway barges do not work continuously, devoting the whole of their time to the business of working, winter and summer, and night and day?—I cannot say beyond the answer I have given you.

11292. You do not know; is that it?—I do not know.

11293. And you do not know about the Lee or the Western barges in the same way?—I know of them. I do not know of their habits.

11294. And you cannot answer my question with regard to that?—No.

11295. Then you said that the Court of the Watermen's Company have a better knowledge of the navigation of the Thames and its requirements than any other body. Are the members of the Watermen's Company all experienced men, or if not, what number of them are experienced men with regard to the navigation of the river?—I should not like to say what proportion. I do not know.

11296. In fact, I think your allegation when you have been promoting your Bills was that they are not competent?—I have never said so.

11297. Is that not the reason why you want to put the licensed men on?—No, that was not the reason.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

11298. In answer to Sir John Wolfe-Barry you stated that an apprentice with a two years' license is not entitled to have sole charge of a barge over 50 tons?—Yes.

11299. But if he has with him on board an apprentice who has been bound for one day only, he is entitled, subject to that, to have sole charge of the barge?—I dare say legally he has, but I never heard of such a case.

11300. He is entitled to that under your own bye-laws?—I never knew of such a case.

11301. But still the employer exercises his own judgment in these matters?—That is the greatest extreme. Nothing could happen worse than that.

11302. You have spoken to-day about the apprentices and the masters. In these matters the master and the employer are two different persons, are they not, as a rule?—Yes, as a rule. The owner does not trouble himself to take an apprentice.

11303. An apprentice may be an apprentice to a master who loses sight of him the following day?—That is possible.

11304. Is it not the rule that the apprentice does go and work for an employer who is not his master?—Yes, that is the rule.

11305. A company such as the Union Lighterage Company, or the Tilbury Lighterage Company may have 20 apprentices at one time who are not apprenticed to them as masters at all?—That is so.

11306. So that as long as a youth of 14 is an apprentice, he can go and work for any person that he chooses?—No.

11307. His master, it is true, has a legal control over him, but in practice does not the apprentice go and work for anyone who chooses to employ him?—No, I should say not; he is subject to his master's control.

11308. He is in law subject to his master's control, but in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred he is not. Does not an apprentice as soon as he is bound go and work for anyone who chooses to employ him?—I am not prepared to say so.

11309. Have you heard it stated to-day that the master lightermen were very often short-handed?—I have not heard it stated to-day.

11310. Have you not heard Mr. Fielder state to-day that they could not get men?—No. I understood Mr. Fielder to say that only twice in his life did he experience a difficulty, and once when he was an apprentice.

(*Chairman.*) I think he said the supply was "somewhat limited."

See 10922

11311. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Do you agree that the supply was somewhat limited?—No; and the reason why I do not agree is that there are hardly any cases where the employers take apprentices. If there were a difficulty in getting men the masters could at once take apprentices, and so control the whole thing.

11312. I have now left the question of apprentices, and I am on the question of lightermen employed on the river. Is it not the fact that the supply of licensed watermen is somewhat limited?—No, I say that is not so.

11313. Do you say there are always enough to be had?—More than enough.

11314. You have stated that 700 licensed men are unemployed at the present time?—Quite that number.

11315. And 150 men are acting as watchmen?—Yes.

11316. Does a watchman get smaller wages than a licensed waterman would, as a rule, get?—Yes.

11317. Can you suggest any reason why they should work as watchmen instead of licensed watermen?—There is not enough work as licensed watermen.

11318. Then you do not agree with the statement that the supply is limited?—I am sure there are more men than are wanted.

11319. Is it not the fact that a lot of these men are not competent, and is not that the reason why they are not employed?—The licensed men, do you mean?

11320. Yes?—I cannot see how that can be because the master could report that to the Watermen's Company, and have them dealt with if they are not competent.

11321. But these 700 men are not employed for some reason or another. Is it not on the ground that they are not competent?—No. I know a good many firms who employ them when they have work for them to do. The trade is slack. That is the reason.

11322. You do not think the Watermen's licence is a guarantee of ability, do you?—Yes, I do.

11323. I thought you said that after two years when he had his licence you tested the man yourself?—I never said so.

11324. You said so to-day?—I should like you to refer me to that.

11325. I am in the hearing of the Commission. I understood you to say that when you had an apprentice you tested his ability yourself?—I never had an apprentice.

11326. An apprentice with a two years' licence?—I have never had any reason to test the ability of an apprentice. I have never had anything to do with the employment of any men at all.

11327. I thought you said so this morning.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I think you are thinking of the last witness.

11328. (*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I think it was this witness who said that before he trusted an apprentice with a barge on the river he would test him himself. You do not agree with that, do you?—No.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

11329. You spoke about a lighterman leaving a barge with a valuable cargo in the river during the night. Is that a common practice?—The employer leaves his craft where he thinks he should leave them I suppose. I am not suggesting that anything is done which he thinks ought not to be done.

11330. Take for instance, a cargo like that suggested to you just now of coffee, ivory, and that sort of thing. Do you mean to say a barge with a cargo like that is left without protection at night?—It often is.

11331. As a matter of fact, is it so?—Yes.

Re-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

11332. Is that the lighterman's fault or the employer's?—The employer's.

11333. If the employer chose to pay for a watchman I suppose he would have one?—If the employer told the man to be there and paid him, he would be there.

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11334. Did the Committee of the House of Lords before which you gave evidence in 1899 hear very fully all the evidence in support of that Bill?—Yes.

11335. Did they hear evidence on behalf of the Watermen's Company against it?—Yes, and they dismissed it very shortly.

11336. They threw out the Bill?—Yes.

11337. They heard only one witness for the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We cannot review the conduct of a Committee of the House of Lords here.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I was only wanting to get the facts.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) We must presume that the Committee heard the evidence.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I should not have asked the question, but the witness has been cross-examined as to the evidence he gave before that Committee.

11338. You have been asked about the apprentice's licence or certificate. Just see if that is the form of it. (*Handing form to the Witness*)?—This is an application form for the licence.

11339. An application form for an apprentice's licence?—Yes.

11340. Do you see that under that he is to be subject to his master's control and direction?—Yes, "subject at all times to his control and direction."

11341. You have been asked about a widow taking an apprentice. Do you know that by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, every widow taking an apprentice is bound to employ some person who is a licensed waterman to instruct the apprentice in the business?—Yes.

Mr. Edward Mills called and examined.

Mr. E. Mills.

11342. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us to give evidence with reference to the licensing system of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

11343. You represent the pilots of the home trade passenger ships?—Yes.

11344. Will you kindly tell me what are the home trade passenger ships to which you refer?—They are ships carrying passengers anywhere in the home ports.

11345. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) That includes some continental ports, does it not?—Yes.

11346. (*Chairman.*) Will you kindly proceed with your evidence?—I was apprenticed to my father, who was a waterman, and for many years master of steamboats. He commanded the "Albert Edward," one of the earliest Gravesend and Sheerness boats, for some years, and subsequently the "Queen of the Thames," the Ipswich boat. I was 15 years of age when I was apprenticed, although I had practically been on the river since I was seven years of age, and I have been employed on passenger steamers as boy before the mast, second mate, mate and master. I commanded the "Alexandra," the "Glen Rosa," and "Queen of the Thames," and I was specially selected to take charge of the "Duke of Edinburgh" when the Shah came to this country in 1899.

11347. Did you prepare your statement of evidence yourself?—Partly.

11348. Who helped you to do it?—The greater portion of it is taken from the evidence that I gave before the Committee on the Bill of 1890.

11349. Did you draft it with the help of the Watermen's Company?—It was taken before a solicitor who helped me partly. I gave evidence of what was done, and it was written down.

11350. Will you kindly go on?—I say that I prefer to have to do with the skilled lightermen of the present day rather than with the masters of sailing barges that come up the river. Masters of sailing barges often lose their heads when they get into the Lower and Upper Pool, where navigation is crowded, and then they down anchor or get into their boats to save themselves, not caring what becomes of their own barge or of other vessels navigating, and who may have shaped their courses for the purpose of passing them in a proper manner had they continued under way or kept their course. Many of them I know use hovellers who are licensed lightermen, and then their navigation is not so erratic. According t omy experience, I think that the lightermen of the present day would bear favourable comparison with any other tradesmen. Of course, I do not say there are not obstinate lightermen, as there are in every other class of life, but as a rule they are intelligent and quick, and ready to assist me when they see me coming up or going down the river with a freight of passengers, and do their best to keep out of my way. If the condition of things were altered, and these dumb barges were in charge of any one whom the master lightermen might like to select, and supposing there was a press of business and the master lighterman or his foreman had to look for labour where he could get it, I think it would be very dangerous for both parties, and I certainly should not like to be in command of a passenger steamer on the Thames, with the lives of many hundreds of people in my hands, if the river were thrown open so that any unskilled person might be put in charge of a barge. For the past 12 years I have been in command of vessels belonging to the Belle Line, and I commanded the "Clacton Belle," "London Belle," and "Woolwich Belle." They traded between London, Clacton, and Harwich. I may state I was very successful the whole time, never having had any collision with any vessel or craft all that time, and I may say I have been seconded in my efforts to work the boats successfully by the mates who have been with me, and who have been mainly licensed watermen of the River Thames. I may state the Belle boats all come to Fresh Wharf, which is the first wharf below London Bridge, so that my experience extends right the way up as far as steamers of their tonnage and size can navigate. When I got back to Fresh Wharf it was as a rule late at night and perfectly dark, and I have always found licensed lightermen willing to assist me, more especially in getting their craft out of the way to allow me to go alongside the pier. I may, for the information of the Commission, give the lengths, sizes, tonnages, etc., of these three vessels respectively:—"Clacton Belle."—246ft. long, 26·5ft. broad without her paddles, 56·5ft. over all, 9·5ft. deep, 182 tons net, 458 tons gross tonnage, 183 horse-power engines, paddles. "London Belle."—280·3ft. long, 30·1ft. broad without paddles, 64ft. over all, 10·9ft. deep, 284 tons net, 738 tons gross tonnage, 364 horse-power engines, paddles. "Woolwich Belle."—200ft. long, 24·1ft. broad without paddles, 52ft. over all, 7·6ft. deep, 109 tons net, 298 tons gross tonnage, 117 horse-power engines, paddles. I may

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mention that the river yearly gets more congested. During the last 10 years the size of barges has materially increased, and whereas at the time of passing the Watermen's Act in 1859 there was no legislation for barges of over 50 tons burthen, I should say, speaking from my own knowledge, now at least one-fourth of the barges on the Thames are of 100 tons burthen and over, so that it will be seen that whilst vessels are daily getting longer, and by regulation a passenger steamer so long as she does not exceed 300ft. may come up to Fresh Wharf, and the barges being so much larger and bigger and the river itself not being able to be increased in width, navigation naturally becomes more difficult. I have now given up the command of passenger steamers on the Thames, having obtained my pilot's licence in the autumn of last year. I have not at present been able to obtain a regular line with which to work, but I am second pilot for the German Hamburg boats. I may state in conclusion that the pilots have held a meeting, and Mr. Walter Hayward, an exempt pilot, and I were deputed to put the views of the pilots before this Commission.

11351. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are you a freeman of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

11352. Did you often get into accidents with sailing barges when you were in command of ships?—No, I have been pretty lucky in that respect.

11353. Then granting the luck, do I gather that the difficulty has not been great with regard to sailing barges?—Yes. I have been in paddle steamers a great deal, and when I got amongst the sailing barges like that I generally washed them away clear.

11354. Do you consider that when a 50-ton barge is in the sole charge of a lad of 18 it is under skilled command?—Well, I cannot say that I have seen a 100-ton barge in the sole charge of a young lad.

11355. I said a 50-ton barge?—I consider that there are plenty of young lads on the river at 16 who are capable of navigating barges—lads who have been brought up along the water side.

11356. I suppose a 50-ton barge could do a good deal of harm to the "Clacton Belle"?—Yes, it could do so.

11357. Are you in favour of more towing going on on the Thames?—There is a good deal at present.

11358. I say, are you in favour of more towing going on?—There is no doubt that the towing helps to keep the river much clearer.

11359. The barges that are being navigated under oars can only be moved very slowly to get out of the way of a steamer, can they?—A lighterman can easily move his barge.

11360. But he can only move slowly, can he?—He can only move slowly through the water, but a lighterman will throw his oar over the barge's head and turn her round.

11361. But they are not so much under control as if they were being towed, are they?—Yes, I should think so.

11362. Then towing, you think, is not necessary or desirable?—It is done for quick despatch.

11363. Not for navigating?—No; quick despatch in getting goods to and fro.

11364. You do not care about it for the purpose of navigation?—A barge that is being towed, of course, is out of the way much quicker.

11365. But is it on the score of better navigation that you would be in favour of more towing being done?—No, I do not think there is quite enough towing going on amongst the larger barges. The tugs are merely used for towing barges for long distances.

11366. You are giving your evidence as commander of passenger steamers, and I want to know whether you think the river would be better or more easily navigated if there were more towing and less navigation of barges?—Yes; the craft would be out of the way much quicker.

11367. Therefore the navigation would be better and easier?—Yes.

11368. You say the river is getting more congested?—Yes.

11369. And the barges are getting larger?—Yes.

11370. If the barges get larger, I suppose towing is more desirable than with smaller barges?—Yes, it is more desirable with the larger barges.

11371. (*Mr. Ellis.*) When did you give up your command of passenger steamers?—Last autumn.

11372. When you became a pilot?—Yes.

11373. You are not connected with any regular line, I gather?—No.

11374. Will you tell me exactly what "second pilot for the German Hamburg boats" means?—If there were two steamers of the line coming in on the same tide I should have the second one.

11375. Does that often happen?—Yes.

11376. Have you piloted in the Thames during the past six months?—Yes.

11377. How many times?—I could not say exactly, but I have had a good number of them.

11378. You have had practical experience as a pilot since you gave up command of the passenger steamers?—Yes.

11379. (*Mr. Peel.*) I suppose when you see a barge in the sole charge of a lad of 16 or 17 years of age you give it a wide berth, do you not?—I endeavour to give all barges a wide berth.

11380. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you any experience in any other river than the Thames with barge traffic?—No, not of any importance.

11381. (*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Have you to do your work at night?—Yes.

11382. As a pilot?—Yes.

11383. Are there a good many barges about then?—Yes.

11384. (*Mr. Harper.*) What dock do you take the German Hamburg boats to?—If there are two steamers coming, one from the dock and one from the tier opposite St. Katharine's Dock, I have the one from the tier.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

(*Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.*) Will your Lordship allow me to make an application. You will remember there was a Mr. Andrews whom you intimated it would not be necessary to call. Your Lordship intimated that it would not be necessary to go on with the evidence in support of the Bill, but in view of the evidence that has been called as to how these Rochester barges and Western barges are worked up the river, I ought to say that I have Mr. Andrews here to give rebutting evidence if you think it necessary to call him. See 10547, 11446, and 11545.

(*Chairman.*) I think you will agree that it was with the consent of Mr. Baggallay that we came to the conclusion that it was not necessary to call Mr. Andrews.

Mr. ADOLPHUS LEWIS SANDFORD called and examined.

Mr. A. L. Sandford

11385. (*Chairman.*) You represent the pilots for compulsory ships?—Yes.

11386. Will you tell us what you mean by "compulsory ships"?—I am a pilot for any vessel from a foreign port.

11387. Will you be good enough to tell us what you have to say?—I have been a pilot going on for 12 years, and I am choice pilot for Macandrew's Line of Spanish steamers, and that is the only work that I do. I pilot 16 vessels either up or down a month. I have been the pilot for this line for the past seven years. These steamers go right up to Fresh Wharf, which, as the Commission may know, is the first wharf below London Bridge on the north side of the river. These vessels carry on an average about 2,000 tons, the older ones a little less and the newer ones a little more. The last new one, the "Pelaya," will carry over 2,500 tons. The draught of water of this vessel when fully loaded is 22 feet. I have not looked at her register, but she is certainly quite 300 feet long. She is very wide and works with a single propeller, and is, for her size and build, fairly handy. I may say that I am not a freeman of the Watermen's Company, although I have served an apprenticeship of seven years to a freeman of the Company. I have been selected by the river pilots

to represent them, because my business takes me to the utmost limit up the river to which vessels with river pilots in charge can be navigated. I gained my experience before becoming a pilot in Gravesend tugs, but I was never master of a tug, but before I could obtain my licence I had to go to sea for upwards of three years in a square-rigged vessel. So far as experience teaches me and the body of pilots whom I represent, I should be very sorry to see the river thrown open for anyone to be allowed to navigate a barge under oars on the Thames. The sets of the tides want a lot of knowing, and if an incompetent man were put in charge of a barge I tremble when I think of the mischief he might cause, not only to his craft and himself, but in hampering navigation for larger vessels passing up and down the river. I may say that I invariably receive assistance from lightermen under oars when I request them to belay their heads in any particular manner, and so far as my experience teaches me I believe them to be at heart a very decent body of men. With respect to the evidence given by Mr. Jacobs, the manager to the Thames Steam Tug and Lighterage Company, Limited, and Mr. Lambert, the manager to the Union Lighterage Company, Limited, to which my attention has been drawn, I do not agree with them that the sailing barges navigating up the river are in the hands of the master and mate who bring them from sea. As a matter of fact, to my knowledge when they get in the upper parts of the river they usually employ hovellers, who come on
See 11404
board between Woolwich and Globe Pier, Rotherhithe, and these hovellers are watermen or lightermen who have served their time on the river, and who pick up a good living by piloting these sailing barges in the upper reaches. The ballast barges which are loaded in the Thames above Gravesend invariably have a freeman in charge, so that the contention of the two gentlemen I have named comes to nothing, because when the navigation gets difficult the master of the barge employs skilled labour to conduct him through the intricate parts of the river. As a matter of practice I always know whether a sailing barge has a licensed man on board or not, for I find that when a man in charge of a sailing barge is not licensed and has not practical knowledge of the river, if he gets in any difficulty he downs anchor, without thinking of the consequences to vessels passing up or down, which is a great source of danger in this river. I may say it is now more important to have licensed men than ever, because ships are continually increasing in size; barges are likewise increasing in size, and so are the tugs that tow them, whilst the river is not capable of the same extension, and it must necessarily stand to reason if the water space is only the same and the vessels which are moving on it are considerably enlarged, it leaves less area for navigation. So far as towing on the Thames is concerned, not only are all the masters of the tugs towing lighters above Gravesend men holding licences from the Watermen's Company, but I should say nineteen-twentieths of the masters of the Gravesend tugs that go down below hold certificates from the Watermen's Company. If, then, owners of tugs find by experience it is necessary to employ licensed men when they have the advantages of steam and can move as they like, how much more necessary is it that licensed men should be employed in barges that can only be moved by those in charge of them availing themselves of the sets of the tide and trading with the wind as far as possible in the different reaches of the Thames.

11388. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I suppose these difficulties of navigation, where you think it is so important that the barges should be under the care of licensed men, exist say between Albert Dock and London Bridge?—Yes.

11389. That does not apply to the whole river from Gravesend up, does it?—Yes, it does.

11390. But your experience applies to that particular part above the Albert Dock?—Yes, it is more difficult above the Albert Dock.

11391. Below Albert Dock most of the lighters are being towed, I suppose?—Yes, and the river is considerably wider.

11392. So that this difficulty that you speak of applies to that particular part of the river, and you think it important that there the lighters should be under the care of licensed men?—Yes, certainly.

11393. I suppose what you really desire is that the lighters should be under the care of competent men?—I would rather prefer them to be under proper licensed men.

11394. Would the licences of the Trinity House or the Thames Conservancy, supposing they were to do the business, be satisfactory to you, or that of a dock authority?—As long as the men hold a proper licence that is all that the pilots require.

11395. You are not attached in particular to the licence of the Watermen's Campany?—No, I do not think so, as a pilot. I think as long as the men are properly licensed and have served their apprenticeship in a proper manner, that is what is required.

11396. That is all that you would require?—I should say so.

11397. These barges, I suppose, that come from Gravesend and go up the river, are without any such licence; is that so?—The barges that come from Gravesend up the River Thames, do you mean?

11398. Yes, that come from the Medway?—Sailing barges you are speaking of. A sailing barge is such a different thing from a lighter, but when she comes in the narrow waters of the River Thames, she is purely and simply a lighter, because they lower the mast down and take the assistance of a proper licensed waterman. They have no occasion to employ them unless they like, but they do. They call them hovellers. They take the assistance of these men and lower the masts down, and she becomes just the same as a lighter.

11399. But if these barges voluntarily get the assistance of competent men, why might not the owners of the barges themselves always have the assistance of these competent men?—I do not think they would do so.

11400. It is a pure matter of choice on the part of these barges, and, if they get competent men, why is it impossible for the owners of barges themselves to get competent men?—I think it will be a question of money. They would not get the competent men. If you could compel them to obtain competent men it would be all right.

11401. They have the same motive to obtain competent men, have they not?—Yes.

11402. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) Have you ever had any experience of any other port than London where lighters are employed?—No.

11403. You said you have been three years at sea in a square-rigged vessel. You have never visited Calcutta, for instance, have you?—No.

11404. Then again you said: "When they get in the upper parts of the river they usually employ hovellers." Are all those hovellers licensed men?— Yes. That is a special living.
See 11387.

11405. Supposing, for instance, a man has been brought up in ships and vessels, how long would you give that man to acquire the necessary knowledge of the set of tides and the actual handling of a barge on the Thames?—I have been a pilot 12 years and I must admit that it would be impossible for me to navigate a lighter on the Thames. I do not think I could do it. It is the work of a lifetime.

11406. Then how can you account for youngsters being put in charge of barges even at the age of 20. How can they have acquired the experience of a lifetime?—They are practically born on a barge. They come on these barges along with their parents when they are 6 or 7 years old.

11407. Some do, of course?—Generally in the case of a London bargeman, he becomes a naturalised bargeman. It is a profession in itself, and it must be properly and thoroughly learnt. It is not the question of the material damage they may do to other ships.

11408. With reference to barges under oars and barges that are being towed, which are the most dangerous to navigation?—I should say that a vessel towing was the most dangerous to navigation.

11409. Do you say that barges in tow are more dangerous to navigation than barges under oars?—Yes.

11410. Do you mean to tell me, as a practical seaman, that you consider a barge in tow against the tide is more dangerous to navigation than a barge drifting with one or two men in it and controlled by oars?—Yes.

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11411. (*Mr. Peel.*) You said you were an apprentice for 7 years to a freeman of the company?—Yes.

11412. Did you get your apprentice's licence?—No.

11413. And you did not apply for your freedom?—I did not get my freedom. I got my papers.

11414. You told us just now that you could not navigate a barge up the river?—I do not believe I could.

11415. You are entitled to do so, of course, having an apprentice's licence?—I do not think I should be allowed to do it as an apprentice. I should as a freeman, but I did not take my freedom up.

11416. You said that, after 7 years serving as an apprentice, you were not then competent to manage a barge?—No, because I was an apprentice and would not stop at it any longer. I went to sea instead. My master died, and I would not have anything more to do with it.

11417. What is the difference between a hoveller and a lighterman?—I do not see any difference.

11418. They are the same thing, are they?—They are actually lightermen. They are lightermen who cannot get a living in a lighter because there are rather too many of them, and so they have a little boat, and board the barges and get a living in that way.

11419. What is a hoveller?—There are sailing barges come out of the Medway: they come up the River Thames as far as they think they are capable of navigating a barge. They have unskilled labour and then they wait for these men. If they do not find the men there, they put the anchor down until such time as the men come.

11420. Is a man who assists in navigating a sailing barge a hoveller?—Yes.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I am told that "hoveller" is a corruption of "hoverer." They hover about for a job.

11421. (*Mr. Peel.*) You say that the masters of the tugs towing lighters are nearly all members of the Lightermen's Company?—Yes.

11422. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—I know it from common conversation that I have had with captains of tugs. I do not know any that are not licensed by the Watermen's Company. The tug owners will not employ them unless they hold a lighterman's licence. I know that. It is a rule laid down between the owner of the tug and the master of the tug that they insist upon that man having a waterman's licence.

11423. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With regard to the hovellers that come on board the sailing barges, do you say that they do the piloting?—Yes.

11424. They are at the rudder?—Yes. They take the full charge of the barge.

11425. Do they order the master what he is to do?—Certainly.

11426. Is it a fact that the sailing barges are different from the dumb barges, because the use of the sweeps must be always at the bow?—Yes, the sailing barge's sweep is always on the bow.

11427. Therefore everything has to be done by steering with the rudder to direct the course of the barge. You cannot use the oars astern?—No.

11428. Therefore they are different in that respect from the dumb barges?—Yes.

11429. And, to that extent, they must have an extra man. If they are going to navigate a sailing barge with oars they must have an extra man, must they not?—No, it is not necessary. They can manage it without.

11430. With two men?—Yes.

11431. How could they use two sweeps?—He would use only one.

11432. You say you can navigate a sailing barge with only one man in the bow and one steering astern?—Yes.

11433-4. Is it ever done?—Yes. Not very often, but it is done, because they make provision and employ these hovellers in the narrow part of the Thames.

11435. Supposing the master of a sailing barge wants to take anybody who comes along as a hoveller, is he allowed to take an unlicensed man?—I do not know how far that applies to a sailing barge. I do not know whether he is compelled to employ this man or not above the bridges.

11436. If the master brought a third man all the way, say, from the Medway, he would not necessarily have to take a licensed man on board at all, would he?—I do not think so, but he would do so.

11437. He would take a third man, would he?—He would take a fourth man if he wanted one. It is quite the custom.

11438. If he took the fourth man would he have to be a licensed man?—I do not say he would have to be a licensed man, but for the sake of his own barge, the bargeowner would take one.

11439. But if he came all the way up from the Medway the man need not be licensed?—No, I do not think it is necessary.

11440. (*Chairman.*) You told my colleague, Sir John Hext, just now that you consider a barge in tow against the tide is more dangerous to navigation than a dumb barge?—Yes.

11441. Will you tell me why?—Because she is going faster. The barge is driving and the other is towing. You approach the barge that is driving slowly, and you would pass the tug quickly. She would approach you quickly. You might slightly damage the barge that is driving. I am only looking at the small damage.

11442. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) I should like to put one more question to clear up that answer of yours. Suppose for instance that there were no barges towed, would the navigation of the Thames be easier or more difficult?—More difficult.

Cross-examined by Mr. Cranstoun.

11443. With regard to these hovellers, do you know the firm of Messrs. Smeed, Dean, and Co.?—No.

11444. Have you never heard of them?—No.

11445. Have you heard of the firm of Messrs. Eastwood and Co., Limited, owners of a large fleet of sailing barges?—I daresay I have. I have had a lot of experience as far as sailing barges are concerned.

11446. Will you undertake to say that these two firms ever employ hovellers at all?—I would say they did if they went through the Tower Bridge.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) My Lord, I may mention that evidence was tendered a day or two since and refused by the Commission on these very points. See 10547; 11384; and 11545.

(*Chairman.*) No; I think you are quite mistaken. We came to the conclusion, in full agreement with Mr. Baggallay, that it was not necessary to call those witnesses.

(*Mr. Schiller.*) I tendered Mr. Andrews again to-day.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) On this very point.

(*Chairman.*) It is not in evidence.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper.

11447. It is a fact, is it not, that there is a good deal of litigation arising out of barge traffic?—Yes.

11448. I daresay you have been to the City of London Court?—No, I have not.

11449. As a matter of fact, there is enough litigation out of barge traffic to keep that court going one day a week, is there not?—I do not think so, I do not think pilots are so reckless as that.

11450. There is a good deal of trouble, is there not?—There is a good deal of trouble with sailing barges, I must admit.

Cross-examined by Mr. F. M. P. Schiller.

11451. How long did you serve your apprenticeship?—Two years.

11452. Not longer?—No.

11453. Then you went away to sea?—Yes.

11454. You had a licence at the end of two years?—No. I never troubled about it; I gave it up as a foregone conclusion.

11455. Did you navigate barges during that period?—No, I have never been in a lighter in my life.

11456. And yet you had two years' apprenticeship'—I turned it up.

11457. Did you serve two years?—No, not as a lighterman—as a waterman, which is quite a different thing.

11458. Then you know nothing at all about the navigation of lighters?—I do not suppose that the Watermen and Lightermen's Company would give me my lighterman's licence now if I wanted it, though I have been a pilot 12 years.

11459. You do not know anything about the navigation of a lighter at all?—I have never been in charge of one.

11460. Never been on one?—Yes, I have been on one to look at damage.

11461. But not for the purpose of the working of one?—No.

11462. You told us that it would be very disastrous if the Thames were thrown open, and that you would tremble to think of the mischief it might cause. Will you tell me why. You talk of the Medway barges?—I am expressing the opinion of the compulsory pilots at Gravesend generally. They held a meeting. It is their idea. There are 72 of them, and we are responsible to the Trinity House for the damage that we may do. They may deal with the pilot's licence. We are responsible for the payment of the damage that we may do, and we are responsible to the common law of this country for the loss of life. That is what makes the pilots nervous. They would not dare to work the upper pools of the river during the night.

11463. Now, with regard to the sailing barges; how do you know that the sailing barges take licensed men on board?—Because I am there every day to see it.

11464. How do you recognise the fact that the Rochester barges have a licensed man on board?—Because they always tow up a very small hoveller's boat. The hovellers come off in a very small punt.

11465. Do you undertake to say that every sailing barge coming from Rochester takes up a small hoveller's boat?—No; there is only 5 per cent. of the sailing barges coming from Rochester that navigate the narrow waters of the Thames.

11466. Will you undertake to say that all sailing barges tow up a small hoveller's boat?

(*Chairman.*) These points are very minute.

(*Witness.*) If they are bound for the narrow waters they do. A man may come from the Medway and turn off into the Albert Dock; then he does not take a hoveller. You must tell me where the barge is, then I will tell you what the barge does. Tell me the position of the barge.

11467. (*Mr. Schiller.*) The Upper Pool?—He takes a hoveller above Globe Pier. *Mr. A. L. Sandford.*

11468. In every case?—Yes, if he wants to keep out of trouble. He stands a chance of getting sunk if he does not. 24 June 1901.

11469. How far do you go up?—As far as I can get—London Bridge.

Re-examined by Mr. Avory.

11470. Will you explain why you said the navigation would be more difficult if there was no towing?—Because the trade of the port is increasing; the size of the barges is increasing; the size of the ships is increasing—everything is increasing, and the traffic is getting more; so it would be more difficult.

11471. Do I understand you to mean that there would be more barges singly afloat if there were more towing?—Yes.

11472. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) I asked the question as to what would be the case if there was no towing on the river, and you said a barge under oars was less dangerous to navigation than a barge in tow going against the stream. Then I asked you whether, if there were no towing, the port would be a more dangerous port or a safer port, and your answer was that it would be more dangerous. That conclusively proves to my mind that you regard towage as a very dangerous means of navigation. I do not see how you can get out of that?—I must admit and agree that a barge towing is better, in the usual way, for the navigation of the River Thames, but, of course, as pilots, we do not take much notice of these lighters driving, because we treat the River Thames as a dock, pure and simple. We have to go very slow. But if you should have a collision, the damage would be more if you were to strike a vessel towing than if you were to strike a barge that was driving.

11473. But must you strike? In your experience of the Thames, how often have you been in collision with a barge in tow, in comparison with the number of times you have been in collision with a barge under oars?—I have never touched a vessel in towage. I have hit a barge under oars. It is impossible to prevent it.

11474. You have not touched a vessel towing?—No, only one, and that was nothing to speak about.

Mr. Walter James Hayward called and examined.

11475. (*Chairman.*) You are a licensed pilot for exempted ships?—Yes.

11476. You corroborate the evidence that has been given by Mr. Mills?—Yes, there is nothing I can add to it except that my experience is a few years longer.

11477. As far as your evidence goes you corroborate all he says?—Yes. I have always found the lightermen a useful lot of men. *Mr. W. J. Hayward.*

11478. Apart from corroborating the evidence you have already heard, you have no fresh points?—No, not without you wish to ask me questions.

Mr. George Ayers called and examined.

11479. (*Chairman.*) You are the Commodore-Captain of the Thames Steamboats, Limited?—Yes.

11480. You are also a licensed waterman and lighterman?—Yes.

11481. You desire to give evidence with regard to the licensing system of the Watermen's Company?—Yes.

11482. Will you be good enough to give us your evidence?—I am the senior captain in the service, and have been a captain of the Thames passenger steamers for the last 50 years. I was apprenticed to the river in the year 1840, and have worked up from call boy to the position I now occupy, and I am now 75 years of age. A meeting of the deck hands employed on the passenger steamboats on the Thames has been held, and at such meeting a resolution was passed asking me to appear on behalf of the men, and directing me to convey to the Commission their view that the present licensing system should be maintained. At the present time my company has a fleet of 34 passenger steamers plying on the Thames. Each boat carries four hands on deck, all of whom are licensed. The vessels are licensed to carry from 400 to 700 passengers each, and work from early morning till late at night between Hampton Court and Woolwich. During the time I have been on the river I have had the King and other members of the Royal Family on board the steamers I have had charge of. The barge navigation of the Thames is the chief danger that steamboats have to contend with, and if the barges were not navigated by competent men whose methods we knew and understood, our confidence would be shaken, and the danger to navigation very materially increased. The danger is greater when we are navigating in the dark, and unless we felt that the barge traffic was in the hands of competent men whose methods we knew, it would not be safe to run our boats, and I personally should refuse to do it. At the present time, in any reach, and with any wind and tide, we practically know what each lighterman will do with his barge; and it is because of this knowledge that we are able to navigate the river. The currents in the Thames vary with each tide, and with each part of each tide, and to navigate the Thames successfully, a man must know every part of the river at every time of the tide, and he can only learn this by practical experience; and I believe an apprenticeship is absolutely necessary to produce competent men, as it is only by years of training that the navigation of the Thames can be properly mastered. The steamers could not be worked by men who are untrained, as, even if they had the knowledge of working steamboats, they would lack the knowledge of the river that is essential to the working on the Thames. Neither could the boats be *Mr. G. Ayers.*

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safely run if other craft on the river were being worked by untrained men.

11483. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose what you really want is that competent men should be employed?—Quite so.

11484. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You mentioned a meeting. When was that meeting held, and how many persons were present at that meeting?—I could not say, as I was not there.

11485. By whom was it called?—By Mr. Gosling.

11486. Is Mr. Gosling the witness we have had this morning?—Yes.

11487. Then you know nothing about the meeting except that they requested you to come here?—That is all.

11488. Was this evidence of yours drawn up by yourself?—I stated it to our solicitor.

11489. And he put it into shape?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Claude Baggallay.

11490. Have you ever navigated a barge?—Yes, but many years ago.

11491. For hire. You were paid for it as a lighterman?—Yes.

11492. How long ago?—It was a long time back. was an apprentice at the time.

11493. You are still licensed?—Yes.

11494. And therefore you could, if you chose, exercise your calling of licensed lighterman to-day?—I could to a certain extent, I daresay.

11495. We will not go into the physical side of the question, but as far as the law is concerned you could claim to be a licensed waterman?—Yes.

Re-examined by Mr. Horace Avory.

11496. In your experience do you think a man would become a competent lighterman unless he is brought up and apprenticed to the trade?—Men must be brought up to the trade.

11497. And do you think apprenticeship is a proper way of teaching men the trade?—Yes; seven years I think it should be.

Mr. ARTHUR CAMERON HURTZIG called and examined.

Mr. A. C. Hurtzig.

11498. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers and a partner of Sir Benjamin Baker?—Yes.

11499. You appear before us on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers for Havering and Dagenham, and other levels in Essex, and the Commissioners of Sewers for Rainham and other levels in Essex?—Yes, and for the Commissioners of Sewers whose jurisdiction extends from Woolwich to Sheerness in Kent.

11500. Your evidence is with the object of seeking protection in the event of any action which may be taken with regard to the river?—Certainly.

11501. You must remember we are not a Parliamentary Committee. We are not here to discuss the merits or demerits of any bill that may be brought before us?—No, but we thought we ought to lay before the Commission any objections we might have.

11502. We are dealing with the Port of London, and it seems to us that your evidence is somewhat premature?—If your Lordship pleases.

11503. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Your evidence would not go to the length of saying that dredging could not be done?—Not in the slightest.

11504. The evidence, I take it, that you wish to lay before us is that certain protection ought to be given to riparian owners?—Yes. The owners on both sides of the Thames think it is possible that damage may be done to them from any action which may follow the decision of this Commission, and they wish the Commissioners to be acquainted beforehand with the dangers they apprehend, and to provide for their protection when the time comes. See 11546

11505. (*Chairman.*) That we perfectly understand. Is that the whole of your evidence?—That is the whole of my evidence.

11506. Will you be good enough to thank in our name the Commissioners of Sewers for having sent that communication?—Certainly.

The Rev. HARRY MORLAND WELLS called and examined.

Rev. H. M. Wells.

11507. (*Chairman.*) You are part owner of 450 acres land in the parishes of Stone and Greenhithe, having a continuous frontage to the River Thames of two miles in a straight line—6,695ft.?—Yes.

11508. Will you kindly proceed with your evidence?—A river wall is maintained by the Sewer Commissioners, from Lombard's Wall to Gravesend Bridge, on lands belonging to me and others, and embracing our frontage to the river. Owing to constant dredging of the River Thames the foundation of a part of this wall has collapsed and caused it to sink. It would seem desirable that those who dredge the river should have the maintenance of walls which the dredging can destroy; that those who pay taxes should be represented on the board that taxes them, and, finally, that if one body is to be charged with the Port of London, the powers and duties of the Sewer Commissioners should be assumed by it.

(*Chairman.*) We are much obliged for your evidence.

Mr. EDGAR WIGHT called and examined.

Mr. E. Wight.

11509. (*Chairman.*) You are the senior partner in the firm of Messrs. John Knill and Co., wharfingers?—Yes.

11510. Which firm you joined in 1872?—Yes.

11511. It then consisted of Sir Stuart Knill, Bart., and your father?—Yes.

11512. And the firm was established in 1827?—Yes.

11513. The firm are the owners of Fresh Wharf and Cox's Quay, which are both legal quays?—Yes; and I should like to hand in a document I have prepared showing the history of the legal quays.

(*The Witness handed in a statement showing a history of the legal quays in the Port of London. See Appendix, 28th Day, No. 7.*)

11514. Do you propose to give evidence with reference to evidence which has already been given by the Wharfingers' Association?—No, I do not represent the Wharfingers' Association in any way.

11515. I understood that you wished to give evidence which dissents from the views they have expressed?—I have not said so. I merely wish to say that I represent more especially the shipping on the north side of the River Thames. I have been put forward by the Short Sea Traders' Association, and I have been invited by our neighbours, Botolph and Nicholson's Wharves, Limited, who are also legal quay owners, to represent them, and I have the particulars of their trade as well as my own.

11516. Will you tell us in a few words what is the purport of your evidence?—As far as the legal quay owners are concerned, I rely on the evidence as to the creation of legal quays to show that Parliament has never yet established a monopoly on the River Thames without granting compensation to the persons affected. That would add so enormously to the expense of any scheme that is proposed to take over the docks as to make it prohibitive, and therefore the port would be very much less attractive than it is now.

11517. Will you proceed with your evidence?—I am not aware that the Port of London suffers from any defects of a serious character as regards its administration, and certainly none as affecting our business as wharfingers. As a port, London has been economically administered, and both from the Custom House authorities and from the Conservators, our firm has experienced the utmost assistance. Upon all occasions we have found the authorities willing and able to meet the require-

ments of the times. Had this not been the case, we are satisfied that, having regard to the very much larger business performed at our wharf, in connection with loading and discharging steamers of a large size, than at any other wharf on the Thames, it would not have been possible for us to have conducted our business so conveniently as has been the case, particularly bearing in mind the fact that, in addition to the goods steamers a very large passenger traffic, necessitating the passage of some millions of the public to and from the shore and the steamers alongside the wharf, has been carried on for the last sixty years, in fact, ever since steam navigation on the Thames was started, no accident of a serious nature having once arisen. The changes in the character of the craft using the river, and a very large increase in the size of steamers, may render it desirable to form one general body, to include the Conservators and the Watermen's Company and Trinity House, and all other authorities dealing with the administration of the port, and the regulation of the persons using it. In view of the increase of the size of the ships, dredging is obviously a necessity, and everything possible should be done to make the port attractive to shipowners, and probably it would be necessary that the authorities referred to should raise a revenue sufficient for the purpose of maintaining the waterway and channel at an adequate width and depth. To avoid the congestion at the docks and wharves, and further to increase the facilities of the port, additional moorings might be laid down. Fixed derricks, with luffing cranes and floating cranes of varying capacity might be established at the expense of a harbour trust of a non-competitive and impartial character, to be covered by such a rate as might equitably be charged to the users, who should be responsible persons, liable to make good any depreciation of the tackle beyond fair wear and tear. This would give increased despatch. Private moorings should be abolished, and lay-byes for barges in the fairway of the river should be removed. The demand for wharf accommodation is growing, as the convenience to shipowners of getting their vessels to and from the wharves without the delays and expense of docking, is much appreciated. In fact, the only limit to my business is my inability to accommodate more steamers alongside my wharf. Some ships discharge alongside the southern wharves, but a large majority discharge at the wharves on the north side of the river. This is partly owing to the water, and partly to the situation of the wharves as regards the city. There is intense competition between the wharfowners and the dock companies, and from time to time this has been sought to be ameliorated by conferences, especially since the dock strike in 1890, when all expenses were materially raised. But I found myself compelled to withdraw from the conference, which I did, sending to all the members of the conference a circular letter, a copy of which I put in, dated November, 1891.

(*The Witness handed in copy of letter from Messrs. John Knill & Co. to the Dock Companies and Wharfingers of the Port of London withdrawing from the Agreements as to the Discharge of Fruit. See Appendix, 28th day, No.* 8.)

The reason for my action was that the dock companies sought to draw away from the wharves adjoining London Bridge the monopoly of the green fruit trade and a large and valuable Mediterranean business —by substantial reductions in the rates, whilst they were desirous that I and others should put up our rates for the goods, of which the dock companies have the largest share. An additional reason was that our neighbours (strong competitors) and other large wharves capable of taking ships alongside were not in the combine. It is to be regretted that the dock company have, at the expense of their revenue, so seriously competed with the wharfingers, viz., in reductions in rates, and other facilities which have been given to the public. But the public have greatly benefited thereby, and however much I may individually object to the competition, I feel it has been for the public good. Whatever services the dock companies render shipowners, we do the same, and we have succeeded in satisfactorily maintaining our business notwithstanding all the difficulties referred to, and we urge in the public interest that this state of things should be continued and not be interfered with. Parliament has never yet created a monopoly without granting compensation to injured parties. The maintenance of the present wharf facilities is more than a public advantage, it is a public necessity.

11518. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) It has been alleged before this Commission that all the docks ought to be formed into a Public Trust. You do not express any opinion upon that in your evidence?—No.

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11519. Assume merely for the sake of argument that all the docks were formed into a Public Trust do you think that that Trust would be able to compete with the wharves on more advantageous terms than the dock companies do now?—Certainly if the Trust were subsidised in any way by public money they might offer better terms than they do at present where they are in competition with us.

11520. That competition would mainly be in the warehouse department I suppose?—No; for the accommodation of ships. At present the dock companies where they are in competition with wharfingers forego their tolls. They work out ships at unremunerative rates and give rebates and we do the same.

11521. That is *qua* shipowner?—Yes. I may say that by far the most important part of our business is our ability to take ships alongside. We can take ships with a carrying capacity of 3,000 tons.

11522. Would you, in your private capacity, be desirous of seeing dock facilities improved?—If thereby the Port was made more attractive. We have as much business as we can possibly do, and we are not afraid of losing that business unless by obtaining subsidies the Dock Trust would be in a better position to compete.

11523. You are very much in favour of dredging the river and improving the facilities of the port as a river?—Yes, as a member of the public; not as a wharfinger. I should not benefit in that way because I anticipate you could not dredge the river to a much greater extent than up to the London Docks. Of course I am not speaking as an expert.

11524. You personally would not get any advantage out of the dredging?—No. But I should like to make this suggestion for what it is worth—that the dredging is a great expense to the docks and also to some of the wharfingers. We, for instance, paid about £500 two years ago to the Conservancy for dredging. I think it should be done at the public expense. The River Thames should be looked upon as a great highway to be kept in the most perfect condition possible at the expense of this Public Trust, if it is to be created.

11525. Not as a channel, but for wharves?—And docks—the expense of dredging. There should be more dredging, and the dredging should be more systematically done. For instance, that dredging that we did two years ago will require, or may shortly require, to be done again.

11526. That dredging was to enable vessels to get alongside your wharf, I suppose?—Exactly. It was not in the fairway of the river.

11527. Ought the Public Trust to dredge alongside every wharf?—I do not say so.

11528. You would not like that, would you?—We should come in on the same terms. I do not press it in any way.

11529. You would have many competitors then, would you not?—Yes, possibly.

Re-examined by Mr. Harper.

11530. Your appliances are of the most modern type?—Yes.

11531. You have a frontage of something like 440 feet of the river?—Yes.

11532. And you can take ships and actually discharge them by means of your luffing cranes two abreast?—Yes, and more; we can put six cranes on to the inner ship at Fresh Wharf.

11533. From your observation as regards docks, have they any similar facilities?—No.

11534. I think your largest luffing cranes will carry a radius of 70 feet?—78 feet. I had them measured on the 6th June. There are three luffing cranes; one at Hammond's Quay has a radius of 60 feet; one at Cox's Quay has a radius of 50 feet; one at Fresh Wharf has a radius of 78 feet.

11535. Can you find any similar appliances to that in the docks as far as you know?—No.

11536. Do these cranes enable you to discharge from the hold of a ship lying alongside your quay right into the barges lying beyond them?—Yes.

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11537. Do you do it?—Every day.

11538. Anyone passing London Bridge I think can look down and see the operation performed?—Yes. We can take goods from a ship lying alongside London Bridge Wharf and put them direct into the warehouse at Fresh Wharf, which is 150 or 160 feet further off.

11539. Your trade is principally the green fruit trade?—And dry fruit.

11540. And in that you are a competitor with the docks for the ships?—Certainly.

11541. You give free overside delivery like everybody else?—Yes.

11542. Do you crane it out with your luffing cranes, and put it straight in?—Yes, we sort in the ship, and we can and do put goods directly overside into barges, and at the same time work on to the quays. We very much prefer delivery direct to barges, because our quay capacity is very limited.

11543. But although you put it on the quay side, you make no charge; you treat that as a free delivery?—Free delivery if the barges are there and the papers are in order.

11544. (*Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.*) The only thing that you desire, I understand, is to keep healthy competition at the docks, but not to put the docks on an unfair basis of competition with yourselves?—Exactly.

11545. What do you say about the practical possibility of dividing the quays from the warehouses. Is that practically impossible?—It would be absolutely impossible with us because the warehouses overlook the Thames, and they are used as quays.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) My Lord, might I refer once more to the evidence of Mr. Andrews?

(*Chairman.*) You see what you said yourself.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Quite so. I know exactly what I said. It was stated that the Commissioners quite understood what was to be said for the Bill, and it was quite useless, of course, to reiterate the same class of evidence. That I entirely agree with, and I should not have thought of afterwards calling either Mr. Andrews or Mr. Stephens or Mr. Heenan, unless it had been that afterwards (I do not know how far it affected the minds of the Commissioners) considerable doubt was attempted to be thrown by Mr. Jacobs and others upon whether the persons who navigate the sailing barges really do navigate themselves or whether they do, in fact, take on board these licensed men. If I call Mr. Andrews he is prepared to prove that he does not take these men on board. Some of the witnesses have themselves admitted that whilst a sailing barge is not obliged to take them on board, some of them in fact do. What I wanted to prove was that, at all events, Mr. Andrews' barges not only are not obliged to take them on board, but they do not take them on board. If the Commissioners attach any weight at all to that point I should like to call Mr. Andrews. I should not like to leave that point in any doubt.

See 10547; 11384 and 11446.

(*Chairman.*) From what I and my colleagues understood we did not regard it as a controversial point in any way. We take it that the witness to whose attention you drew the point admitted it. Do you remember referring to Mr. Andrews' statement and my telling you it was not in evidence?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Quite so, my Lord.

(*Chairman.*) I do not understand the witness contradicted it in any way.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) If the Commissioners are satisfied there is no obligation I do not think I could properly press the matter. In point of fact, they do not except that in certain cases a man may take on an extra man to help through a bridge owing to stress of weather. There may be a case of that sort.

(*Chairman.*) About that we shall have the pleasure of hearing you later on when you make your speech.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes; I don't want to argue the matter now.

(*Chairman.*) We take it as a non-controversial point.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Very well, then, if your Lordship takes it in that way I shall certainly not press to call Mr. Andrews.

(*Chairman.*) At the same time you will be careful not to draw any admission from us.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Of course, I will not do that. There was a copy of a policy put in at Question 10863 showing that one company attaches advantage to having certain statutory conditions to fulfil. Here is one of the ordinary policies on cargoes carried by barges. This is the actual policy itself. I think it would be convenient that this should be put upon the notes for the purposes of reference.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay handed in copy of a Policy of Insurance on Cargoes carried by Barges. See Appendix, 28th Day, No. 9.*)

(Adjourned to Wednesday next, June 26, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

Wednesday, 26th June, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
SIR ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
SIR JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral SIR JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE, appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. HORACE AVORY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., and Mr. F. P. L. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. JOSEPH SHAW appeared on behalf of the North London Railway Company.

The Hon. J. D. FITZGERALD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers for the limits extending from Lombard's Wall to Gravesend Bridge in Kent; the Commissioners of Sewers from Gravesend Bridge to Sheerness in Kent; the Commissioners of Sewers for Havering and Dagenham and other levels in Essex, and the Commissioners of Sewers for Rainham and other levels in Essex.

11546. (*Chairman.*) I understand you wish to make an application, Mr. Fitzgerald?—Yes, my Lord, I have been instructed to appear on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers both on the Kent and Essex sides of the river. to the river, having the river walls under their jurisdiction, and, of course, these river walls protect a very large area behind, which is of very great value indeed. What I have to ask your Lordship and the Commission generally is to allow their evidence to be heard which you excluded at your last sitting, and, I think, under a slight misapprehension as to the exact position we take up. Mr. Hurtzig, who is advising engineer to the Commissioners of Sewers on the Kent side of the river, was called as a witness, and at Question 11504 what was said to him was this. Sir John Wolfe-Barry said: "The evidence, I take it, that you wish to lay before us is that certain protection ought to be given to riparian owners. (A.) Yes. The owners on both sides of the Thames think it is possible that damage may be done to them from any action which may follow the decision of this Commission, and they wish the Commissioners to be acquainted beforehand with the dangers they apprehend, and to provide for their protection when the time comes." Then your Lordship said: "That we perfectly understand. Is that the whole of your evidence? (A.) That is the whole of my evidence." Now, my Lord, from one point of view that is the whole of Mr. Hurtzig's evidence, but it is not the way I should have put it if I had been addressing this Commission, or if the matter had been dealt with before a Parliamentary Committee. One of the matters referred to this Commission is the improvement of the water approaches to the Port of London, and it is suggested that that improvement should be carried out by the deepening of the channel. If the channel is to be deepened in close proximity to these river walls it must, or, at any rate, it may, have some considerable effect upon them. Our position is this: we should object to that deepening being carried out unless under certain conditions. Of course we have no desire whatever to interfere with any improvements of the Port of London, but we should object to a deepening of that kind being carried out, which might very seriously affect the river walls, unless under certain conditions. If I were appearing before a Parliamentary Committee—to take an illustration that I am familiar with—my position would be an opposition on the preamble. I should object to the Bill passing unless certain conditions were put in. I ask your Lordship very shortly to allow the evidence to be heard, to show to the Commission that this proposed deepening might have a very considerable and prejudicial effect upon the river walls, that it ought not to be carried out except under certain conditions which would enable the Commissioners of Sewers if their walls were injured to obtain compensation; and particularly to put on record evidence which would show whether the damage was done by deepening or by some other cause, because that would be the question hereafter.

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(*Mr. Ellis.*) Speaking for myself, I should like to ask you this; is not all that covered by the answer to Question 11504. Speaking purely for myself I do not want any evidence to produce an impression on my mind that certain consequences may follow the deepening of the river. I do not want detailed engineering evidence to convince me of that. Is not the whole case covered by the answer to Question 11504?

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) No, I do not think the whole of my case is covered by that answer.

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(*Mr. Ellis.*) If you take also the answer to the preceding Question 11503, is it not all covered. Why do you want to carry it further?

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) One is obliged to bear in one's mind what may be the result of the recommendations of this Commission. The result of the recommendations of this Commission will probably be embodied in a bill. If that bill takes the form of a public bill a private petitioner might not be heard against it at all. On the other hand, if it takes the form of a private bill a petitioner might be involved in an expensive parliamentary contest, whereas the whole thing might be obviated if we are allowed now to suggest to this Commission the difficulty which the Commissioners of Sewers find themselves placed in. The difficulty might be obviated in a very simple way, and if the evidence that we should give commended itself to this Commission, and in their report they included a representation to that effect, the matter practically would be ended.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) If you suggest to me as a Member of Parliament that a bill of that description would go through the House of Commons, and pass through a Committee of the House, without being referred to a Select Committee, I entirely differ from you. Are you aware that there is a bill on all fours promoted by the Board of Trade in the House of Commons with a motion to refer it to a Committee?

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) I am very glad to hear from you that it is likely to go to a Select Committee.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) I do not say that.

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) One is obliged to keep in one's mind possible eventualities, and although it seems certain that a bill relating to the Port of London would be a public bill, it might be treated as a bill of a hybrid nature and referred to a Select Committee. Of course, bills of that nature have sometimes gone through the House as public bills. I do not suggest that as the most likely course. I agree that the most likely course is that petitioners would be heard against it, but we are rather anxious to avoid the possibility of having to be heard against it. The evidence we ask to be allowed to give would be very short. I should only call two witnesses representing the Commissioners of Sewers, one from the Kent side and one from the Essex side. I respectfully ask that their evidence may be heard.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Do you propose to put any further evidence before the Commission than this: that if dredging is done in an improper way, or in close propinquity to the river walls of the Commissioners of Sewers, whom you represent, damage might occur. Do you wish to carry it any further than that. I especially asked Mr. Hurtzig whether he wished to carry it further than that, and the Commissioners did not see any necessity for taking evidence with regard to what is perfectly obvious to any sensible body of men. If you wish to make any reference to a special mode of dredging, or anything of that kind, it is another matter, but if it is merely to tell us that deep dredging close to earth retaining walls may endanger the earth retaining walls it is quite unnecessary.

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) That I quite follow, but what to my mind is the material evidence is this. The channel, as you know, runs near these walls in certain places, and it is very desirable that before any dredging is done the exact condition of the channel should be ascertained, so that there may be no doubt in any subsequent investigation, as to what has been the result of the dredging. One thing we were going to suggest was that cross-sections should be taken before any dredging was done, and that those cross-sections should form a record, to which either party might refer, showing the state of the channel before the dredging was done. Then you would have evidence upon which you might arrive at a conclusion in the event of a slipping of the wall taking place, owing to the operations done under the powers granted to a new body which might be created, and compensation could be provided if it appeared that the walls had been let down by the dredging operations. That is the whole case I intend to lay before you.

(*Chairman.*) The Commissioners will consider the matter.

(The Commissioners retired.)

On returning

(*Chairman.*) The Commissioners fully understand the circumstances of the river walls and of those responsible for the embankments, and they see no necessity for carrying the matter any further. Of course, the learned counsel will have the opportunity, if he so desires, of addressing the Commissioners next week, and emphasising the point.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) My Lord, may I make one short application before you proceed. I am afraid we shall want your assistance in settling the question of the order in which we address you, for this reason: I am appearing for the Watermen's Company and for the Amalgamated Society of Watermen and Lightermen. My friend, Mr. Baggallay, who appears for the promoters of the Bill that attacks us, enjoys the doubtful privilege of leading me——

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) What Bill?

(*Mr. Ellis.*) There is no Bill before us.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) The Bill that has been referred to this Commission.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) Counsel have altogether misapprehended the position all along.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I hope you will not say all the counsel.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) No. I beg your pardon. There is no Bill before this Commission. No Bill exists; it is dead.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I withdraw the expression. It is inaccurate. I ought to have said that my friend represents the interests that are expressed in that Bill, and he is, in fact, attacking my clients. All I ask is that he should precede me. It seems to me to be obvious that I ought to hear what is to be said against me before I am called upon to address the Commission.

(*Chairman.*) Our opinion is that the Docks Companies undoubtedly have the privilege of being heard last. As to the representatives of the other interests, it seems to us that there has been so much courtesy and goodwill shown by all the gentlemen connected with this Inquiry, that an arrangement might be come to between the learned counsel themselves.

Mr. George Lisle Ryder, C.B., recalled and further examined.

Mr. G. L. Ryder, C.B.

11547. (*Chairman.*) You are, as we know, Chairman of the Board of Customs?—Yes.

11547A. You desire to give evidence as to the question of Customs control over warehouses of special security?—Yes.

11548. Will you be good enough to proceed with that evidence?—May I first hand in certain documents which the Royal Commission required, which have now been printed. They have a special bearing on the question. They consist of a statement of limits of the Port of London; particulars of warehouses of special security in the Port of London; particulars of Customs bonded warehouses in the Port of London; and copies of the two cases submitted for the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown and their opinions thereon.

The Witness handed in the following documents:

(*A Statement of the Limits of the Port of London. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 1.*)

(*List of Warehouses of "Special Security" in the Port of London for which no Bonds are required. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 2.*)

(*List of Customs Bonded Warehouses in the Port of London. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 3.*)

(*Cases for the Opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown and their opinions thereon as to certain powers of the Commissioners of Customs with reference to the Warehouses at the St. Katharine Docks. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 4.*)

Since I had the honour of appearing before the Royal Commission in November, 1900, a correspondence has taken place between the London and India Docks Company and the Board of Customs which I ought to mention. In January and February last there was again a fear that the tea duty would be increased, and very heavy forestalments of tea were made, and a great demand arose for free warehouse room for this tea, which the market was not yet in a position to receive. The dock

company were anxious for the removal of Crown locks from some of their warehouses for the reception of part of this tea. But on learning the objection entertained by the Customs to this step, the company at once withdrew their proposal, and waiving all question of strict legal right, submitted themselves entirely to the wishes of the Board. If this attitude had been adopted in earlier days there would have been no occasion to trouble the Royal Commission with the question of Customs control over London warehouses for the custody of dutiable goods. That question has already been referred to the Commission, but, happily, it may now be discussed exclusively as one of general policy, and in a spirit of complete amity as between the Board of Customs and the company. The Customs Board, therefore, respectfully invite the Royal Commission to consider whether it is not in the public interest that a uniform control should be exercised over all such warehouses, whether bonded or of special security where bond is not required. Accordingly they submit that the peculiarities of a warehouse of special security are such as warrant exemption from bond, but not exemption from control. The peculiarities of such a warehouse are that it is situated in a statutorily defined place of special security, that is surrounded by prescribed walls, protected by gates, and watched by constables, so as to be unusually safe against robbery from without, although perhaps as much exposed as ordinary warehouses to irregularities from within; and, in view of these peculiarities, and of their initial cost, Parliament has seen fit to exempt the owners of such a warehouse from the obligation to give bond for the duty on goods stored therein, such as is required in the case of ordinary warehouses for dutiable goods. Notwithstanding these peculiarities, however, a warehouse of special security is probably in close contiguity to other warehouses, for duty-free goods, and various operations on such goods, and on duty-paid goods, may be carried on continually within the enclosure in which it stands. These may involve more or less risk of confusion between goods awaiting payment of duty and those on which duty has been paid, or which are duty-free. Further, the cost of supervision is directly affected by the number of floors, and area on each floor, occupied by dutiable goods, and the order in which they are arranged, and the precautions observed against unnecessary means of access, or dangerous proximity of certain other goods, and the like. Consequently there is the same practical need for Customs control over warehouses of special security as over bonded warehouses. The second point is that the reasons for giving this control to the Board, viz., economy of supervision and security of the revenue, exist in the case of warehouses of special security as well as in that of ordinary bonded warehouses. This follows from what has been said under the first point. But it should not be inferred that in the view of the Board of Customs both of the above reasons exist in quite equal force in the case of both classes of warehouses; because, undoubtedly, the enclosing walls and gates, and constables of the place of special security in which a warehouse stands, afford a protection to the revenue to a considerable extent, as is recognised by exemption from bond. Nevertheless, the distribution and method of storing different kinds of dutiable goods, and their separation from other goods (being the specific matter in which the Board of Customs claim to exercise control, and the Joint Committee deny their right), necessarily have an important bearing, not only on the number of officers required for supervision, but on the risk of irregularities involving loss to the revenue, whatever kind of warehouse be in question. Then the third point is that the exercise of this control over the former class of warehouses will entail no unreasonable trouble or risk upon their owners, who are also owners of numerous bonded warehouses containing, in the aggregate, goods of far higher duty-value than the warehouses of special security, and which are subject to this control without any difficulty or inconvenience being caused thereby. It is submitted that this is proved by:—(*a*) The fact that by far the greater part (that is, about 73 per cent. of the whole, in duty-value) of dutiable goods in the custody of the Joint Committee, are stored in ordinary bonded warehouses, subject to the undisputed control of the Customs Board, without any special trouble or expense being occasioned. (*b*) By the fewness of the occasions on which friction has arisen between the Customs and the Joint Committee on the subject of control. Of course, there is no longer a Joint Committee; it is now the company. I think, my Lord, I really need add nothing more on the subject. The answer seems almost obvious that it is in the interests of the public and of all merchants concerned with the Port of London that the control of the Customs should be uniform over the warehouses that are intended for the custody of dutiable goods. The answer seems to follow, as a matter of course, that it ought to be uniform.

11549. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Are there any warehouses of special security other than the dock warehouses?—We know of none. Parliament gave power many years ago to set them up, but, so far as we know, none of them were set up except here in London. The policy of setting them up was very soon abandoned.

11550. Are there any warehouses of special security other than dock warehouses in London?—No, there are no other warehouses of special security. Mr. Fleming can speak with more authority on that point than I can, but we do not know of any.

11551. Do I rightly understand that in the warehouses of special security there are undutiable goods and dutiable goods, subject to varying imposts?—There are the warehouses. When once a particular portion of the company's warehouse has been set apart for dutiable goods, and put under Crown lock, we hold that it ought to be reserved for dutiable goods. That was really the original bone of contention, through our having jurisdiction over the warehouses that were under Crown locks, as this would enable us to prevent, we will say, duty-paid tea being put into the Crown-locked warehouses.

11552. I am anxious to understand it. Is there a warehouse called a warehouse of special security which is under lock and key?—Within the *enceinte* of Millwall Dock, for instance, you will find a great number of warehouses, and some of these warehouses you will find under Crown lock; and, more than that, in a particular warehouse you would also find a floor that was under a Crown lock, and the floor above, perhaps, would be free; but you would also find there were special arrangements for access to the Crown-locked floor independent of access to the other floors, for the sake of security, and you will find every variety of arrangement of that kind within the premises of the dock companies.

11553. Those are not bonded warehouses?—Not in the sense of a bond being required, but they are on the same footing otherwise as bonded warehouses; it is a common term conventionally used for any warehouse into which dutiable goods are placed.

11554. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I believe your Board passed a Minute on the 9th July, 1900, on this subject?—Yes, that is so.

11555. And that contains illustrations of the inconvenience which from your point of view arise?—Yes, I will hand it in. I think it has been communicated to each member of the Commission. I request leave to formally put it in now.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of a Minute of the Board of Customs respecting Customs control over Warehouses of Special Security. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 5.*)

11556. I think the Treasury wrote a letter to your Board on the 24th March, 1900?—That is so.

11557. And that is contained in this document which you have just handed in?—It is.

11558. May I take it that the Commissioners will find in that Minute of the Board and in the letter of the Treasury and in your evidence this morning the formal and deliberate opinion on this subject of those two public departments, namely, the Treasury and the Customs?—That is so. I feel quite certain that the Treasury and the Board of Customs are at one on this matter. We appear here really at the desire of the Treasury.

11559. You notice I have used the expression "formal and deliberate." May we take it that this has been very carefully considered by those two public departments, and the Royal Commission has the advantage of all they can say on the subject in these two documents and in your evidence?—That is so.

11560. In a fully authorised and deliberate manner?—I think it may go as far as that, certainly, for ourselves, and I think I may say so for the Treasury too, but, of course, it is open to the Treasury if they think

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the Customs have not fully represented their views, to ask leave to send a further witness.

11561-2. You appreciate what I ask; I want to get it in the most authoritative manner?—Yes.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My Lord, with reference to the evidence that has been given by Mr. Ryder, I am instructed by my clients, the dock company, to say that they would exceedingly regret coming into any conflict with the Customs' authority, whose jurisdiction has always been exercised with great courtesy and consideration to the dock company in the trade interests represented in this matter by them. The only questions that have ever really arisen between the Customs and the company that I represent have arisen, as your Lordship will have inferred from the evidence that has been given by Mr. Ryder and I think the document which Mr. Ellis has been asking questions about, with reference to the storage of duty-paid goods when the Revenue has considered that the duty was paid by the merchant to avoid an expected increase in taxation, as in the case of last year on the tea to which Mr. Ryder has referred.

(*Chairman.*) Do you wish to ask any question of the witness?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I wanted just to put this before your Lordship.

(*Chairman.*) You will not repeat this when you address us?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I can promise your Lordship that I will not.

(*Chairman.*) We think this should more properly be dealt with in your speech.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I only wish to say, my Lord, that we thoroughly understand the nature of the control which the Customs authority seek to exercise, and I am very hopeful that a friendly conference between us will enable us to give sufficient assurance to them in the matter that while we preserve our statutory rights they will have all the control they really seek to exercise, and we shall be very glad if your Lordship and the Commissioners will allow me to leave the matter there. On that footing I am instructed not to ask Mr. Ryder any question at all by way of cross-examination.

11563. (*Chairman.*) Have you anything further to say, Mr. Ryder?—I should like to hand in some documents which have been compiled at the request of the Commission by the Board of Customs.

The Witness handed in the following documents:

(*Statement of the Total Value of the Imports (including the goods entered for transhipment) of Foreign and Colonial Merchandise into London, and of the Total Value of the Exports (including the transhipments exported from London) of the same merchandise, together with the percentage proportion the total value of the Exports bears to the total value of the Imports from 1890 to 1899. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 6.*) See 673.

(*Statistics of the Imports and Exports at London and certain other of the largest ports of the United Kingdom of the principal articles of Foreign and Colonial Merchandise, with the object of showing the effect which the competition of those Ports has had upon the entrepôt trade of London. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 7.*) See 764–70.

(*Statistics [so far as they are able to be furnished by the Board of Customs] of the Imports of the principal articles of merchandise at five leading Foreign Ports for each of the ten years from 1890 to 1899. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 8.*) See 764–70.

(*Return showing for London, Liverpool and Outports respectively the Amount of Overtime charged by the Customs in the year ended 30th September, 1900, in respect of the landing, shipping and warehousing of all kinds of goods (dutiable, drawback and free), distinguishing the payments connected with landing and shipping from warehousing. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 9.*) See 909–704.

(*Statement showing the Hours and Pay of Dock Labourers at the principal ports. See Appendix, 29th day, No. 10.*) See 705–7.

Mr. FREDERICK JOHN DUNN called and examined.

Mr. F. J. Dunn.

11564. (*Chairman.*) You are the Traffic Superintendent of the North London Railway Company?—Yes.

11565. You appear in order to give evidence with regard to the Poplar Docks belonging to that company?—That is so.

11566. Will you be good enough to proceed with what you have to say?—The North London Railway Company, whose present title was conferred upon it by an Act of 1853, was originally incorporated by an Act of 1846, under the title of the East and West India Docks and Birmingham Junction Railway Company. The North London Railway has junctions with the following systems:—

London and North Western Railway at	Camden.
" " " "	Kentish Town.
Midland Railway	St. Pancras.
Great Northern Railway	St. Pancras.
" " "	Canonbury.
Great Eastern "	Victoria Park.
" " "	Bow.
" " "	Poplar.
London, Tilbury and Southend Railway at	Bromley.
Great Western Railway London and South Western Railway London, Brighton and South Coast Railway South Eastern and Chatham Railways	By means of the North & South Western Junction Line (of which the North London is lessee jointly with the London and North Western and Midland)

and by means of these railways has communication with every railway in Great Britain, and interchanges traffic with nearly all of them. The railway carried during the year 1899 1,999,076 tons of merchandise and 1,139,021 tons of minerals, respectively. Of these tonnages the proportion dealt with at Poplar Docks was 594,612 tons merchandise and 192,553 tons minerals, the percentages to the gross traffic being 29·74 and 16·91 respectively. The balance represents the tonnages in respect of traffic dealt with at the several goods stations and coal depôts on the railway, and also includes through traffic passing over the line. Exclusive of specials, the total number of merchandise and mineral trains run over the North London Railway, with traffic from all parts of the kingdom direct to the docks, is 72 per day. The position of the North London Company in possessing docks within the docks of another dock company is absolutely unique. In 1897 the North London Company were compelled by the action of the Joint Committee to apply to Parliament for powers to enlarge their entrance, and this resulted in the Act of 1897, a copy of which I can produce. The works authorised by this Act have been carried out at a cost of £19,620 18s. 1d., and an attempt was made by the Joint Committee to claim £75,000 for the piece of land 83 square yards in measurement required for the widening, followed by a claim by the amalgamated company of £34,600. The London and India Dock Company derive considerable revenue from the traffic of the several companies passing over the North London line, and going to the docks, and in respect of which neither the East and West India Dock Company nor the Joint Committee have been called upon to contribute any capital outlay. To show what I mean by this:—in the year 1896 there was paid to the Joint Committee by or through the North London Company for wharfage, rail haulage, and dock dues, no less a sum than £31,347, and to earn that sum not one farthing of capital had been specifically expended by either the dock company or the Joint Committee. All capital expenditure had been that of the railway companies. The amount paid to the Joint Committee for the year 1899 and for pumping (£500 per annum) was £36,762, of which the North London paid direct £5,600. The structural cost of lands and works at Poplar Dock and Goods Station is £444,378, including the provision and equipment of warehouses. This amount is arrived at by actual payments where practicable, and where such information is not available, by measurement. Besides this, the company pay to the Joint Committee £500 per annum towards the cost of maintaining the head of water in the docks of both companies. I have prepared the fol-

lowing table showing the accommodation provided by the North London Railway Company at Poplar Docks:—

PARTICULARS OF ACCOMMODATION provided at POPLAR DOCKS.

Length of old dock	750 feet.
Length of new dock	535 ,,
Width of old dock	310 ,,
Width of new dock	150 ,,
Length of quayage—old	1,865 ,,
Length of quayage—new	1,405 ,,
Length of lock	140 ,,
Width of lock	40 ,,
Depth of water at bottom of dock	20 ,, T.H.W.M.
Depth of water at bottom of sill	21 ft. 6 in. ,,
Water area	7½ acres.

Maximum dimensions of ships that can be dealt with at lowest neap tides:—

Beam	38 feet.
Draught	19 ,,
Length	Practically no restriction.

PARTICULARS of BOILERS, ENGINES, ACCUMULATORS, CRANES, and CAPSTANS, ETC., at POPLAR up to 30th June, 1900.

Boilers	6	Locomotive type boilers and two feedwater heaters (180 square feet each).
Pumping engines	9	viz.:—6 pairs of large horizontal pumping engines (60 h.p. each). 1 horizontal pump for dock water (30 h.p.). 1 vertical pump for dock water (20 h.p.). 1 vertical pump for water softening apparatus (10 h.p.).
Donkey engines	2	Vertical donkey feed pumps.
Other small engines	1	Small vertical shop engine (3 h.p.).
Total	12 engines.	
Accumulators	4	Accumulators ram 17 in. diameter, 17 ft. stroke, each weighted to about 80 tons.
Coal tips	8	10 tons each.
Swing bridge	1	
Draw bridge	1	
Hydraulic cranes	73	viz.:— 1 30 ton. 1 12 ton. 4 5 ton. 1 3 ton. 34 2 ton. 15 30 cwt. 12 25 cwt. 2 20 cwt. 3 15 cwt.
	83	Total.
Hydraulic capstans	40	1 ton.
Snatch heads	156	
Rollers	15	
Hand power cranes	11	viz.:— 1 30 ton. 1 5 ton. 2 2 ton. 7 30 cwt.
	11	Total.
Steam dredger	1	

The warehouse accommodation provided in connection with Poplar Docks consists of five blocks of warehouses of a storage floor area of 31,893⅓ square yards, fully equipped with hydraulic conveniences.

The number of men employed (July, 1900) at the North London Poplar Docks and Goods Station is—

London and North Western Railway Company	197
Great Western Railway Company	203
Great Northern Railway Company	154
North London Railway Company	96
Platelayers (North London)	17
Brakesmen on Poplar Shunting	7
Enginemen on Poplar Shunting	12
Signalmen (Traffic Department)	12
Waggon Examiners (North London)	2
Hydraulic Staff (North London)	19
Total	719

In addition to this there are—

Brakesmen who work into Poplar during the 24 hours	22
Enginemen who work into Poplar during the 24 hours (about)	24
Beer Companies' Staff working on the premises	96
Pickford's Staff (Carmen and others)	25
Thames Steam Tug and Lighterage Company's men	15
Grand total	901

Happily the railway company have been able to satisfy their customers in conducting the traffic at the dock, difficulties having only arisen on three occasions, when the East and West India Dock Company or the London and India Docks Joint Committee imposed charges on barges. The railway company, to minimise the dislocation of traffic caused by these charges, on the first occasion undertook to indemnify the lightermen, who paid them under protest, and on the next occasion paid them themselves under protest, and on each occasion the charges, being held illegal, had to be abandoned, and the amounts paid under protest refunded. The third occasion was the one referred to by Sir Thomas Sutherland, when the Joint Committee endeavoured to force all goods on to their quays. By Clause 47 of the North London Act of 1865, the docks of the railway company are deemed to be part of the Port of London, and the rights and privileges which belong to such port as regards ships and vessels are extended to the railway docks and premises. Among these privileges I consider the free access of barges to be very important to the trade of the port. I have prepared a comparative table dealing with the total registered tonnage of ships resorting to Poplar Docks in the year 1899. No vessel has been computed twice over in the same voyage, that is, inwards and outwards, but one way only. The table is as follows:—

Name of Dock.	Water Area (Acres).	Tonnage of Shipping in 1899 (Tons).	Tonnage of Shipping per Acre of Water.	Cranes. Mechanical.	Cranes. Hand.	Cranes. Total.	Length of Quays (Miles).	Apparatus per Quay Mile.	Railway Accommodation (Miles).	Railway per Quay Mile.
London	40	447,988	11,200	206	27	233	2·25	103	400 feet	180 feet.
St. Katharine's	10	200,731	20,073	88	41	129	1·0	129	nil	nil.
West India	64½	292 084	4,528	327	120	447	4·0	112	12	Miles. 3·0
South-West India	33	132,373	4,011							
East India	33	275,315	8,343	89	51	140	1·5	93	0·75	0·5
Victoria	90	637,492	7,083	306	24	330	9·0	37	45·0	5·0
Royal Albert	87	1,455,924	16,735							
Tilbury	73	839,432	11,499	110	1	111	2·75	40	26 0	9·5
Poplar (North London)	7½	72,233	9,631	121	11	132	0·62	213	14·0	22·6

The total nett tonnage, including barge traffic that entered the Poplar Docks during 1899, gave an average of no less than 111,739 tons per acre of water space in the dock, that is, taking the tonnage of the barges in addition to the tonnage of the ships.

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From this table it appears that the North London Company's docks, with their superior supply of apparatus, are enabled (in spite of the agreed restrictions on the trade carried on in them) to attract a larger tonnage of shipping per acre of water accommodation than do the East India, West India, South-West India, or Victoria Docks, and nearly approach the proportionate tonnage entering Tilbury and London Docks, although all these docks have a greater depth of water over their sills than the Poplar Docks. The Royal Commission having indicated (Questions 617 to 621) that they desired the London and India Joint Committee to give a statement of the expenditure and earnings of their docks, apart from the expenditure on and earnings of the warehouses, I have had the figures very carefully taken out of the North London expenditure, and I find that the capital expenditure, merely in respect of the construction and equipment of the docks, amounts to a total of £135,733, which sum is irrespective of the rental of £1,200 per annum paid to the East and West India Dock Company under the lease. This figure does not include any capital moneys spent on the construction and equipment of warehouses. I have also taken out the income attributable to the docks apart from the warehouses, and I find that the profit earned on a trade restricted by the terms of the lease, after deducting the rental of £1,200 per annum and all working expenses (but prior to the agreed payments to the East and West India Company in respect of wharfages, etc.), show a net return upon the capital cost of 4·34 per cent. per annum, although, of course, under the terms of the lease this profit is not retained by the North London Company, but is almost entirely paid over to the East and West India Dock Company under the conditions of the lease, the ultimate profit left to the railway company in respect of the docks being ·58 per cent. on the capital. The following are the figures in tabular form:—

POPLAR DOCK.

YEAR 1899.

	£	s.	d.
Capital expenditure, viz.:—			
Land	14,429		
Works	121,304		
	£135,733		
Percentage of balance of receipts and working expenses (Cr. To capital expenditure, 4·34 per cent.	5,895	6	5)
Less half wharfage .. .. £8,962 11 10 = £4,481 5 11			
Dues on shipping 618 15 0			
	5,100	0	11
	£795	5	6

Percentage to capital receipts ·58 per cent. 11s. 7d.).

I desire to point out that the payments in respect of wharfage, etc., to the dock company represent neither working expenses nor rental, but are payments out of what would be (in the case of any independent dock company such as the London and India Dock Company) nett revenue strictly applicable for the payment of dividends. I now hand in a table showing the earnings and working expenses for the year 1899 of the Poplar Docks.

(*The Witness handed in a table showing the receipts and working expenses of the Poplar Dock for the year* 1899. *See Appendix, 29th Day, No.* 11.)

11567. Is this a balance-sheet?—It is not exactly a balance-sheet; it has the same effect as a balance-sheet.

11568. Will you put in a balance-sheet?—Yes, I will do so.

(*The Witness handed in the Report of Directors and Statements of Account of the North London Railway Company for the half-year ending* 31*st December,* 1900. *See Appendix, 29th Day, No.* 12.)

Well-equipped and well-managed docks in London can be made to earn a substantial dividend, even under such restrictions as to class of traffic as exist at Poplar, and this is confirmed by the results shown by the Surrey Commercial Docks.

11569. Have you anything to say with reference to the charges on barges using Poplar Docks?—I have calculated that the charge on barges, irrespective of the charge on goods as proposed by the Bill of last session, would, in respect only of barges using Poplar Docks, afford the dock companies a revenue of £12,763 10s. per annum, and I believe this charge would destroy the trade of the Port of London, and I, therefore, venture to urge the Royal Commission not to recommend the imposition of any such charge—a charge which, as is clear from the evidence, neither the Poplar Docks nor the Surrey Commercial Docks find necessary for the earning of a respectable profit. No deduction has been made in respect of coal, because coal, to our dock, does not come within the exemptions of the Bill.

11570. Do you wish to say anything with reference to running powers over the Millwall Extension Railway?—I should like to make a correction of evidence that has been given. I notice that on the 4th Day, Mr. F. E. Duckham, in reply to Question 1076, stated that the railway companies have no running powers over the Millwall Extension Railway. This may be the case so far as other companies are concerned, but the North London Company have statutory running powers over that line, and have from time to time suggested putting those powers into force when difficulties have arisen in getting traffic expeditiously carried to or from the Millwall Docks. The powers in question are conferred by the London and Blackwall Railway Lease Act, 28 Vict., cap. c., sec. 11. I have observed that questions have been put to various witnesses, and statements made by them, which show that, in many cases, London is a cheaper port as regards official charges than many of its competitors, and this is undoubtedly the case when vessels are unloaded in the stream, and also, if when lying in the docks, the cargo is delivered overside into barges, and I am informed that it is the right of free access of barges, and free delivery of cargo overside into them, and that alone, which has preserved the trade of the Port of London, and that were this right taken away the trade of London would be driven away to other ports which would then be cheaper. See 11833.

11571. You say you are informed; do you believe it?—This evidence was prepared by our general manager, Mr. Bolland Newton, who is unfortunately not able to be here owing to illness, and I am, perhaps, scarcely prepared to speak from personal knowledge.

11572. We are extremely sorry to hear of Mr. Bolland Newton's illness. Have you anything to say with regard to the increase of charges as affecting trade?—Trade is not attracted by an increase in charges already heavy, and, as a rule, if trade is to be attracted and developed, one of two courses only is successful, either the charges should be reduced, or if they are maintained, improved accommodation and facilities must be provided adequate for the demands of the traffic to be attracted. I desire as regards the future of the docks, to confine myself to the question of the control and management of the Poplar Docks only. So long as the company's right of egress and ingress through the Blackwall Basin is preserved, I cannot see that any change in the ownership of the West India Docks can make any material difference to the Poplar Docks, or to the trade therein, always provided that it is not for the future to be subjected to annoyance or obstruction, or to attempts to alter the charges to which I have already referred. In my opinion, friendly relations between the North London Railway Company and the owners of the West India Docks are essential in the interests of the latter, inasmuch as the Poplar Docks earn for them revenues from sources, and to an extent that are not, and cannot be, available to the owners of the West India Docks. I hand in a statement giving some indication of the various streams of traffic flowing to and from the docks over the railway, and the whole of that traffic has to be worked in with not only the other very great goods and mineral traffic of the railway, but with, what is more important, the enormous volume of passenger traffic which is carried by the line.

(*The Witness handed in a Statement showing connections made between other Railway Companies by means of the North London Railway system, with examples of some streams of traffic regularly passing. See Appendix, 29th Day, No.* 13.)

To accommodate the passenger traffic, there are trains between Poplar and Broad Street, still more trains between Broad Street and Bow, on the same branch, on which also are situate junctions with the Great Eastern at Victoria Park and Bow, and at Bromley Junction is also a junction with the Tilbury and Southend Railway, whilst at Dalston Junction come in the services between Broad Street and the western branch of the railway over which pass trains running to Camden, and also trains via Chalk Farm, over the North-Western lines to the North and South Western Junction Railway, and thus

connecting with the North Western, South Western, Great Western, Metropolitan, District, and all the railways south of the Thames, also by means of other junctions with the Midland at Maiden Lane and the Great Northern at Canonbury, over whose line the company run a service of passenger trains. The ordinary passenger service requires no less than 823 trains per diem and the goods trains amount to 514 trains per diem in addition. Besides this regular service special trains for either passengers or goods are frequently required. To secure the safety of this passenger traffic is of course the first duty of the North London Company, and the traffic to and from the Poplar Docks runs over the whole of these lines, and has to be carried along with and in many cases across the passenger traffic. The control and management of the Poplar Docks involves the power to disarrange the entire goods and mineral service, and is so inextricably mixed up with the railway that the possession and control of the water area so as to ensure the proper and regular admission and discharge of vessels, and transmission of traffic must remain in the hands of the railway company, in the first place, to secure the safety of their passengers, and in the second, so as to avoid the utter disorganisation of traffic, not on the lines of the North London alone, but on those of all the other companies over whose lines they run, or to or from whom they deliver or receive traffic. I wish to point out that the goods traffic of other companies is not a mere question of a waggon or so for each company, but it comes and goes in entire train loads coming from, or destined for, almost every part of Great Britain, some hauled by the company owning the train, others hauled by the North London Company, and therefore that punctuality on the North London line directly affects all the other great companies. I would point to the powers granted to many of the railway companies to make docks in connection with their railways, such as the Garston Dock of the North Western, or to acquire existing docks, such as the purchase of Southampton Docks by the South Western Company, as good precedents for the course I desire the Royal Commission to adopt, of leaving the Poplar Docks in the hands of the North London Company, who would, of course, be quite willing to purchase outright the leasehold portion of their docks, and, if necessary, to secure the full and free ingress and egress between their docks and the River Thames; they would be prepared also to purchase the Blackwall Basin. I desire to endorse most emphatically the opinion given by other witnesses that the privileges of the Watermen's Company are a serious danger to the trade of London. Our experience during the recent strike has proved the damage and annoyances which those privileges enable the freemen of that company to inflict upon trade, and, in our view, those privileges should be taken away entirely, and, so far as necessary, for public safety, conferred on the Thames Conservancy, or whatever body may be the future authority controlling the navigation of the River Thames.

11573. You told us that you were put to damage and annoyance during the strike?—Yes.

11574. Can you tell me how many lightermen who were working for you struck?—I cannot at the moment.

11575. Can you tell me any percentage of the number that you had?—I cannot off-hand. We have no lightermen of our own. The lightermen, of course, come into the dock.

11576. The lightermen with whom you were dealing?—I cannot give you the number. We were very seriously inconvenienced in our trade.

11577. During that strike, by the action of the lightermen, was your business paralysed?—Yes, it was practically paralysed. Our trains were running very badly, and our traffic was dislocated very seriously. Our sidings, notably St. Pancras, were blocked up with traffic which we could not deliver. I have read and considered carefully the report of the Rivers Committee of the London County Council, and, subject to due provision being made for proper access to this company's docks (which I gather from the report the County Council do not desire to acquire), and, of course, to the ownership of the Poplar Docks remaining undisturbed in my company, I am of opinion that the scheme outlined by that report presents a basis for constructing a workable scheme for controlling and developing the docks of London.

11578. Do you think that in the proposed scheme of a Port Trust there should be railway representation?—Yes.

11579. You urge the representation of railway companies on that Trust or Board?—That is so. We think it is important that the railways should be represented.

11580. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Have you any idea of the proportion of representation the railway companies ought to have. Suppose there are 40 members on the Board. How many members do you think ought to be representative of the railway companies?—We have not considered that.

11581. Should it be a substantial representation?—I think so. The railway companies' interests are very great with regard to this matter. We are very much interested in it, probably as much as the shipowners. We have to carry traffic inland.

11582. You have said that the structural cost of those works at Poplar Dock and Goods Station is £444,378. You say you arrive at that amount by actual payments where practicable, and, where such information is not available, by measurement?—Yes.

11583. How much of the total sum consists of actual payments?—The bulk of it is actual payments.

11584. Would you say 80 or 90 per cent. of it?—There is only a small portion of it London and North Western Railway. The balance is all North London.

11585. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) I gather from your evidence that in the event of a Trust or body officially formed to control the Port and Docks of London, you wish to be the only docks excluded, and you wish to be free of their control?—I understand that the County Council do not want to take our docks.

11586. I am not talking of the County Council. I am asking you this question. In the event of a public body being formed to control the docks and river of London, you wish the Poplar Dock to be excluded altogether, and to remain under your own control?—I am afraid I am not in a position to reply to that definitely. I am informed that our General Manager's opinion is that we should be left.

11587. (*Mr. Ellis.*) We have had plans of the other docks put in; perhaps you will see that one is put in of your dock?—Yes, I will hand one in.

(*The Witness handed in a plan of the Poplar Dock.*)

11588. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) With reference to the profit earned attributable to docks apart from the warehouses you have said that prior to the agreed payments to the East and West India Company in respect of wharfages, the income would show a net return upon the capital cost of 4·34 per cent. That is reduced to ·58 per cent. Is that reduction due to the payments to the East and West India Dock Company?—It refers to wharfage under our arrangement with the dock company, under the lease. I can hand in a copy of the lease if you wish.

(*The Witness handed in a copy of the Lease of the Poplar Dock granted by the East and West India Dock Company to the North London Railway Company, July 1st, 1857. See Appendix, 29th Day, No. 14.*)

11589. I see it is less than half the wharfage?—Yes.

11590. Do the North London Railway Company retain the other half of the wharfage?—Yes, it is simply an assumed charge; no actual money passes.

11591. At any rate, we may take it that the North London Railway Company only make ·58 per cent. on the capital which has been expended in the construction and equipment of the docks?—Yes, practically a half per cent.

11592. A little over a half per cent.?—Yes.

11593. Will you tell us what they spent in the construction and equipment of warehouses?—Roughly £300,000.

11594. On warehouses and equipment apart from construction of the docks?—Yes.

11595. What revenue does the railway get on the warehouse business?—Differential rates.

11596. What do they come to per cent. on the expenditure after deducting working expenses?—Our tenants, the other companies, pay 6 per cent. The Great Northern Railway, the Great Western Railway, and the London and North Western Railway are the tenants.

11597. You do not hold them yourselves?—No.

11598. You lease them to other companies?—Yes, they are practically our tenants.

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11599. They pay you 6 per cent. on an apportioned amount of this £300,000?—It is an arranged amount.

11600. In each case you apportion the amount to each company, and they pay 6 per cent.?—Yes.

11601. Then what is the great interest that the North London Company have in the dock except as carriers of traffic into the dock?—We are the landlords.

11602. But I mean what money interest?—The rent of the warehouses.

11603. But in the dock itself apart from the warehouses?—The railway-borne traffic.

11604. As an owner of the dock, apart from warehouse matters and as carriers, the only interest that the North London Company have is about ·58 per cent. of revenue on the capital which has been expended?—That is so.

11605. Do all railway companies' vehicles come to Poplar?—The traffic of nearly the whole of the railway companies comes to Poplar, with the exception, perhaps, of the Midland, who have a warehouse of their own.

11606. I do not recall whether you have told us what companies have warehouses there?—The London and North Western, the Great Western, and Great Northern.

11607. How is the Midland Company's traffic accommodated?—The Midland have a separate place of their own about a quarter of a mile off.

11608. Is that at Limehouse?—No, it is closely adjoining ours, between Blackwall and Poplar.

11609. Have they a separate entrance to the Thames?—Yes.

11610. Can you give us any idea of the proportionate amount of traffic at the Poplar Docks which is barged either from and to the vessel, and the proportion which is taken from ships into warehouses, or shipped direct on to ships?—All traffic.

11611. I want the proportion between the traffic which is barged and the traffic which is not barged?—I have not the exact figures, but I think the whole of the goods traffic is barged. The coal traffic is practically all shipped. It comes by ship.

11612. Can you give me the tonnage of vessels and barges for Poplar Docks?—Yes. It is as follows:—

Statement showing the aggregate register tonnage of vessels and barges entering and leaving the North London Company's Poplar Docks Loaded.

Year 1899.

	No.	Aggregate Register Tons.
Steam Colliers - - -	133	70,734
Sailing Vessels - -	21	1,499
Barges—Goods - -	13,116	*693,049
Barges—Coal and Coke -	1,377	*72,761
	14,647	838,043

The acreage of the North London Company's Docks is 7·5, therefore

838,043 tons on 7·5 acres = 111,739 tons per acre.

* Based on the average of 710 barges belonging to 35 different owners, which entered the North London Company's Docks during October, 1899.

11613. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have referred in your evidence to the event, if a Trust was formed, of your purchasing the Blackwall Basin?—Yes.

11614. Would not that invalidate the entrance to the West India Dock?—I should not think so. Practically there is very little being done in the West India Dock now.

11615. You would not advocate doing away with the whole of the West India Dock?—I take it we should not obstruct that. We should allow the vessels to go into the West India Dock.

11616. What ships go into your own dock now?—Practically all sorts of small ships.

11617. Very small, I presume?—Yes. We have recently had to enlarge our entrance to let the modern coaling vessels through. They are small vessels.

Cross-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

11618. You have mentioned a claim made by the Joint Committee in regard to a piece of land of 83 square yards required for widening, which was followed by a claim by the amalgamated Company. Those claims are, in fact, still pending, are they not, against the North London Company?—Yes, I believe they are. The last one, £34,600, has only just been received.

11619. It is a matter about which a decision remains to be given?—Yes.

11620. Then I shall not discuss it. You have told us that you get from the railway companies, to whom you let your warehouses, a return of 6 per cent. on your £300,000?—Yes.

11621. That rental you got from them by the terms of a lease, or some agreement?—We have an agreement with the company.

11622. They agreed to pay you the 6 per cent.?—Yes.

11623. In point of fact, your relation with the old East and West India Dock Company, and now with the new company, depends altogether upon an agreement, does it not?—The original lease, I take it.

11624. Have you ever seen it?—I believe I have.

11625. I do not mean the original document, but are you familiar with the terms of the document at all?—I cannot say that I am.

11626. In point of fact, I may put it to you shortly, no doubt it depends upon three documents of the 1st of July, 1857, which are extremely long and extremely complicated?—Yes, that is so.

11627. What the particular rights of the dock company or yourselves are upon that, it would require some of His Majesty's Judges to decide?—I think so.

11628. You say that in the year 1896 there was paid to the Joint Committee by or through the North London Company for wharfage, rail haulage, and dock dues no less a sum than £31,347?—Yes.

11629. Have you yourself any personal knowledge on the matter?—I have a return showing how the amount is made up.

11630. Will you just answer this question generally, because I suppose you have inspected the returns before you came to give evidence?—Yes.

11631. Recently?—Within two or three days.

11632. Will you tell us the items of that sum of £31,347?—Yes, I can give you the whole of the details. This is a statement showing direct payments to the London and India Docks for wharfage, rail haulage, dock dues, etc., on traffic passing over the North London Railway to and from the various docks during the year 1899.

Railway Company.	Amount. £
London and North Western - -	14,082
Great Northern - - - - -	10,828
Great Western - - - - -	6,252
North London - - - - -	5,600
	£36,762

These figures are exclusive of the Joint Committee's interest in the direct rail traffic worked by them to and from Millwall Docks and North London Railway, the tonnage of which for the year 1899 was 72,768 tons.

11633. Are the London and North Western, the Great Northern and the Great Western Railway Companies the ones which bring traffic over the North London line?—Yes.

11634. You pay £5,600?—Yes, in respect of Poplar.

11635. We are only dealing with Poplar. Does this table include anything besides Poplar?—Certainly, as stated in the heading which I have given you. It is in respect of all traffic passing over the North London Railway to and from the various docks.

11636. Whatever dock?—Certainly.

11637. Were you here when Mr. Scott was cross-examined?—No.

11638. Perhaps some of your advisers were. There is a suggestion at Question 6169 which I want to put to you.

(*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) If my friend, Mr. Wallace, will allow me to say so now, I was going to explain that matter when my turn came. I was under a misapprehension at the time. From the papers before me I understood that the £36,762 was only relating to the

Poplar Docks. Since then I have had the matter inquired into; I asked the question afterwards myself, and I had the correct information. It meant all the traffic.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Then that disposes of the suggestion.

(*Chairman.*) Under those circumstances we need not pursue the point.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) No, my Lord; not at all.

(*Witness.*) The amended figure was put in with a view to clearing up the matter.

11639. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) I see the amount that you pay of £5,600 includes the North London traffic for all the docks?—Oh, no. The £5,600 is that which we pay the dock company in respect of Poplar.

11640. Do you get no North London traffic from any of the other docks upon which you pay charges?—No, we do not pay charges, but we are instrumental in carrying the traffic which is represented by that £36,762. It passes over the line. It goes through the neck of our bottle.

11641. You have given us some figures as regards income, and you have said the ultimate profit left to the railway company in respect of the docks is 0·58 per cent. on the capital. Do you, in fact, keep a separate account for the dock distinct from the railway company. Perhaps you do not yourself know?—I do not myself know. At the Poplar Station for the goods department we have a separate wages bill in respect of the men who are there; it does not come into the traffic department.

11642. Are you able to tell me yourself how the account is kept?—No, candidly, I cannot tell you.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Mr. Wallace, you will observe that Mr. Bolland Newton, who was to have given this evidence, but who is prevented from doing so by illness, states that he has taken out the income attributable to the docks apart from the warehouses.

See 11566.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Yes; I wanted to find out how it was done.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I am afraid you cannot get it from this witness.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) No, I have come to an absolute *impassé*.

11643. Do you know whether, in fact, they make any specific dock charges as against railway charges. I may put it shortly, I am sure you will answer me candidly—you really do not know how the accounts are kept or made up at all?—I have already said so.

(*Chairman.*) Might I suggest that the account is separated in Mr. Bolland Newton's statement of evidence. He separates the dock and railway charges.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Then, my Lord, I should like to ask a question about it.

(*Chairman.*) We are in a difficulty, because you see this witness is only appearing for Mr. Bolland Newton and giving his evidence—really Mr. Bolland Newton's evidence. He would have been here but for his illness.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I quite feel that, my Lord.

(*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) My difficulty, my Lord, is that Mr. Bolland Newton is not here.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I suppose we may take it that Mr. Newton had it taken out for him by the proper accountants of the railway company.

(*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) As you know, sir, that is always done.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Then probably it would not be done by Mr. Newton himself.

(*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) No.

(*Chairman.*) Mr. Wallace's point is that he would have liked to ask some questions about it.

(*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) I have no doubt the accountants who took out the figures can be produced before the Commission, if desired, and the matter can be cleared up.

(*Chairman.*) I do not think there will be any doubt about the figures.

(*Witness.*) This was all taken out very carefully.

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11644. That figure of £36,762 represents the traffic brought in over your line to any of the docks?—Yes.

11645. And that is actually the money that you are instrumental in earning for the dock company?—The London and India Dock Company.

11646. To make it perfectly clear, you are the connecting link, so to speak, between the great railway systems of England and the docks?—We are one of them.

11647. You are one of the most important; in fact, your original start was to be a connecting link between the London and North Western Railway and the docks?—The old London and Birmingham Railway, before the amalgamation, and the docks.

11648. With regard to the question about your traffic, do you mean that all your traffic into the docks is railway-borne traffic?—Yes.

11649. You do not carry on a business such as the other docks do, of warehousing, and so on. All your business is railway-borne business?—We are restricted to that.

11650. You are restricted by your lease to railway-borne business?—Yes.

11651. So far as the warehouses are concerned, you being only the connecting link, do not want warehouses for yourselves; but the railway companies who may want to hold the stuff do want the warehouses, and lease them from you?—Yes, our three tenants.

11652. So far as the barging goes, for your purpose, must that be free, as now?—We think so.

11653. In fact, all the goods that are barged into the dock go on to the quayside, and the dock gets paid for it?—Yes.

11654. (*Rear-Admiral Hext.*) You have just said that you wish the barges to be entirely free?—Yes.

11655. You would not make any charge at all for out-of-pocket expenses, for increased pumping, etc., which the docks have to go to for the accommodation of barges?—We already pay for the increased pumping.

11656. I am talking of barges. Would you give the barges all the facilities which they have now, which cost considerable sums to the dock company, and would you still give them those facilities free, gratis and for nothing?—Yes.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I do not know whether your Lordship has any further witnesses to call.

(*Chairman.*) That concludes the evidence, I understand.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I was going to make an application to your Lordship with reference to one or two things which have been said in the course of the evidence. I am sure your Lordship will understand the fact that because one does not cross-examine it does not mean that one accepts every statement that is made by a witness. There are one or two statements that have been made by witnesses with regard to which I should like, with your Lordship's permission, to recall Mr. Hardy. There are, I think, about four points, but they are extremely short.

(*Chairman.*) Will you tell us what the points are, because this raises the question of rebutting evidence. We do not want to have that. If you have any specific points which you will bring before us, we can tell you whether we will hear further evidence as to them or not.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) The first point is in connection with Question 9562. That is in Mr. Powell's evidence.

(*Chairman.*) Is this a contradiction of a contradiction?

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) Mr. Scott was asked a question about it, and then Mr. Powell came comparing a rate of 5s. 6d. with a rate of 9s. 9d., which he alleged the dock people charged. I should like to recall Mr. Hardy upon that. It relates to charges I know; but the matter has been started.

(*Chairman.*) We will not go into any further questions of rate, but as this has been allowed to go in, I think it is only fair to you that we should hear what Mr. Hardy has to say.

Mr. T. Hardy. Mr. THOMAS HARDY recalled and further examined.

26 June 1901.

11657. (*Mr. George Wallace.*) Will you tell the Commissioners what you say with reference to the answer about the rates of 5s. 6d. and 9s. 9d.?—The rate of 5s. 6d. charged by wharfingers was compared with the rate of 9s. 9d. charged by the dock company. It was alleged that the services were precisely of the same character. The 9s. 9d. rate is one that has been arranged with the leather trade, and includes, as Mr. Scott explained, delivery to the trader's premises in Tooley Street. A good deal of leather, both Australian and American, comes to Tilbury Dock, and the expenses which the dock company has to bear to earn the 9s. 9d. are:—Paid to ship in respect of labour performed on quay at Tilbury, 1s. 6d.; conveyance from ship's side to Commercial Road Depôt, 4s. 6d.; cartage from Commercial Road to Tooley Street, 3s. 4d., making a total of 9s. 4d., which leaves a gross profit to the dock company of 5d. a ton. Clerical and other establishment expenses come out of that small profit. Leather discharged at the Albert and Victoria Docks gives a somewhat better return, the rate being the same and the expenses of transit something less; but the 9s. 9d. rate cannot be compared with the rate of 5s. 6d. a ton charged by wharfingers. A wharfinger certainly could not afford to pay the London Clause charge and bear the expense of lighterage and cartage out of such rate. A landing rate of 5s. 6d. a ton is in force at the docks in cases where the goods are delivered from the dock at which the ship discharges.

See 9562.

Cross-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

11658. With regard to the second item that you have mentioned, namely, conveyance from the ship's side to the Commercial Road Depôt, 4s. 6d., how is the conveyance carried out?—By rail.

11659. Then cartage from Commercial Road to Tooley Street 3s. 4d. Is that the charge which Mr. Scott said is 5s.?—No; I explained it is rather a better rate for us when the conveyance is made from the Victoria and Albert Docks, because then we can get the goods carted all the way for 5s.

11660. If it comes from Tilbury it is 4s. 6d. rail and 3s. 4d. cartage?—Yes, making 7s. 10d.

11661. I do not quite understand your position. Do you deny that if the leather is taken by the wharfinger his charge to the trader is 5s. 6d.?—I cannot deny it, because I have no knowledge on the matter, but I certainly do dispute that any wharfinger would pay 1s. 6d. out of the 5s. 6d. rate for London Clause charge, and that he would also pay cartage at the other end out of your low rate; he could not do it.

11662. I do not want matters of opinion; I want matters of fact. Mr. Powell has said that the charge to him by the wharfinger is 5s. 6d.; do you deny that?—I believe he pays the London Clause rate himself.

11663. You do not deny it?—I can only argue from a common sense point of view.

11664. You do not deny as I understand that your charge is 9s. 9d.—never mind what it includes?—I get considerable traffic, which shows that the service is a totally different one.

11665. If the leather is delivered by the dock company to the merchant the charge is 9s. 9d. for the services which you have enumerated?—Yes.

11666. That is agreed?—Yes, it is 9s. 9d.; I am explaining how the charge is made up.

Re-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

11667. I think you said you get a considerable quantity at that rate?—Yes; nobody would pay us that rate if he could get the same services done for 5s. 6d.

11668. The next matter with which you wish to deal is with regard to Mr. Rouse's evidence as to rates on coffee. There were some questions put by Mr. Lyttelton with reference to a table that was put in at Question 9597, which table is shown in Appendix No. 3 of the 25th Day. What do you say with reference to the charge as regards Brazilian coffee?—As regards Brazilian coffee, very little of this comes to London. None direct, but *viâ* Southampton, where it is discharged from the Royal Mail steamers or from Continental ports. As regards that *viâ* Southampton, we collect the coffee by lighter from Nine Elms at a cost of 2s. 5d. a ton, and land it at the London Dock or at the St. Katharine Dock. Our rate, which includes lighterage, landing, housing, sorting for damage, weighing, sampling, storage for 21 days, and delivery either to land conveyance or to water conveyance, is 7s. 6d. per ton; deducting 7½ per cent. (11¼d.), it comes to 6s. 6¾d. Mr. Rouse dealt with a rate covering three months' storage, but there is no necessity to pay three months' rent unless the goods are actually stored for three months; but if so stored by the importer, the rent, in addition to the above, would be 6d. per ton a week, say 10 weeks, 5s.; deducting 7½ per cent. (4½d.), makes 4s. 7½d., or a total of 11s. 2¼d. Mr. Rouse's figures are:—If delivered by land: Landing, etc., 12s. 6d.; delivery, 5s.; making a total of 17s. 6d. If delivered by water: Landing, etc., 12s. 6d.; delivery, 6s. 8d.; making a total of 19s. 2d. In other words, Mr. Rouse has stated the London charges from 57 to 72 per cent. higher than they really are.

11669. Now, what do you say as regards East India coffee?—As regards the East India coffee there is a consolidated rate which includes lighterage from ship to warehouse, landing, housing, bulking, sorting for damage, filling-in and weighing, storage for six weeks, and delivery to land conveyance or to water conveyance, of 14s. 2d. per ton gross; extra for sorting and lotting (1¼d. per bag), say 1s. 4¼d.; making 15s. 6¼d.; deducting 7½ per cent. (1s. 6¼d.), it comes to 14s. There is no necessity to pay for three months' storage. The goods are, in fact, often sold within the six weeks covered by the consolidated rate; but if they were stored by the importer for three months the additional charge for rent would be:—Seven weeks at 6d., 3s. 6d.; deducting 7½ per cent. (4d.), making 3s. 2d., or a total of 17s. 2d. Mr. Rouse's figures are:—If delivered by land: Landing, etc., 18s. 9d.; delivery, 5s.; making a total of 23s. 9d. If delivered by water: Landing, etc., 18s. 9d.; delivery, 6s. 8d.; making a total of 25s. 5d. In other words, Mr. Rouse has stated the London charges from 38 to 48 per cent. higher than they really are. In both cases Mr. Rouse appears to have forgotten the discount, and has added a delivery charge which is in fact never made. The only case in which a delivery charge would be at all likely to be made on coffee would be where an importer took delivery to water from the place of discharge within three days from landing. In such a case the charge would be:—Landing rate, 8s. 4d. per ton; delivery to water, 2s. 3d. per ton; making a total of 10s. 7d. Coffee, however, is never removed under such conditions, and, in fact, never dealt with upon a rate which is exclusive of delivery. Mr. Rouse alleged that the figures stated in the schedule which he put in represented amounts which he himself had actually paid. He never has paid any such amounts as stated under the head of London, and he cannot produce any vouchers in proof of any such payments. I ask to be allowed to hand in copies of three bills that have recently been rendered to Mr. Rouse for charges on coffee.

(*The Witness handed in copies of three accounts rendered by the London and India Docks Company in respect of Charges on Coffee. See Appendix, 29th Day, No. 15.*)

I should like to add, if I may, that Mr. Rouse's evidence is not the only evidence which has been tendered by the Chamber of Commerce on the subject of charges on coffee.

(*Chairman.*) We do not want to go into any other specific charges.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Your Lordship will understand I am placed in considerable difficulty with regard to this. Mr. Rouse made these statements in the presence of counsel for the dock company, and they were at liberty to cross-examine him upon the matter when he was in the witness-box. He would have been prepared to deal with any facts which were within his personal knowledge, but it is rather difficult for me now to deal with facts which Mr. Rouse ought to prove.

(*Chairman.*) It is only fair to say that I think it is the Commissioners' fault. It was the one occasion when we deferred to you by allowing the introduction of evidence with regard to rates.

Cross-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

11670. Mr. Rouse dealt with two articles in his table handed in at Appendix 3 on the 25th day. One was cotton and one was coffee?—Yes.

11671. You have examined the figures he gave?—Yes.

11672. Do I understand rightly that you do not dispute the accuracy of the figures that he gave with regard to cotton?—Yes, I do; I have not gone into cotton, because it is really a negligible quantity in London; it is not worth talking about; but Mr. Rouse is wrong in his figures as to cotton.

11673. Were you present in the room when Mr. Rouse was giving evidence?—Yes, but I had not the material with me for correcting his evidence.

11674. You say that Brazilian coffee all comes to London *viâ* Southampton?—Or Continental ports.

11675. Is it not true that some has come in within the last two or three years, say, to the Victoria Dock?—It is more than two or three years ago; it must be ten years ago.

11676. But it has come?—Yes.

11677. So that we must modify your statement to that extent?—I do not think so. It is ten years ago; there has been none since. It never comes now, I say.

11678. With regard to the cost to you of 2s. 6d. for doing the lightering from Nine Elms to London Dock, do you do the lightering yourself with your own men?—No, the London and South-Western Railway Company do the lighterage, and we pay them their charge.

11679. Is it an all-round charge that they make?—Yes.

11680. For all kinds of goods?—We get a little wool sometimes.

11681. It is not a special charge made with reference to coffee?—No; we pay 2s. 6d. all round.

11682. Does that include lighterage from any other point than Nine Elms?—No.

11683. Simply between those two points—Nine Elms and the London Dock?—Yes.

11684. Your point, as I understand, is contained in your statement that Mr. Rouse has stated the London charges to be 72 per cent. higher than they really are?—Yes.

11685. You arrive at that by comparing the figure of 19s. 2d. with your figure of 11s. 2¼d.?—Yes.

11686. Roughly speaking 19s. 2d. is 72 per cent. more?—Yes.

11687. But you also attribute another figure to Mr. Rouse of 17s. 6d.?—Yes; that would be 57 per cent. higher.

11688. But you did not first of all, at all events, consider that that difference of 14 or 15 per cent. was worth commenting upon. You put the case at the extreme as against Mr. Rouse?—I did not do anything of the sort. In giving my evidence to-day you must please take what I have said. I have said from 57 to 72 per cent.

11689. Mr. Rouse, you say, gave certain figures of 17s. 6d. and 19s. 2d.?—Yes.

11690. The figure of 72 per cent. which you put before the Commission is not an accurate figure when you make a comparison with that 17s. 6d.?—No.

11691. There is a difference of something like 15 per cent.?—Yes.

11692. Did you do that intentionally or unintentionally?—The whole discussion on the occasion when Mr. Rouse gave his evidence was as to the additional charge for delivery to water over the charge made for delivery to land; therefore I was specifically dealing with that figure.

11693. I am coming to Mr. Rouse's evidence. I am dealing now with your evidence. Did you regard that 15 per cent. as an important matter or an unimportant matter?—I am quite ready to make Mr. Rouse a present of that 15 per cent.

11694. The same, then, applies with regard to your calculation of 38 per cent. There, if you compare the 17s. 2d. and 23s. 9d. it is a difference of 38 per cent.?—I have said so to-day in my evidence. I have actually used those very figures.

11695. Mr. Rouse's figure you say is 17s. 6d.?—Yes.

11696. Show me where Mr. Rouse gave that figure. Show me any place, either in the notes of evidence, or in the Appendix, where any such figure was given by Mr. Rouse?—Are you speaking of Brazilian coffee now?

11697. I am taking your statement that those figures are Mr. Rouse's figures?—It will be found in the table. Mr. Rouse showed that the rate on Brazilian coffee was 7½d. per hundredweight, plus a delivery charge of 5s. a ton.

11698. You are not answering my question. I ask you where do you find in the Evidence, or in the table, that Mr. Rouse put before this Commission the figure of 17s. 6d.?—I am telling you where I find it.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) My learned friend asks the witness a question, and when the witness goes on to explain he stops him.

11699. (*Mr. Whitehead.*) You are giving me something quite different; you are giving me 7½d.?—That is per hundredweight, and I have sufficient capacity to calculate and arrive at 17s. 6d.

11700. Then this 17s. 6d. is arrived at by you by calculation?—I am turning into tons what he stated in hundredweights.

11701. You come here to make corrections, as a pattern of exactitude, and I want to find out whether your statement is exact. Those figures are not Mr. Rouse's figures at all?—Do you dispute that 20 times 7½d. are 12s. 6d.?

11702. Are they your figures or Mr. Rouse's?—They are both mine and Mr. Rouse's.

11703. They are not Mr. Rouse's unless you can find some place where Mr. Rouse put them before the Commission. You are suggesting that Mr. Rouse has placed inaccurate information before the Commission?—I say so.

11704. With regard to this 17s. 6d. he never put it before the Commission?—He said that the rates were 7½d. per hundredweight, and 5s. per ton for delivery.

11705. We will deal with what Mr. Rouse put before the Commission. I will ask first of all about your statement. Your rate, which includes lighterage, landing, housing, sorting for damage, and so on, is 7s. 6d. per ton?—Yes, but the "so on" includes delivery.

11706. I will read it: "Storage for 21 days and delivery either to land conveyance or water conveyance is 7s. 6d. per ton."?—Yes.

11707. That is the rate which appears in your book of rates?—Yes.

11708. If, as a matter of fact, the goods are stored for three months, you have to add to that a rent charge for 10 weeks?—Yes.

11709. A charge of 5s.?—Yes, less a certain discount.

11710. I will come to the point of discount presently. If you add 5s. to 7s. 6d. you get a gross charge of 12s. 6d.?—We get 11s. 2d.

11711. If you add 5s. to 7s. 6d. (I am dealing with the gross charges without taking off the discount) you get 12s. 6d.?—Yes.

11712. And 12s. 6d. per ton is equivalent to 7½d. per hundredweight?—That is what I thought.

11713. And 7½d. per hundredweight is the figure contained in the table which Mr. Rouse put before the Commission?—Yes.

11714. So that on that point we are in agreement?—Yes.

11715. Now, take the East India coffee. I want to see how far Mr. Rouse was accurate. There you have a consolidated rate, which works out on your table at 14s. 2d.?—I do not admit Mr. Rouse was accurate in the case of Brazilian coffee.

11716. You made a distinction, and said that he did not include discount?—And he added delivery, which the other rate covers.

11717. Now, take the 14s. 2d.; you have there 14s. 2d. for consolidated rate?—Yes.

11718. That includes six weeks' storage?—It includes six weeks' storage.

11719. And if you are going to include three months you must therefore add seven weeks' rent?—Yes.

11720. At 6d. per ton; that is 3s. 6d.?—Yes.

11721. And 1¼d. per bag—say 1s. 4½d.?—Yes.

11722. That comes to 19s.?—Yes.

J. Hardy. 26 June 1901.

11723. And that works out at 11⅔d. per hundred weight gross charge?—Yes.

11724. The figure which Mr. Rouse put in the table was 11¼d.?—Yes.

11725. You say the discount ought to come off those figures of 7½ per cent.?—Yes.

11726. If you take 7½ per cent. off 7½d. it works out to about 7d., does it not?—Yes.

11727. So that, making full allowance for the discount, there ought to be that variation in the Table; the figure ought to be changed from 7½d. to 7d. roughly speaking?—No, I do not agree at all.

11728. I quite understand your argumentative point about adding for delivery or landing. I am not forgetting that, but the figure in the table is a figure of 7½d., which is accurate to this extent: it is accurate if you take off 7½ per cent. in respect of discount?—I cannot take the figure apart from the services which Mr. Rouse enumerated.

11729. The table must speak for itself; I want to speak of the figures. Take the East India coffee. If you take off 7½ per cent. from the 11⅔d. you get a charge which should be 10·55d., call it 10½d., instead of 11¼d.?—Yes.

11730. That allows for the discount?—Yes.

11731. Take warehousing. Is it not a fact that you allow discount to the importer?—Yes.

11732. But if goods remain in the warehouse to the order of the buyer you do not allow that 7½ per cent. discount to the buyer?—That is so.

11733. And where the coffee is warehoused by the buyer that allowance of 7½ per cent. should not come off?—If the coffee is warehoused by the buyer he would get 7½ per cent. It would not be warehoused by the buyer, but by the importer.

11734. It may be warehoused in the first instance by the importer, but it remains in the warehouse to the order of the buyer?—He would pay rent; there would be no other charge to the buyer.

11735. The buyer would not get that 7½ per cent. discount?—No.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) There is one matter that, perhaps, I ought to deal with with reference to the evidence of Mr. Garratt and Mr. Robinson. It is referred to at Question 9905. It is most conveniently put in the Appendices to the 26th Day, Nos. 1 and 2. That is Mr. Robinson's evidence. It is a very short matter. I do not know whether your Lordship thinks it necessary to go into it. It is about the 1s. 9d. a ton.

(*Chairman.*) No, I do not think it is necessary to go into it.

Re-examined by Mr. George Wallace.

11736. There is one other matter I have to ask you about with reference to Questions 10108 and 10109. It is in the evidence of Mr. Tasker. He gave a recent instance of a transaction in which he made a complaint against the company. I cross-examined the witness as to the transaction, and he was good enough to give us some information about the matter, which you have been able to trace, have you not?—Yes. Mr. H. B. Tasker, in his evidence on the 17th June, at Questions 10108 and 10109, made reference to the alleged heavy charges made by the docks upon export goods, and said that those charges operated against his landing flour in the docks. He illustrated his remarks by reference to a recent instance, particulars of which he did not then give, but which from information he has since supplied I have been able to trace. He had 165 bags of flour, weighing 10½ tons, *ex* the "Duke of York," which he desired to ship by the Messageries steamer "Baghdad." The transfer charge of 3s. 4d. a ton was quoted to him for carting the flour from one part of the dock to another, and for delivery to the export ship. There must be some misunderstanding as to his being told that we could not lighter the goods, because we actually publish a tariff of the rates at which we undertake to lighter goods to export ships, and the rate for flour in quantities of less than 50 tons is 1s. 8d., and for quantities in excess of 50 tons 1s. 6d. per ton, with a minimum charge of 30s. Mr. Tasker said in his evidence that had the flour been landed at any private wharf in London the transferring would have been done for 1s. 9d. a ton. It is extremely improbable that any lighterman would undertake to convey from a river wharf to an export ship lying in dock 10 tons of flour at 1s. 9d. a ton, but if he would do so from a river wharf he would equally do it from a dock warehouse, and Mr. Tasker is entirely in error in supposing that he would be at any disadvantage in that respect by landing his flour at the docks. Indeed, as I have shown, subject to a minimum charge, the dock company itself would lighter the goods for 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d. a ton. Then Mr. Tasker made a very curious comparison between a rate of 8s. 9d. charged by the dock company and a charge of 1s. 9d. for lighterage, and wished it to be inferred that he was comparing like with like. The rate of 8s. 9d. a ton covers collection by cart from any warehouse within the City limits, conveying by rail or otherwise to any of the company's docks, depositing goods in export shed, keeping them there (if necessary for three weeks) until the ship is ready to receive them, and then trucking them out to the ship's side. Mr. Tasker did not in so many words say that he could get all those services performed by a lighterman at 1s. 9d. a ton, but he clearly wished it to be so understood, otherwise there is absolutely no point in his observation at the end of Question 10108 that "the difference in charge of 8s. 9d. to 1s. 9d.—7s. a ton—is a much more handsome profit than we get on our trade in the usual way."

Cross-examined by Mr. Rowland Whitehead.

11737. Do you deny the statement made by Mr. Tasker that when he made application to the Dock Company or their officials, he was told that they would not do this lightering for him?—I do not deny it, but I think there must have been some curious misunderstanding, because we actually publish a rate at which we will do lightering.

11738. I have in the room a gentleman who can give evidence with regard to this. I can call another witness who can prove that this did, in fact, take place; but I do not understand you to deny it?—No; I only wish to correct Mr. Tasker's point that he is at a disadvantage when he puts his goods into a dock warehouse.

11739. Then with regard to what you say about the 1s. 9d. and the 8s. 9d. Mr. Tasker said that he wanted certain services performed for him in taking the goods from one dock to another?—Yes.

11740. He was not in the City limits, and he did not want those services, and this was a case where you offered to charge him the consolidated rate, which includes a large number of services, when he only wanted a smaller service. Is that so?—No; I do not think that is so. The 8s. 9d. certainly would have been our charge, and where I think Mr. Tasker has confused two things is in this. He says we said we are not lightermen; you had better go and get it done by some lightermen. That is the answer that would have been given to him if he had said: "What is the rate for conveying it from one dock to another?" We should have said: "We are not lightermen."

11741. And you would have charged him 8s. 9d., the consolidated rate, which covers a large number of services?—We should not have got the business.

11742. (*Chairman.*) What you mean to say is that the application made to you by Mr. Tasker, you would have replied to by saying: "It is not our business to do it"?—Yes. It is not our business to do it.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) It is a small point, but I should like to get it clear, that the negotiations which Mr. Tasker said took place did, in fact, take place. That is all I have to ask.

(*Chairman.*) As far as the Commissioners are at present advised, the evidence is closed. Under the circumstances we hope it will be convenient to the learned counsel to begin their addresses on Monday, the 1st July; and we trust that before that date they will make it convenient to send in to the secretary some memorandum as to the order in which they propose to address the Commission. We think they might make an arrangement between themselves.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) My Lord, I understand that a very considerable part of an agreement has been come to. I understand that Mr. Daldy, for the County Council, will be ready to speak early on Monday; Mr. Whitehead, for the Chamber of Commerce, will be ready to speak on Monday; and I understand also that Mr. Harper will be ready to speak on Monday.

(*Chairman.*) As I have said before, the Commissioners trust that the learned counsel will restrict their speeches to the matters which immediately affect their clients.

(Adjourned to Monday, July 1st, at 11 o'clock.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

THIRTIETH DAY.

Monday, 1st July, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D. F
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, ESQ., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., Secretary.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. HORACE AVORY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., and Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. JOSEPH SHAW appeared on behalf of the North London Railway Company.

Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the Short Sea Traders' Association.

The Hon. J. D. FITZGERALD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers for the limits from Lombard's Wall to Gravesend Bridge in Kent, the Commissioners of Sewers from Gravesend Bridge to Sheerness in Kent; the Commissioners of Sewers for Havering and Dagenham and other levels in Essex, and the Commissioners of Sewers for Rainham and other levels in Essex.

The Hon. J. D. FITZGERALD, K.C., called to address the Commission.

11743. (*Chairman.*) You propose to address us on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers for various districts?

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) Yes, my Lord. You were good enough on the last occasion, when you intimated that you did not consider it necessary to hear evidence on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers, to say that you would allow their Counsel to address you and put their case before you. I promise to be only a very few minutes, because the case is entirely in a nut shell, and it is a very simple one indeed.

The Commissioners of Sewers whom I represent on this occasion, are the Commissioners of Sewers both on the Essex and on the Kent sides of the river, and just to make it plain who they are and what their jurisdiction is I will say this: On the Essex side of the river, speaking generally, their jurisdiction commences at Barking Creek—they have a little jurisdiction higher up which I need not refer to—and runs from Barking Creek down to Mucking Creek, which represents roughly some 25 miles of river wall on that side of the Thames. On the Kent side of the Thames the jurisdiction of the Commissioners commences at Lombard's Wall, which is close to Woolwich, and extends practically down to Yantlet Creek. Altogether between 50 and 60 miles of river walling is under the jurisdiction of the Commissioners. I should wish you to understand that their jurisdiction is not confined to these river walls, but it extends inland in some places a very considerable distance. For instance, at one place on the Essex side of the river the jurisdiction extends ten miles inland and at another place four miles inland. Altogether there is a property of enormous value protected by these walls, both agricultural property and property of an industrial nature.

Now, my Lord, what the Commissioners of Sewers fear is that in the carrying out of any improvements of the Port of London by deepening the channels there is a possibility of their walls being allowed to slip into the river at certain points. Many of these walls are of considerable antiquity; some of them were originally established 200 or 300 years ago. In some cases the navigable channel is close to the wall, and what the Commissioners are apprehensive of is not any negligence in carrying out the work, but a risk which is inherent in the work itself, namely, that if you deepen the channel close to the wall, though that deepening may be carried out in a most skilful way, it may result in the walls slipping in, and very considerable damage being done to the walls and possibly also to the property behind the walls. Therefore the Commissioners would respectfully ask this Commission that if they recommend the deepening of the channel, they should accompany that recommendation with a further recommendation providing for the protection of the Commissioners of Sewers and the persons whom they represent. And, my Lord, what they would respectfully suggest as the best way of carrying out the protection is this: that before any deepening of the channel is begun, the authority to be entrusted with it should be under an obligation to make a complete survey of the channel, so that before any works are begun there should be on record a survey to which any party interested can refer, showing what the exact state of the channel was before it was altered. The natural way that occurs to us to carry out that recommendation, if it were made, would be that cross sections should be taken at moderate intervals all along, showing the exact state of the channel. Of course where the channel is nearer the river wall those cross sections might require to be taken at shorter intervals than where the channel is at a considerable distance away. Then you would have this one important factor absolutely determined; that is, the existing state of the channel before the work was begun. If while the work was being carried out or within any short time afterwards the river wall slipped down, you could then by taking a survey of the state of the channel where the slip occurred be practically in a position to say whether the slip was caused by the deepening of the channel or not. That would avoid a great deal of contention and a great deal of possible obligation.

Then, my Lord, of course what we should ask is this, as a matter of common justice. If in carrying out the improvements of the Port of London in the way suggested this damage is caused, the authority charged with carrying out the improvement should be liable to

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make good the damage. The damage may be mere damage to the wall, or it may extend much further; it may be damage to the property behind; but in either case I venture to submit that it is a matter I think I may say of common justice that if that damage is done the person by whom the damage is caused should be under an obligation to make compensation to meet the damage. But unless there is some recommendation from this Commission to that effect, or some provision to that effect in the Act of Parliament carrying out the recommendation of this Commission, a very difficult question of law would arise, because if the Act of Parliament authorised a thing to be done, unless the Act of Parliament contained provisions for compensation no compensation would be payable if the thing authorised by the Act were done without negligence. Therefore in a case of this kind it is necessary that some provision should be carried in that if the accident to the wall is the result of the deepening of the channel, whether that work was carried out skilfully or unskilfully, the authority carrying it out should make compensation to those who are injured by the damage to the wall. That really is the whole of the case. I am not going to take up the time of the Commission by a further address, but I think I may say this. The Commissioners of Sewers, whom I represent, though representing very large interests, are not wealthy bodies, and of course all monies which they have to raise have to be raised by rates on the levels behind and the property protected by the banks; and the Commissioners are naturally very desirous not to be involved in a lengthy Parliamentary contest in obtaining what I venture to submit is a mere matter of ordinary justice in a case of this kind. If this Commission in recommending the deepening of the channel coupled it with such a recommendation as I suggest, then I take it that in the ordinary course a Bill carrying out the recommendations of this Commission would contain those provisions in the first instance, and these Commissioners of Sewers would be released from any attendance on that Committee, except possibly to see that their interests were not threatened by anybody else. At any rate they would be released from attending in any hostile character against the Bill. That to them is a very important matter, and they venture to suggest that the recommendation which I have suggested in general terms should form one of the recommendations of this Commission if the Commission recommend the deepening of the channel in the Port of London.

11744. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) May I ask what the powers of the Thames Conservancy are with regard to dredging and deepening the river?

(*Mr. J. Fitzgerald.*) I am afraid you must put that question to the representative of the Thames Conservancy, but I think I may say this: I had somewhat in my mind, when I spoke of an expensive Parliamentary contest, what happened when the Thames Conservancy Bill was before the Committee of the House of Commons. The Commissioners of the Sewers were kept there in attendance for some 30 days or more. In the result they did obtain very considerable protective clauses to protect them and to protect their position. Those clauses might really have been accorded at the commencement of the proceedings, but I do not think they were accorded till the Committee had been sitting for more than a month.

11745. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You have not referred us at all to those clauses?

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) I have not at the present moment in my mind what the exact position is.

11746. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) You say you have some protective clauses in the Thames Conservancy Act?

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) I recollect quite well that protective clauses were introduced to protect the Commissioners of Sewers, because I represented them on that occasion; but whether it was in respect of dredging or other matters I really at this moment cannot say. If I had known that the question would be put to me, I would have refreshed my mind by referring to the Thames Conservancy Act of 1894.

11747. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) My reason for asking was that Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland produced before this Commission a programme for dredging in the River Thames, and I did not know whether that programme in any way conflicted with your interests?

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) I do not know what Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland's programme was, but certainly I can refresh my mind by looking again at the Act of 1894, and if necessary I can refer you to the sections there which protect the Commissioners on both banks.

11748. (*Mr. Ellis.*) I think it would be convenient if you would refer us specifically to the Acts of Parliament under which the Commissioners of Sewers discharge their duties. I do not think we have been referred to them.

(*Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald.*) The original Act of Parliament which gives powers to the Commissioners of Sewers is an Act of the reign of Henry VIII., known as the Bill of Sewers, which is still in existence. That Act has from time to time been amended, and there are perhaps some seven or eight other Acts of Parliament. Then finally there is the Land Drainage Act of 1861. I can give you, if you like, the reference to all the Statutes. They are as follows:—23 Henry VIII., chapter 5; 3 and 4 Edward VI., chapter 8; 13 Elizabeth, chapter 9; 3 and 4 William IV., chapter 22; 4 and 5 Victoria, chapter 45; 12 and 13 Victoria, chapter 50; and 24 and 25 Victoria, chapter 133, which is the Land Drainage Act, 1861.

Mr. Claude Baggallay, K.C., called to address the Commission.

Mr. C. Baggallay, K.C.

11749. (*Chairman.*) You address us on behalf of the promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes, my Lord, I propose to address you very shortly indeed on behalf of those gentlemen who were the promoters of a bill which is now dead, the Thames Lightermen's Bill. That is a matter which is entirely separate from the matter which I shall have to deal with after the schemes have been put forward with regard to dealing with the river as a whole, when I shall have to address you on behalf of the Thames Conservancy. The two matters are totally distinct. I should like to make these observations at this moment in order that my friend Mr. Horace Avory, who appears on behalf of the Watermen's Company, may have an opportunity of dealing with anything which I say. I think that would be only fair.

I said I would deal with this case very shortly, and I intend to do so, because the evidence with regard to this question of lightering in the river is the most recent evidence which has been put before the Commission, and I think the Commission have paid very great attention to it, and have grasped very clearly what the present state of affairs is. Under these circumstances, it will be necessary to refer to the evidence itself very shortly indeed. What I want to do is really to go to the Thames Traffic Committee's Report of 1879, and, taking that as a starting point, just to see what changes of circumstances there may have been which would lead you possibly to come to a different conclusion from, or which would lead you to affirm the conclusions of the Committee which made that report. That report, as the Commission know, is the report of a departmental committee appointed by the Board of Trade. It was an exceedingly strong committee, and it is only necessary to call your attention to the names of the gentlemen who composed it to show how competent that committee was to deal with this very question. Their names all appear at the commencement of the report, and, as I say, it is only necessary to look at them to see that they were persons interested in the trade, the shipping, and the conservation of the river, and in every way competent to deal with those particular questions with which they were dealing. That being so, they had a very great deal of evidence before them, and the whole of that evidence is summed up on pages 41 to 48 of the report. I am not going to read it all, but there are two or three short passages which really sum up the conclusions which form the point from which I want to start now. On page 47 you will find this stated very clearly: "But your Committee cannot doubt that the balance of evidence is very strongly against the present system." That is what I wish you to confirm, if you will, having regard to the evidence which is before you. "It proves beyond any reasonable doubt that the monopoly of the Watermen's Company has produced the evils usually due to monopoly, and that it should be put an end to." Then a little further on it says: "It is impossible to hold the owners, either of passenger steamers or of other craft, justly responsible for the manning and conduct of their vessels if they are

restricted in their choice to a class of men who are limited in number, and whose antecedents and statutory qualifications afford no security for competency or behaviour." There followed upon that a passage which
See 10508. I will not read again, because it was read by Sir John Wolfe-Barry before you a few days ago. That is with regard to the difficulty of establishing a satisfactory examination. Then the final conclusion comes at the top of page 48, where the committee report as follows: "We recommend, therefore, that the navigation of barges on the river be thrown open entirely." That I say was a conclusive report at that time. Now I just want to see what changes of circumstances there have been since that report was made. As far as I can make out there have only been two changes of circumstances. One is what has been clearly shown in evidence here, namely, the increased amount of towing of barges. That is one change of circumstance. The other change of circumstance is that since 1879, when that report was made the Thames Watermen's and Lightermen's Act, 1893, has been passed, which has provided for the measuring and the registration of barges. Those, I think, are the only two changes of circumstances which have taken place. There is no evidence before you of any alteration in any other respect that I know of from the circumstances which existed when that report was made.

Now let me see how those changes really affect this question. If there is anything in the evidence which has been put before you as to the necessity of men being brought up under apprenticeship, to work barges by means of sweeps or oars on the river, the fact that barges have come more under towage goes to make the necessity for education by apprenticeship less necessary. That is with regard to the one change of circumstance, and therefore, if anything, the circumstances are stronger to-day in favour of the abolition of this system of apprenticeship and licensing. As regards the other change, that is the passing of the Act of 1893, that was really the carrying out of a suggestion which was made by the Thames Traffic Committee near the foot of page 48 of the report where they say: "If these changes are made, it will probably be necessary to transfer the registration of barges to the Conservators. It is important that this registration should be continued, since without it, and without some name, number, or other distinguishing mark painted on the barges, it would be impossible to identify them, and to enforce the regulations against them." The Act of 1893 was one which provided a very careful system of measuring these barges, providing for the registration of the barges, and for the means of the identification of the barges—I forget at this moment whether it was by names or numbers, but it was by one or other of those means. That was important because it was necessary for the purpose of enforcing the bye-laws of the Thames Conservancy with regard to the number of men who should be carried on barges, to know what the proper tonnage of the barge was. You will remember that bye-law No. 27 is the present bye-law of the Thames Conservancy which deals with this matter, and that bye-law requires that on barges under 50 tons burthen there shall be one competent man, on barges from 50 to 150 tons burthen two men, and on barges above 150 tons burthen three men. That is necessary. Therefore by the passing of that Act you have got fulfilled one of the very conditions which this Committee evidently thought it might be desirable to fulfil if their report led to the abolition of the compulsory employment of the licensed men.

Now that being so let me see what is the evidence which goes to confirm the necessity for altering the present state of affairs. Since 1879 we have had the desirability for altering the present state of affairs confirmed by the report of Mr. Childers' Committee which sat in 1890 for the purpose of considering a Bill which was promoted for the same purpose as the Bill of 1901. It is true that that Committee rejected that Bill; and it is true that they added to their report a provision that whilst it was desirable to throw open the river as regards lightering, the men should be examined. Their report was in favour of having an examination and a more stringent examination than the existing examination. In that respect their report differed from that of the Thames Traffic Committee 1879, but that was the only point affecting this matter in which their report differed. It is really to see, as between those two, which is the best system that I propose now really to direct my attention. I think you may take it as being conclusive at this moment that some alteration is required. Mr. Ardley, who gave evidence as a foreman lighterman, admitted to me in a series of questions beginning at 11043, and continuing down to 11049, that he himself in employing his regular hands did not look to the licence as a guarantee of the men's capacity. He said it was so at first, but afterwards he said that in nearly all cases he used his own judgment. Of course, for occasional work he took on men simply on the strength of the licence, but for his regular men he always used his own judgment. That is particularly emphasised in the answers to the later questions which I put to him. Mr. Gosling, the secretary of the men's society, also told me, in answer to some questions which I put to him, that one of the objects with which his society promoted the Bill of 1899 for the reconstitution of the Watermen's Company was for the purpose of, if possible, getting a more stringent examination, because they did not consider that the examination at the present time was a sufficiently strict one. I say, under these circumstances, it is clear that there is an admission on all hands at the present moment that things are unsatisfactory, and that some change is necessary.

Now let me see what the alterations possible are. There are three alternatives I think for dealing with this matter which have been suggested, at different times, and in saying this I am trying to sum up the position as nearly as I can so as to try if possible to help the Commission. One alternative is that of throwing the navigation of barges open entirely, which was the recommendation of the Committee of 1879. The second alternative is that of throwing it open wholly, subject to examination, which was the recommendation of Mr. Childers' Committee. The third alternative is the maintenance of the present system with something in the nature of a more stringent examination as suggested by Mr. Gosling. It seems to me that those are the only three proposals which have really seriously been put before you. Now let me deal very shortly with these proposals. First, as to throwing the navigation of barges wholly open. If I can satisfy you on the evidence that you have guarantees of having good men employed, surely it is better to throw it open than to have an examination which may or may not be good in its results, and which may or may not be effective. What is the position of the owners of these barges which have to be navigated? It is clearly proved before you that they have an unlimited liability in respect not only of the goods which they carry on their own barges, subject, of course, to the extent to which they may insure against their risk, but, secondly, they have an unlimited liability as regards the damage which they may do to others. That being so, you have the very strongest inducement to the owner of the craft to see that he has the best men to navigate that he can get. If that be so, will he not take care to get the men who have been regularly working on the river? It does not matter to him whether they are licensed lightermen; it does not matter to him whether they are examined or not by any particular body; the thing is that he wants to get the best men just in the same way that a railway company would go and get the best men it could find to do its work or as the owner of vans working to and from the docks and working about the City of London would take care to enquire into the antecedents of a man he was going to employ and would take care to get a man who could drive and who understood the management of horses. There is exactly the same inducement; there is the very strongest inducement there can possibly be. Is it fair to an owner of craft that having this responsibility, and not being able to free himself from this responsibility, he must employ men from a limited class? I do not speak now of the difficulties which may arise in the event of a strike or anything of that sort. That is all fully before the Commissioners; you fully appreciate the undesirability of having a close corporation if it can possibly be avoided. I am dealing simply here with the question of the protection of the navigation of the river. Remember this traffic on the river is largely, as we have heard with regard to barges going any considerable distance, done by towing; it is only the barges going short distances which are not towed, and the barges which are not being towed can only move when they are all going at the same time in the same direction, practically governed, as the witnesses have said, by the tide; they cannot go against the tide; therefore nearly all the traffic is going in one direction. It is not like a driven traffic in the streets with crossings and so on; it is all traffic which is moving

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with the tide whether it is flowing or ebbing. That beng so, I submit this lightering ought to be thrown wholly open.

To come back to this question of examination, how are you going to provide for a perfectly effective examination? Is it to be an examination which is going to be renewed from time to time? If a man was once examined and got his licence would you be obliged, years afterwards perhaps, to still employ him? His examination at one period would be no guarantee of his fitness at another period of his life, either having regard to age or health or anything else, to carry out his work. You would have to have an elaborate machinery for examination, for re-examination and so on from time to time. It would merely come back to this: that even if you examine him, the man who employs men to work his barges would always make enquiries as to the training of the man and as what he had done and as to who he was, and as to his capacity, and so on. The employer might not always do it himself; he would do it by his agents and foremen, and by the various men working under him, but it really comes back to this: that he goes into the personal investigation of the matter, and does not rely merely upon the certificate. There was not a happier illustration of that than that which was given by Sir John Wolfe-Barry at Question 10640, when Sir Edwyn Dawes was being examined. It was with regard to the case of a quartermaster and a leading seaman. Sir John Wolfe-Barry asked this question: "On the subject of examination I suppose the man in charge of a barge is more comparable to a leading seaman or a quartermaster than to a mate of one of your big ships? (A.) Yes. (Q.) You do not have any examination for them, do you? (A.) No. (Q.) You select them from your practical knowledge of their ability to do the work? (A.) Quite so." Yet those are the very men who steer these great liners and transports; those are the men who have really the greatest responsibility upon their shoulders. I say that this matter is comparable here to that case. I submit that it is quite unnecessary to have this examination.

I have no doubt that it will be suggested to you that supposing you throw open this lightering of craft upon the river you may deprive the Watermen's Company of income, which may impair that company so that it will not be able to carry on other functions which it has to perform. Now let me just call your attention to this. There are only two other duties I think which that company has to perform. One is with regard to the measuring and registration of barges; the other is with regard to the watermen. I do not want to say a word against the company; I have not a word to say against them; I do not want to complain in any way of the way that they have done their duty with the powers they have, or anything of that sort. What I do say is that supposing their financial position was so altered from loss of income from the licensing fees and so on that it was impossible for them to carry on their functions in respect of these two matters, then I suggest that those two matters should be transferred as was suggested by the Thames Traffic Committee's Report in 1879. The Committee say: "Your Committee are strongly of opinion that there should be one authority, and one authority only, empowered to make bye-laws for the regulation of the navigation of the River Thames. They think further that this authority should be the Conservancy Board." I do not care what the Board is; it may be the Conservancy Board, or it may be any new authority for dealing with the lower river which this Commission might think fit to recommend. What I would suggest is this, that if dealing with the watermen's question and dealing with the measuring and registration of barges are matters which the Watermen's Company could no longer carry on, those are functions whichcould well be transferred to the new authority whatever it is, or to the Conservancy Board if the Conservancy Board continue. You would then have all the bye-laws dealing with the navigation of the Thames made by one body instead of having, as at present, two sets of bye-laws, one by the Thames Conservancy, or whoever their successors may be, if any; and one by the Watermen's Company. There is only one other matter which the Watermen's Company have to deal with, and that is with regard to the question of certain charitable institutions and almshouses which they have. That no doubt is a matter which would have to be provided for, but I think there would be no difficulty whatever, because, if I understand the position rightly, the funds which provide for these charities are not in any way funds which are contributed by the lightermen, but are simply funds which have been bequeathed or given by benefactors at different times to the company as trustees who hold them for the purpose of applying benefits to certain classes. There could be no difficulty in dealing with that matter; it would be necessary, possibly, to appoint certain trustees, but I am quite sure that is a matter which, if necessary, would be dealt with by the Charity Commissioners, and there would be no question of difficulty whatever with regard to the matter.

The only question now is in what form the Commission should report that this change would best be carried out. I am assuming that the Commission would feel that the change is necessary, and ought to be effected. Of course, it it is to be effected, it will have to be carried out by legislation. It has been suggested once or twice that this is a matter which can only be dealt with by public legislation. I do not think that that is so as a matter of fact, and I will tell you why. The Thames Lightermen's Act of 1859, which is the Act which deals with nearly all this matter, was a private Act. That was not a public Act at all. The Thames Conservancy Act of 1894 and the Acts which it consolidated, and which dealt with the question of the contract men, were all private Acts. The Act of 1893, which deals with the registration of barges and the measuring of barges, was a private Act. In fact, the whole of this matter has been dealt with since 1859 by private bill legislation, and I do not think there is any difficulty in the way of this being dealt with in that manner, though I always speak with diffidence with regard to what may be said in Parliament as to dealing with large matters by private bill legislation. But I would ask you if you see your way to suggest that this may be carried out by private bill legislation, to so recommend. If it depends upon public legislation one knows the great difficulty of dealing with matters of this sort at the present time by public bill legislation. One knows how year after year these matters go on. One has only to look to see how the London water question has gone on year after year because of the difficulty of dealing with it in Parliament. I have not the slightest doubt there would be a great difficulty for a long time in dealing with this matter. Now, if you come to the conclusion that this is a matter which ought to be dealt with, and which ought to be dealt with soon, I would ask you, in addition to recommending any public legislation, to say that you think also it is a matter which might, of course subject to any rules of the House, or Standing Orders, or anything of that sort, well be dealt with as the previous Acts have dealt with it, by private bill legislation. I say that because this is a matter which, if the evidence is to be accepted, is one of urgency. You have had before you the evidence of the effect of the strike of 1889. You have had before you the evidence of the strike of last year. You had very strong evidence from Mr. Livesey of the South Metropolitan Gas Company, of what took place. I submit that this is an urgent matter, and a matter which ought to be dealt with at once, and I cannot see that there is any object whatever in the matter being delayed. Therefore I ask you to report in favour of the change being made, and also to report as I suggest with regard to legislation taking place either by public or by private bill legislation. I am sorry to have taken up the time of the Commissioners so long.

Mr. HORACE AVORY, K.C., called to address the Commission.

Mr. Horace Avory, K.C.

11750. (*Chairman.*) We understand you appear on behalf of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Yes, my Lord. I have decided to forego the advantage of hearing what any other of my learned friends have to say affecting this subject, and to address the Commission on behalf of the Watermen's Company and the Amalgamated Society of Watermen and Lightermen, whom I represent. The fact is that everything that can be said against the Watermen's Company and against the lightermen has been so often and so fully said on previous occasions that I knew it by anticipation. I was anxious to hear whether my learned friend, Mr. Claude Baggallay, had found any additional fact or reason which ought to influence your judgment upon this matter.

The Watermen's Company and the Amalgamated Society of Watermen and Lightermen have a common interest in maintaining the present system of licensing

of the lightermen on the river. But there is, of course, this difference between the two bodies. The Watermen's Company is threatened with extinction; the lightermen are threatened only with a deprivation of the monopoly which they enjoy. I say the Watermen's Company is threatened with extinction for this reason: it is admitted by the accounts which have been put in that their revenue is just sufficient only to maintain the corporation. The abolition of the system of licensing lightermen would so diminish, in fact, or destroy, their revenue that they could not continue to exist. This is a fact which must be borne in mind when suggestions are made that you may report on this subject of the lightermen without touching or infringing upon the existence of the corporation of the Watermen's Company.

Now I apprehend that there are two alternative suggestions to which I ought to address myself—first, should the river be thrown open and the whole system of licensing abolished so far as the lightermen are concerned? There being no suggestion from anyone up to the present that the system of licensing watermen should be abolished, I restrict my argument to the lightermen. The alternative question, as I understand, is this:—Should some system of licensing and examination of the lightermen be transferred to some public authority to be constituted for the purpose of supervising and controlling the trade of the Port of London? I will very shortly deal with those two alternative questions, premising that this question of the licensing of lightermen on the River Thames is a detail of management which is not worthy a report of this Commission. I venture to put in an interrogative form this point which I submit for the consideration of the Commissioners. Would the trade of the Port of London be improved one iota by allowing any man who pleases to work on the river as a lighterman? In other words, does this question of the licensing of lightermen in the least enter into the consideration of the important matter that you are here deliberating upon? Is it not, as I have said, a mere detail of management which should be left entirely to the consideration and determination of some body specially appointed to deal with it? I am quite sure that there is present to the mind of every Commissioner here the fact that an occasion of this sort is very often made the opportunity for the ventilation of individual grievances, and I venture to submit to you that this question of the lightermen is within that category. It is a grievance which belongs to individuals, and it is a grievance at the foundation of which is this question of the strike. You will find, if you read between the lines of the evidence of every person who has spoken against the lightermen, that the strike is at the bottom of the grievance. If it could have been said that these licensed lightermen had abused their privilege by striking frequently and constantly for the mere purpose of extorting extravagant wages from their employers it would have been a legitimate argument; but there seems to me to be no reason to suppose that anything of the kind has taken place. You have it in evidence that these men, although enjoying this privilege, have only struck twice in the last 40 years, and that on the last occasion that strike was due to some dispute between the employer and the employed as to the meaning of Lord Brassey's award. You have it further proved that that strike was not a general strike of all these lightermen, but was a strike limited only to a small proportion of them; that the foremen lightermen did not join it; and, therefore, it is in no sense right to say that these men have abused their privileges by resorting to a strike for the purpose of extorting extravagant wages. Now if it be the fact that the question of the strike is at the bottom of this grievance, I submit it establishes my contention that this is merely an individual grievance on the part of people who want you to say that there should be some legislation to prevent men who work on the river from striking. Of course, put in that way the proposition is an absurd one. You might as well be asked to recommend legislation which would prevent the dock labourers from striking. Can anyone doubt that the strikes of the dock labourers, which have been frequent during the past few years, have caused quite as much and probably more inconvenience to those interested in the trade of the Port of London than any strike of the lightermen? Would you upon such an inquiry as this condescend, if I may use the expression, to any recommendation which had for its real object the prevention of a strike among the dock labourers?

Having said so much as to what appears to me to be the character of this question of the lightermen, I will very shortly deal with the two alternatives which are submitted to you. First of all as to whether the whole system of licensing should be abolished; in other words whether the lightermen should be required to have any special training or certificates of competency. I do not find that the representative bodies such as the London Chamber of Commerce, the London County Council and the City Corporation have any of them recommended the abolition of this system. On the contrary in the scheme which has been put before you by the London Chamber of Commerce I find a recommendation that those regulations should in effect be preserved. I find by Clause 3 of the scheme of the London Chamber of Commerce that they propose that the Trust should have transferred to it the whole of the powers, duties, &c., of the Watermens' and Lightermens' Company among others. I find by Clause 20 of that scheme that they propose that until new bye-laws are issued, those which are at present in force under the power of any existing body are to continue, and that the bye-laws passed under the Watermens' and Lightermens' Act are to be used as the basis of the powers of the Trust. There I suggest, at all events, is a recognition by that representative body of the necessity of maintaining some system which shall regulate the lightermen on the River Thames. I want shortly now, because I am merely going to make a statement of fact, to point to the history of this question, going back a little further than my learned friend has invited you to go. 1859 is the date of the Act which regulates the Watermen's Company, and I want to call attention to the fact that that Act was the result of a Bill that was brought in to abolish the privileges of the Watermen's Company. The Watermen's Company had been constituted long before then, and this Act is the result of a Bill brought in, as stated in its preamble, to abolish the privileges of the Watermen's Company. That Bill was referred to a Committee of the House of Lords, and the present Act of 1859 is the result of the deliberations of that Committee. In 1864 a public Bill was introduced which proposed to transfer to the Thames Conservancy the control of barges and lighters on the River Thames, and to repeal the Act of 1859 so far as it affected persons employed on those lighters; in other words, to repeal all the privileges of the men and to deprive the Watermen's Company of the powers which had been conferred upon it in 1859. That Bill in 1864 was referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons, who, after consideration, struck out all the clauses which were in conflict with the Act of 1859; struck out all the clauses, in fact, which proposed to interfere with the Watermen's Company, and to interfere with the system of licensing lightermen. It was under that Act of 1864 that what are called the two years' contract men were created. To increase the number of men working on the river it was provided that a man should be entitled to have a licence after working for two years under contract and passing an examination. That Act of 1864 also provided that any widow of a freeman taking an apprentice should be required to keep a competent man to instruct the apprentice in his work. Therefore the legislature expressly recognised in 1864 that this system of education of the lighterman and of licensing should be continued. In 1870 another Bill was introduced into the House of Commons which was referred to a Committee, proposing again to throw open the navigation of the river. That Committee of the House of Commons decided that the certificate required to be obtained from the Company was still necessary, but they proposed to amend the system by abolishing the apprenticeship, and they provided an appeal to the Conservators if the certificate were refused. The Watermen's Company carried their opposition into the House of Lords, and the result was that the House of Lords' Committee struck out all the amending clauses and left the jurisdiction of the Watermen's Company just as before. In 1881 a private Bill was introduced into the House of Commons with the avowed object of repealing the Act of 1859, and abolishing all the restraints on the navigation of the river. That Bill was withdrawn on the second reading on its being pointed out that the subject ought to be the matter of public legislation, and not of private legislation. The private Bill being withdrawn, a public Bill for the same purpose was introduced in May, 1881.

11751. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Was that introduced by the Board of Trade?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Either by the Board of Trade or by some department of the Government, because it was either an undertaking of the Government when the other one was withdrawn, or, in fact, the other one

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was withdrawn on the undertaking that the Government would introduce a Bill. A public Bill was introduced which was similar to the Bill of 1870 that I have mentioned, but the opposition to it was such that it was withdrawn on the second reading. Then came the Bill of 1890. I have not mentioned in order of date this Committee of the Board of Trade, because my learned friend has alluded to it, but I have a word to say about it now. In 1890 the Bill was introduced, which it is well that you should notice, was again for the avowed object of abolishing all these privileges of the lightermen. It proposed to enact that it should not be necessary that any person acting as a lighterman should be either a freeman or an apprentice, and that it should not be necessary that any barge navigated on the river should be in charge of a licensed lighterman as mentioned in the Act of 1859. That Bill, as you have already heard, was referred to a committee, the constitution of which I need not call your attention to; it was a committee of nine members, with Mr. Childers in the chair. Against that Bill there was presented a petition of master lightermen and barge owners with 253 signatures to it. To that Committee on that bill of 1890, was referred the report and the evidence taken before the Board of Trade committee of 1879. So that not only was this Report of the Committee of 1890 a report which was in direct opposition—on the main question that I am now addressing you upon—to the report of the Committee of the Board of Trade of 1879, but it was after consideration of the report and the evidence which had been taken before the Board of Trade Committee in 1879 that Mr. Childers' committee reported as they did in 1890. You will remember that so far from recommending the abolition of this system of licensing and throwing the river open, the special report recommended that the examination for a lighterman's licence should be more strict than at present. That was the second recommendation of that committee. They also recommended that there should be some alteration in the constitution of the Court of the Company, and that any person should be eligible for a licence if found on examination to possess the necessary qualification, it being no longer necessary that he should be an apprentice, and so on. That was the special report of that committee. In passing, I wish to call your attention to the fact that that bill of 1890 was introduced just after the previous strike of the lightermen, and the dock labourers, and everything that has been said here about the inconvenience of the strike was said on that occasion before that committee. The committee recommended that a bill to carry out their report should be introduced by the Board of Trade; but nothing was done by the Board of Trade on this report. In 1894 the Thames Conservancy Act was passed, which was a consolidation of all the previous Acts relating to the River Thames; that is four years after this report of Mr. Childers' Committee. In 1894 Parliament again recognised these privileges of the Watermen's Company by enacting in this very Act of 1894 the provisions relating to the Watermen's Company. I refer to sections 299 to 313 of the Act of 1894, which, being a consolidation Act, re-enacted the provision about the two years' contract men and the provision about the widows keeping a competent man to teach apprentices. So that that was again recognised in 1894.

11752. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) That was the Committee of which Mr. Jackson was the chairman, I think.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Yes. Then finally we come to the bill of this year, introduced by those whom my learned friend represents, which simply proposed just the same as was proposed as far back as 1864. With that bill, a copy of which was laid before you at Question 10409, there were copies of petitions to (the Board of Trade, sent in by various persons in the autumn of last year, asking the Board of Trade to take some steps in consequence of the inconvenience which was being caused by the strike. It is, of course, open to you to inquire what the Board of Trade did or said upon the receipt of those petitions. If you do I think you will probably find it confirmatory of what was stated by one of the witnesses, that the whole reason of that strike was because some of the employers were not carrying out the terms of Lord Brassey's Award with regard to overtime, and that in consequence the Board of Trade refused to interfere.

11753. (*Chairman.*) I do not know if you are aware that the Board of Trade referred all those petitions to us; we have the originals.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Those petitions being referred to the Commission it would be open to the Commissioners to inquire why the Board of Trade did nothing or what they did when they received them in the autumn of last year, or what answer they gave.

11754. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Was your company represented, do you remember, before that Committee of 1894 of Mr. Jackson's?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I presume so.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) No, I remember they did not appear. I happened to draft that bill. What I did was to reproduce in the bill of 1894 verbatim the clauses affecting the Watermen's Company from the existing Acts which were being consolidated. I did not vary them at all.

11754*a*. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) There was no amendment?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) No, there was no alteration. I think in the last part of the bill they were just put in *en bloc*.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) It was, I am told, because the company found that they were adequately protected by these clauses in the Act of 1894 that they did not appear or think it necessary to take any part. It was upon being assured that those clauses were there that they abstained from taking any part in it.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) It was simply consolidation as far as you were concerned.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) Yes. These were the re-enactments of the provisions of 1864. I propose now just to say a word or two upon the chief points which have been urged in favour of this amendment of the law. I will deal with what seem to me to be the more powerful arguments. It is said that these restrictions are limited.

11755. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Are you still on your first point?

(*Mr. Avory.*) I am still on the point as to the licences. It is said that the restrictions are limited to the barges which are navigating within the jurisdiction of the Watermen's Company, and that the barges which come from without, although they may navigate through the same water, are not subject to these restrictions. At first sight, of course, that appears to be a strong argument. I suggest that the answer to it is that in practice you find, in the majority of cases at least, that a licensed man is taken on board as soon as the barge comes within the jurisdiction of the Watermen's Company. In other words, as soon as it comes within that part of the river where it is recognised that there is exceptional difficulty. It is quite true that in some cases, as the law does not require it, this lighterman is not taken on board. I suggest to you that the result of the whole evidence is that in the majority of cases that help is taken on board. It is a very strong answer to the argument if you find that people avail themselves of this assistance although they are not obliged by law to do it. Then, again, it is said that the practice of towing barges has so much increased that the necessity no longer exists for the licensed man who has been educated and brought up to this trade being on board. With regard to that, I answer that in fact there is always one licensed man on board the tug, and, as was stated during the hearing, tug-owners and bargeowners have apparently never yet suggested that they are not required by law to have this one licensed man on board the tug. The company has been waiting for an opportunity of testing that question if it ever arose, but the bargeowners and the tug-owners have apparently acquiesced at all events in the practice of keeping one licensed man on board. Further, in answer to this argument, I say that the evidence shows that for short distances towing is not available, and it must always continue to be the practice on this river for a large amount of navigation over short distances to be done under oars. At Appendix 4 of the 28th day appears a list of bargeowners who are now in the habit of navigating their barges under oars. That was a list which it was stated comprised half the number of bargeowners, and it was said that probably half the total barges at the present day were in fact being navigated under oars for some distances. If, therefore, it be the fact that this practice must continue, the necessity for the proper navigation, of course, also continues. I call your attention also to the facts that have been proved in regard to some insurance companies at all events. A policy was put in at question 10863 showing that the ordinary policy on the barge contains a condition that the barge has to be navigated in accordance with the requirements of these Acts. It is quite true that my learned friend in answer to that put in at question 11545 a cargo policy which contains no such condition. Finding that that has been put in, I desire to call your attention now to this, because it has an important bearing on the ques-

tion of the Medway barges. I have before me here the Articles of Association of the Rochester Barge Insurance Association, in which many of these barges which come from the Medway are insured, and I find a similar provision there. It is this: "In the event of any barge insured in the Association sustaining or doing damage in navigating the bridges of the Thames, Medway, and Swale, when loaded, without having on board a bridge hoveller or other competent help, a deduction of 25 per cent. shall be made from the amount which would otherwise be allowed by the Association in respect of such damage." You will remember that the meaning of "hoveller" is one of those licensed men who are waiting about for a job.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) No, not necessarily. There was no evidence of that.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) The evidence was that a hoveller means one of the licensed men who wait about or hover about for a ship.

(*Chairman.*) That was your evidence, Mr. Avory.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I think the witness assented to it, my Lord.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not think the evidence was that he was a licensed man. He was a hoverer—I think the term was explained to be a corruption of that—who waited to be taken up by anybody who wanted an extra man.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) If you turn to any references to that individual you will find him described by all the witnesses as a licensed man. Now what is the inference from that article which I have just read? They are to take on board a bridge hoveller or other competent help. All I am citing this for is for the purpose of showing that this association recognises that the bridge hoveller is a competent man—that the very fact of his being a licensed man is evidence of his competence. Then I pass on to call the attention of the Commission to a further point having regard to the opinions of the various witnesses who have been called before the Commission. I am quite sure that the Commissioners will not lose sight of the fact—I am not complaining of it at all—that these opinions have been expressed without the ordinary test of cross-examination. Some persons have come here and expressed an opinion that this system ought to be abolished. If you have regard to their opinions I point to this fact: that some of the leading practical men in this trade who have been called before you say that it is necessary that the present system should be continued. Take for example Mr. Deering and Mr. Fielder, they are both gentlemen who were called as witnesses on behalf of the master lightermen. They were put forward to represent the views of the master lightermen. But in giving their evidence originally they were not asked anything about the Watermen's Company or the system of licensing. They were recalled for the purpose, when my case was reached and both of those gentlemen who are representative men—both of them large barge-owners and master lightermen—in the strongest terms agreed that the present system should be continued and that above all it is necessary not only that the man shall be competent as shown by a certificate, but that the only way in which he can acquire that competence is education on the river, such as is gained by apprenticeship. Dealing with this evidence I submit to you that the preponderance of the evidence is in favour of continuing that system. I find on reference to the proceedings of 1890 that every argument which has been adduced before you was urged before that Committee in 1890. I have read through the speech of my learned friend Mr. Pember, who introduced the Bill before the Committee and opened the proceedings, and I have read through the evidence of most of the witnesses, and I find many of them were the same as you have heard before this Commission. Mr. Hugh Colin Smith, who gave evidence here, gave evidence also before that Committee. He told me that he gave evidence specifically to the same effect; and every argument that has been urged here was urged in 1890, including the matter of the towing. For instance, one of the witnesses I find was a Mr. Arthur Frey. You will find that almost every point which has been taken here was taken by him in his evidence in favour of abolishing these restrictions. With regard to towing I find this: "(Q.) Is it your opinion that the barging will more and more develop into towing? (A.) Taking the present ratio, it soon will be all towing." None of those arguments availed in 1890 to convince that Committee that this system should be abolished.

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The next point which is an *ad captandum* argument rather, is this; why should there be any such system for lightermen when an employer can employ any man he likes as a carman? I submit there is no analogy. A carman is not navigating on a surface which is moving with him; the only resemblance between the two cases that I see is that both the barge and the horse are dumb. The man who is driving the horse has the assistance of an intelligent animal. There is this further difference between them. Where is the policeman in the river to hold up his hand to regulate the traffic, and where would the traffic of the streets of London be if it were not for the policemen at the cross streets to regulate it? If there were any comparison between these two cases I suggest that the proper reform would lie in a regulation which required the carman to be licensed and to have a certificate of competency before he is allowed to drive these heavy vans through the streets of London. When you have regard to the number of serious accidents that are constantly happening it would be an improvement in the law that carmen as well as omnibus drivers and cabmen should have some certificate of competence before they are allowed to drive.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Cabmen do not have a certificate of competence.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) They have licences.

(*Chairman.*) We must please adhere to our subject.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I am sorry, my Lord, if I have digressed; I have been provoked into doing so by this comparison. There is one other point I wish to deal with. It was said by one of the witnesses that there is a deficiency in the number of men available for this work on the river. Surely the answer to that is that if there were a greater demand the supply would be equal to it. The number of contract men who could be licensed is almost unlimited, and there cannot be a doubt that they would have been increased if there were any necessity for it. The evidence on the other hand shows that at the present moment there is a large number of these men, something like 800 I think it was stated, out of employment. Therefore it cannot be inferred that there is any real necessity for an increase. That is all I have to say upon the general question of whether some system of licensing and examination of these lightermen ought to prevail.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) If you are going to another subject might I just call your attention to this, Mr. Avory. I had not seen these Articles of Association before. I see that the regulation to which you have referred of the Rochester Barge Insurance Association mentions bridge hovellers in respect, not only of the Thames, but of the Medway and the Swale. It cannot mean licensed men in that case.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) No doubt that is why the words "or other competent help" were introduced.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) It does not in any way restrict it to licensed men. It is bridge hovellers, applicable to any of the three rivers.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I think my argument was misunderstood. I only used this for the purpose of showing that the association recognised the bridge hoveller as a competent man, and if they have not a bridge hoveller (which they cannot get on the Medway) then they must have some other competent help. That was all I said.

Now upon the second point, as to whether the company should be abolished in the sense of being deprived of its present duty of looking after the lightermen on the River Thames, I appeal to the same history to which I have already called attention—to these repeated attacks that have been made and which have always been answered in their favour, and especially to the report in 1890, which distinctly recognised that the Watermen's Company were the proper persons to continue this supervision and education of the lightermen and the watermen on the river. When that Committee recommended that the Board of Trade should introduce a bill to carry out the recommendations I find as part of the history that the Board of Trade when appealed to refused to take any steps.

11756. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Where do you get that statement from?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I will give you my authority, sir; it is none else than my friend, Mr. Claude Baggallay.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) You say you are quoting me, but as a matter of fact speeches of counsel are only the speeches of their clients. It is what I was in-

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structed to say by your clients of to-day. I do not object, but it is not usual to refer to the speeches of counsel in other matters, because it is not their opinion, but the opinion of their clients.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I can assure my friend I am not going to read anything like opinion or advocacy of his in 1899, but I am only taking the facts which he mentioned in his speech, and which, I presume, had been verified. It may be worth nothing, as my friend suggests, but I find it is stated that after that report the Board of Trade was appealed to. My friend said: "A deputation went to the Board of Trade, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, President of the Board of Trade, said that they were mistaken as to the report of the Committee. It was not a very intelligible report, and he communicated with Mr. Childers, who was the chairman of the Committee. He found that the Committee meant that, while the electors should be in the majority of cases the freemen of the company, yet they also desired representatives of public bodies such as the London County Council, the Thames Conservancy, or the Council of Riparian Owners; but on communication with these bodies he found (that is, the President of the Board of Trade found) that not one of them wished to have anything to do with the matter. Then there was a good deal of further discussion on the subject, and ultimately Sir Michael Hicks-Beach absolutely refused on behalf of the Board of Trade to have anything whatever to do with the matter, and said, 'If you want to promote the bill you must promote a bill of your own as a private bill.'"

11757. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Was the date of that 1891?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) The date of this deputation to the Board of Trade must have been in 1891; it is not stated here, but it must have been in 1891 because I am going to show you what it was followed by. It was followed by a private Bill introduced in 1892 by Mr. Wootton Isaacson among others. That Bill was thrown out. In 1893 the Watermen's Company themselves introduced and passed The Thames Watermen's and Lightermen's Act of that year. That is the Act that has been referred to, providing for the registration of barges and craft on the river. Why I call attention to it is this; in 1893 the Board of Trade themselves drew up and supplied the schedule for that Act of 1893, recognising in that year the Watermen's Company as the proper persons to carry out these duties. That is all I mention it for because I say that was a recognition by the Board of Trade; they assisted them in passing this Act of Parliament, and recognised the Watermen's Company as being the proper persons to have the supervision of registration, and so on.

11758. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) What do you mean by drawing up the schedules?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) The schedules of the measurement of barges and the fees to be charged, and so on. Now, still upon the point as to how far Parliament has recognised the Watermen's Company as being a body that ought to continue to exist, in 1894 I have called your attention to the fact that in the Thames Conservancy Act these provisions were re-enacted, and by sections 309 and 310 of that Act it was provided that the accounts of the Company are to be sent to the Conservators and to the Board of Trade. By section 310 it is provided also that if at any time it appears to the Board of Trade that the income of the Company is more than sufficient to meet the proper expenditure, then the Board of Trade might direct them to reduce the fees which are charged. There again is a recognition in 1894 by the legislature of the Watermen's Company.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not think it is quite fair to put it in that way. This was a mere re-enactment, because under the Act of 1893 Parliament imposed an obligation on the Thames Conservancy to introduce a Bill in 1894 repealing all their Acts and consolidating the provisions with amendments, and these provisions relating to the Watermen's Company were only reproduced verbatim at the end of the Act without any alteration at all. That is how that came about; it was never before Parliament in the sense of being reconsidered.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) I quite follow that. I am entitled to say that if the Act was passed in 1894 it was a recognition by Parliament of the Watermen's Company as the proper persons to be entrusted with these duties, and it was a recognition of the fact that they derive a certain income from these sources, and the Board of Trade is to regulate that income by reducing the fees if they find it is proper to do so. That is followed in 1899 by the Bill of which you have heard, a Bill introduced and referred to a Committee of the House of Lords, which proposed to alter the construction of the Watermen's Company. The Committee of the House of Lords threw out that Bill. I want to point this out for the consideration of the Commission. Supposing the powers which are at present exercised by the Watermen's Company were to be transferred to some new authority for the Port of London, what would happen in practice? Obviously these duties would have to be delegated to some Committee who would have in effect to perform the duties which the Watermen's Company now perform. Supposing you thought that the lightermen ought to be licensed, and ought to be competent as shown by some examination, it is obvious that such a Committee as this would have to be formed—a Committee of this new public trust. Who would they be? It is not suggested that any practical men such as at present constitute the court of the Watermen's Company are to be members of this public trust, and I venture to say that no Committee of a body who are likely to be appointed would be competent to perform the duties which at present are performed by the Watermen's Company—to examine a lighterman, for instance, practically, in order to ascertain whether he was competent. Is it proposed that the new Port of London authority should exercise this jurisdiction over the lightermen, and that the Watermen's Company is still to exist in order to control the watermen? As I have pointed out, they cannot exist for that purpose, merely because they have not revenue sufficient.

11759. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Might I ask the learned counsel if he could tell us how many watermen there are as distinguished from lightermen.

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) About 500 watermen as distinguished from lightermen.

11760. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) Are those 500 included in the members which are given at Question 10646, where the number of licensed men is stated as 5,863?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) They are included. You understand, of course, that the individual holds the two licences, in some cases at all events.

11761. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Does the licence apply to the whole of the jurisdiction of the Watermen's Company, or is there any difference between the licence for watermen above and below London Bridge?

(*Mr. Horace Avory.*) There is no difference. The Commissioners would, of course, consider before making any recommendation which might lead to the extinction or abolition of this Company the fact that during all those years of course numbers of persons have acquired vested interests in this Company. It is not like the case of a company which has large funds at its disposal, which would be available for compensating or pensioning the officials. The accounts which have been put in show that their total fund is a sum of something like £7,000; their revenue is just sufficient only to maintain the offices, and the inspector, and so on; and upon the whole I submit to you that no sufficient case has been made out to justify any recommendation which would be from the history as I have narrated it to you, in direct conflict to the opinion of Parliament expressed over and over again ever since the year 1859.

My Lord, that is all I have to say on those two points, and I am indebted to you for the consideration you have shown me.

Mr. F. F. DALDY called to address the Commission.

Mr. F. F. Daldy.

11762. (*Chairman.*) You appear to address us on behalf of the London County Council?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) If your Lordship and the Commissioners please. Appearing to support before the Commission the case of the London County Council, I think there would be no justification whatever for my attempting to argue or support the points which are already represented by the specific separate interests. Therefore I am thrown somewhat into criticism on the general proposals and outlines of the schemes, and those I am fully aware are points with regard to which the Commissioners stand necessarily on a somewhat higher level than I can, and, therefore, I wish to make my remarks as short as possible upon those points. When one comes to the heart of a case like this it all resolves itself into the question of what the deficiencies of the Port of London are, and what steps you are going to take to remedy those deficiencies. Really the leading principle of an inquiry like this is to ascertain whether you are or are not in the presence of what I may call an imperative case, an urgent case; as distinguished from what one may call perhaps a secondary

or ordinary case, because, of course, if you once establish what so many of the witnesses have spoken of as an imperative case, then you come into a position which enables you to recommend interference with existing interests and things of that kind, which would not be reasonable in an ordinary current case. I must admit, of course, that to some extent a case of that kind must be shown to carry through the scheme which the County Council have proposed. Of course, if it were a case for readjustment of charges, a case for the purchase of waterworks, or an application by a railway company for further powers, there you compensate every existing interest, and you do not ask any of them to give way. But that is not the case here. I cannot point that observation better than by a short reference to this disputed free water clause. Of course it has come out that in the year 1855 a responsible minister of the Crown in Parliament said this: "There was what I believe is known to the law as a dedication of the created water space for that purpose, the newly created water space being as free as the River Thames." That is Mr. Cardwell's speech in the year 1855.

11763. (*Mr. Ellis.*) When he was President of the Board of Trade, I suppose?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) I had forgotten that for the moment, but he was the Government official who was in charge of the bill, and he probably occupied some such office as that. May I say to the Commission that those words struck me as a lawyer very much. I do not think there is any maxim in law less open to question or exception than the maxim "Once a highway, always a highway." It is a maxim which is so inherently strong that it may produce a most extraordinary result sometimes. For instance, take the case of a public pathway which has fallen into disuse, and which people have not been careful about. If a palace had been built across it, say 100 years afterwards, and somebody was able to establish that that was once a footway, then that palace, no matter what it cost, must come down, and the old pathway stand, and be available to the public as it was before. I think there was some suggestion that this was a limited public right or something of that kind, but I do not really find that. It is not a right reserved for lightermen at all, but it is the right of the general public, and that is the way it has been described. If you take that statement that I have read, which was made 45 years ago, as to that public way, and then add to it the fact that in all the Dock Acts you get the same clause over and over again, and the same policy of Parliament right away through, one is in the presence, one feels, of a very difficult case, where it is sought to recommend an alteration in a status of that kind. I am not concerned to argue this point of the free water Clause from one side or the other, and I do not propose to do so from one point of view or the other. All I refer to it for is the purpose of showing the necessity of seeing how far this is an imperative case. In an ordinary case to make an ordinary change of rights, as I say like transferring an undertaking from one waterworks company to another or something of that kind, it seems almost impossible to say that you could justify interference with such a right as that. On the other hand, if you are in the presence of an imperative case, one of necessity, one can see at once that a proposition that the lighters should pay what the dock services are worth to them or something of that kind, does become possible and does become reasonable to some extent. Then again one cannot help seeing this: in this port for some years there has been this free lighterage Clause which must have had a tendency to drive the port into lighterage, and make it a lighterage port. If the Commission, looking into that matter, came to the conclusion that the lighterage in this port was responsible for a great deal of delay, and that there was too much lighterage, it would then be open to the Commission to recommend a modification to that extent only of this free water Clause. Again it might be said that a case could be shown for putting a charge on goods which go to competing warehouses, and not on goods or lighters that do not go to competing warehouses. All those are matters for the Commission to consider, and I simply put them forward without expressing an opinion upon them, merely saying that in the face of such a public declaration as that I cannot understand how the dock companies can possibly be allowed in the interests of their shareholders to clean take away such an eminent public right as that. My Lord, I am not going to attempt to make an argument before the Commission as to the actual state of this port and the urgency of the matters now required. My friend, Mr. Whitehead, for the Chamber of Commerce, will be able to say anything there is to say with regard to that. I do not think it would be right to go into the whole case and make out a case of unreasonableness in that way. Nor again do I think that I ought to refer, though I leave it with some reluctance, to the evidence which has been given about foreign ports. One takes for instance a matter like this. Looking at Mr. Gomme's figures, supposing you compare the shipping entered with cargoes in the Ports of London, Hamburg, and Rotterdam in the years 1850 and 1899, you find that in London there were 5,155,000 tons in the year 1850, and in the year 1899 something over 15 million tons; so that the multiplier to get the state of things in 1899 from the year 1850, in the case of London, is something like the figure 3, but in the case of Hamburg the figure is nearly 14, and in the case of Rotterdam I think it is something like 18. Those are figures which of course must be looked into, and considerations which must be entertained at some time or another. I do not propose to attempt an argument upon them, because they are matters which are perhaps better considered quietly and carefully, rather than by means of a speech from Counsel. With regard to that I put it in this way; those matters may be very useful as confirming the direct evidence which has been given, but really the matter is most strongly brought forward before the Commission and the public by the evidence of all these leading merchants who have come and told the Commission that the state of things in the Port is not only unsatisfactory, but that a change is imperatively required. So again with regard to the question of the dearness of the Port, that again seems almost too wide to be argued within the limits of a speech by Counsel, and I do not intend to attempt it. It is sometimes of assistance in matters of this kind to see how much really is common ground, and how far you can get from that. I think in this case there is an absolute consensus of opinion in favour of a public authority for the Port. There must be. I cannot really see that there is any substantial opposition to that suggestion at all. If you wanted an authority in addition to that general consensus of opinion I should submit that a very strong one was furnished by the exhibition before this Commission of the various interests, and the extreme conflict in which they appear to be. It is natural enough, of course, that they should each come forward and look after their own rights in the most tenacious manner, and their evidence betrays that they are regarding the matter almost entirely from their own point of view. Take the Short Sea Traders, take every one who has given evidence, and the one matter that they stick at is the thing that affects their own particular trade. That by itself would form a considerable argument, I think, for a public authority being in general control of the Port. I think it is further agreed that the channel of the river must be deepened; as a general thing, I think one would say somewhere up to about the entrance of the Albert Dock. That, of course, is a matter in which our neighbours have been active, and it is not only other ports in this country and adjacent ports, but I think we were reading a few days ago that a 40 ft. channel at New York had been completed. We are a little bit later than other people with regard to that. I invite the Commissioners to consider that that is a matter that ought to be done, as to which there is no question, and from which you can, as it were, start as a foundation and proceed to reason from that to what measures are necessary. I do not think I can put that better than it was put in the words of one of the dock witnesses, Mr. Malcolm, who at Question 1743 said this: "In the interest, not only of this company, but of the Port, it is imperative that the river should be made navigable for vessels of deep draught above as well as below Gravesend, and it is to be hoped that measures may be adopted to carry out the necessary deepening without delay." Mr. Malcolm, you will remember, is the chairman of a dock company. Having once got to that point, of course, the fact of this artificial channel in the river, for I suppose it is an artificial channel, must be taken into consideration. There can be no doubt that such a channel as that made and maintained, to some extent gives rise to a new state of things in the river. I can point out one instance at once. It may not be a very important matter, but when you have to maintain a deep and artificial channel with possibly very great difficulties in maintaining it, a matter like the use of these blowers which have been spoken of to clear out the docks possibly ought to some extent to be under the control of the authority which has to keep that artificial

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channel going. Then again, assuming you do that piece of work you have to consider the benefit to the docks which will arise from that expenditure. It may or may not be a benefit; it may be that if all the warehouse goods at present come up to the upper docks and you make those upper docks available for deep water vessels there may be an effect upon the Tilbury Dock which is not altogether anticipated. As we know in the history of these docks the movement has been to get the accommodation further down the river. As railway communication and that kind of thing has improved the business has gone further down. It may be that when that deepened channel is made it may make an important difference in that direction. Then, again, I do not know—and it is a matter of engineering knowledge and opinion—whether the ballast which is dredged from this channel may not be disposed of in some way or another in connection with the formation of wharves, or jetties, or things of that kind. If that were so, that again would be an argument for saying that this deepened channel does involve or may involve a further distribution in a number of these matters in the river, of the authorities, and the works which the authorities attend to. But, more important still, there is an influence which follows as soon as you get that deep channel, and that is that in addition to the increased cost of the maintenance of the channel, you have, if I take it at 3 per cent. on 2½ millions a year, a charge of something like £75,000 a year extra. That, of course, is a very serious matter. It certainly seems to say that you cannot stop short of that deepening of the river, because if you do stop there you are putting a charge of at least £75,000 a year and the maintenance without any provision for the docks being connected with it, and the docks being made efficient to serve with it and in that way to enable the full, or anything like the full, advantage to be taken of the deepened channel on which you have spent so much money. I assume for the moment that in addition to that deepening of the river improved facilities to the extent of something like two millions or 2½ half millions will be required in some shape or other, and that the Commissioners will recommend something of that kind in some way. I mean something that will give better despatch in this port, and something that will bring the goods, in cases where it can be done, nearer to the centre of trade. The importance of that is that if you get 2½ millions for deepening the river and 2½ millions for this better accommodation you start with a charge of at least £150,000 a year, taking it at 3 per cent., for which you have to provide, and in addition to that you have to maintain the artificial channel, as I have said, and also to maintain the new works. I think the County Council must have come to the conclusion, though I do not say it in plain words as coming from them, that there is a point up to which it is always worth the ratepayers' while to bring the facilities of the port in some shape or another. And I think we have come to this, or shall come to this, that the condition of this port does urgently call for a remedy, and that this is a case in which ratepayers can give something and the other interests should give something. I will take an instance of this that has come forward very prominently. It is said that if the London County Council take over these docks and the warehouses connected with them there will be competition with the private wharfingers. I should say supposing it does come to that, keeping that competition within reasonable bounds of course, still that may be a point in which, to meet the great state of difficulty which has arisen in this port, one of the interests ought to give way just as the ratepayers have to give way a little. I put it before the Commissioners as a case in which everybody has to give way a little all round in order to get this new work done and the port brought up into a proper state.

11764. (*Chairman.*) Do we understand that you are authorised by the County Council to say that you raise no objection to contribute by a charge on the rates?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) No, I meant to say nothing further than the County Council have said in their resolutions, and what Mr. McKinnon Wood said. I stand absolutely on that. My recollection is that Mr. McKinnon Wood was asked about that, and he said we apprehend that there will not be any charge upon the rates, because we think we can make the thing up. That was, I think, in substance what he said.

11765. (*Chairman.*) You do not go any further than the evidence that has been given?

(*Mr. Daldy.*) No. I will make that clear, if I may, at once. Of course, one cannot help seeing that if they give a guarantee it is in the nature of a risk. They may not have to pay ultimately at all, but it is something in the nature of a risk. It is a case in which, as I say, the urgency is such that all the interests must give way a little.

Now there is a point which I should just like to mention in case it has not been put in precisely this way by anybody else. What I want to submit is this; in a port of this kind in the long run the tendency is for any agency which is engaged in distributing goods, or rendering services to goods, to get the value of its services, and no more. Of course you may speak of it in a very wide way: here are ships, here are docks, here are lighters, all rendering services to what I call in the broad sense the distribution of goods. I submit that as an economical principle you do find that in any port the tendency in the long run is for the agency, the means of distribution, to get what its services are worth and no more; and as soon as you introduce a state of things in which the distributing agency is getting more than its services are really worth to the goods or shipping, then you get into a state of things which is very likely to take you off into a wrong direction and get you into serious trouble later on. Of course it is obvious that if you force goods into a particular dock or a particular channel, you may have other channels in the port into which those goods may go, or you may drive the goods away altogether. As an instance of that I find that in the year 1865, speaking of the private wharves, Mr. Capper, who was a dock man, in his book on the "Port and Trade of London," at page 166, says: "Nevertheless, subject as they are to all sorts of disadvantages, the wharves, in consequence possibly of being more economically managed, are enabled to compete to a large extent for the business of the port; and by regulating their rates in accordance with those of the dock companies, and keeping them conveniently lower, they continue to command a considerable trade in all sorts of imports." That was a good many years ago. I do submit that this is a matter which is borne out to some extent by the history of this port. One is aware, of course, that after the monopoly expired, say somewhere about the year 1825, and after the Warehouse Act was passed, the dividends of the company were not what they were. They did not remain at 10 per cent.; but still the dock companies went on for some time charging, I believe, their maximum charges and paying a good dividend to their shareholders. I submit that the fair interpretation of that is this; these people who built the docks at the beginning of the century knew what they were about. I believe there were just as shrewd merchants then as there are now. They knew what they wanted: they built these docks and the docks answered their purposes. In those days there was all this pilfering that we have heard about, and the protection necessary with regard to that and the provision for ships not to load in the river but in some sheltered place. At that time I say the history shows that the services of those docks as a distributing agency rendered to the goods and ships were worth the money they charged for them, and there was a point of time at which they ceased to be worth the same money. I say that really that is what you have to look at as a broad principle, namely, that these charges in the docks have become, and indeed have for some years been more than the dock services are worth. The moment you realise that, I say that any attempt to enable the docks to put still further charges on for those very same services, which are not worth their money now is bound to lead to disaster. I believe that is the fair and right argument. Of course one does not forget that in the history of this port there have been a number of disturbing causes. Of course there has been a very great increase of business which has helped the docks there; there have been these amalgamations from time to time which I daresay have helped matters; there has been a great increase of steam vessels; the geographical extension of the metropolis; and the metropolis growing in point of population, of course, and as a centre of demand; and then there has been this enormous improvement in the means of communication, and so on. All these are very important matters, but when you bear all those in mind you still do not find anything in those disturbing causes to disturb the principle which I have ventured to lay down before the Commission. It has been said over and over again in evidence, that these conditions are due to increasing competition between the docks; then it is said that they are due to want of appliances; then it has been said again that there has been an insufficient capital expenditure and no means of making a sufficient capital expenditure: but those are all, I submit, merely intermediary causes; the real cause standing above them all is that the dock services are not worth the money that is charged for them. How else is it that

the docks are starving, and yet not charging up to their maximum; unable to enforce their bye-laws and keep these barges and lighters in order, and really, I was going to say, honeycombed with these secret agreements. To put it shortly, these docks are valuable things and they ought to make profits, but the dock profits simply go in delay. Of course I need not say that for any satisfactory reasoning on this question, one would have to consider why it is that the Surrey Commercial Dock on one side, and the Millwall Dock on the other, stand in such different positions financially. My suggestion would be that in the Surrey Commercial Dock, where you have something that wants keeping and wants warehousing like timber, timber can go there, and then, of course the services that the Surrey Commercial Dock renders to timber are worth the money; but they are not anywhere else, and that I submit is the real reason for the present financial position in which the Surrey Commercial Dock stands.

Now I pass from the general remarks that I have been making to the proposals of the Corporation of the City of London, and I think I shall be doing what is most useful, both to those whom I represent and to the Commissioners, if I make a few remarks on these schemes in turn. Of course the City of London is one of the largest of our constituent boroughs, and historically it is the most important of them, and I want to attach importance to their proposal if possible. They agree that there should be a public body and a leaven of municipal element, and they also recommend the purchase of the docks. The fact that the Corporation recommend the purchase of the docks is no doubt a weighty fact. But the moment you allow that the consumer is interested in any way in these charges that the Corporation propose to put on, the whole of the Corporation scheme seems to go to pieces at once, because really if it is a matter of representation, is it to be considered that the Corporation, which insists that the consumer is not affected in any way by these large proposed charges, is to represent the toiling millions who are consumers in this metropolis, and to say that those are the views of those toiling millions. I think the Commissioners did ask what the representation of the City was, and we were told with something of a flourish that 29,907 municipal voters elect the Common Council, from whom, of course, these representatives would come. I took the trouble to ask the number of voters who elect the London County Council, and I am told that, exclusive of the City, it is rather over 672,000. Now really to suggest that this municipal leaven is to come out of this select body who are elected in this way by the City, if you put the scheme forward as a scheme which is a representative scheme, becomes absurd. Then you will remember of course that when the Corporation were asked what they meant by the expression "the benefit of the port as a whole"—that was an expression made use of once or twice in their evidence—they said it meant the benefit of the traders of the port, and nothing more. That means, clearly, excluding all the consumers. And they said again in plain terms at Question 7924 that the merchants' interest was the only one which had influenced them in drafting their scheme. How can they affect to represent the consumers after that? If you consider for a moment the evolution of the Corporation scheme, from internal evidence it looks really like this. The first thing they had to do was to keep out the County Council. They started with that, and that is involved, of course, in having no aid from the rates. They never suggested any aid from the Corporation funds. But, having gone to that point, it was necessary to have a scheme which would be a large scheme and worthy of a body like the Corporation of London, and they certainly have proposed a scheme which, as regards such matters as the purchase of the bonded wharves and these jetties, is a great deal larger than anybody else's, perhaps. So that they satisfied that condition. But then there came this very difficult question of finance, and that had to be met by putting the Liverpool rates on the top of the London rates. Of course that produced a very large sum. That by itself would not give, perhaps, a sufficient power of borrowing, or sufficient facilities for borrowing, but they put on that an unlimited power to charge. That is what the Port Committee were to have. Then when one tried to find out what this all really meant, Sir Marcus Samuel said it was not an augmentation, but an adjustment of charges. I may say at this point that I have understood for a long time now that the Commissioners are clearly of opinion that this is not a case which can be met by a readjustment of charges, because I think if the Commissioners had thought it was merely a matter of rearranging the charges in the port which are imposed now, the question of charges would have been gone into. I gather that the Commissioners are of opinion that something more is required in the circumstances of the present case. The Corporation, having got so far, had to account for the expenditure of this large sum of money, and that they did by saying that there would be a great growth of trade. But they were still in a further difficulty, because people had a difficulty in understanding how such a prodigious growth of trade would occur immediately after the execution of these works as to meet this large expenditure. Then they committed themselves to this: they said that there was gross mismanagement somewhere in London. They cannot mean the Thames Conservancy, because they praised the Thames Conservancy up to the skies. It must mean the docks, and I think the suggestion of the Corporation, which I do not accept at all, is that really there has been gross mismanagement on the part of the docks, and that was responsible for the state of things, or, at any rate, largely responsible for the state of things, in the port now. All that not being sufficient—and I really do not think the Corporation have treated the Royal Comission quite as they should in the matter—the Corporation put on to their scheme a Government guarantee. If you can compare that with anything, compare it with this. Consider for a moment the launching of a ship with a big hole in her bottom, and then the people responsible for launching her putting collision mats on. That would be nothing more nor less than this in the way it has been brought up. There was no resolution on the matter at all. This Port of London does stand on a different footing from other ports. For instance, on the last occasion, as far as I know, in which this river was really in a difficulty—certainly we are free from it now—was in the year 1855-6 when the Main Drainage Acts were passed. Everybody knows that then the river was in a terrible state, and something had to be done. I do not know whether it is present to the minds of the Commissioners or not, but those Acts do contain a power to the Metropolitan Board of Works to borrow on a Treasury guarantee. The moment you get to that you do see that the Government has to some extent treated the Metropolis as being on a different footing from other places. Speaking from recollection I think that if you were to take the case of the Royal Parks—there may be some exceptional reason for that—to some extent the up-keep of them is provided for out of the Consolidated Fund, and I think if the matter were looked into it would be found that in that and one or two other respects the Government have distinguished in the case of London. One feels that in the present day, of course, apart from arguing from the importance of the Government arsenals and things of that kind on the river, Parliament is not inclined to put London in a different position. But now supposing you do assume that under some circumstances a Government guarantee would be given, I cannot understand how any Government could for a moment give a guarantee where an enormous sum of money was raised on some large charges which might or might not—very possibly not—produce the anticipated renvenue. I cannot understand how the Government would undertake to make the whole of the interest good to the bondholders. As far as my experience goes the Government is rather prone to put a limit on its guarantee in all cases. Then I do not understand this proposal for making it a Trustee Stock, for it seems to me that that either comes to a guarantee in disguise, or to nothing at all. You cannot make trustees invest in a stock by calling it a Trustee Stock, and you cannot affect its value in the market by saying that trustees may invest in it. If they will not do so they will not do so. It is a serious question, which the Commissioners have no doubt considered, whether these increased charges which the Corporation have proposed will really produce an increased revenue at all. It does not follow that because you take a larger net you are going to get a lot more fish, because the net may be so large that it will frighten away the fish. I cannot examine the whole of the matter critically, but take Sir Marcus Samuel's table of charges in Appendix 3 of the 22nd day. Amongst charges on the exports of home manufactures he proposes a charge of £12,457 on manufactured iron and steel. I do think that anyone who is acquainted with iron and steel work, even remotely, might fairly ask whether in the face of the American and German competition which we have to meet, steel and iron work would stand an extra £12,457? Surely other people would be able to under-

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sell us, and the item of charge would disappear in time. That is only one instance, but I think it is a somewhat strong one. Could you ask common-sense people to lend money at a low rate of interest upon such charges as that? Then I do not think the Corporation put anything extra for the up-keep of the channel and the new works. I suppose they must amount to a considerable sum. But whether we have to thank the Corporation for an example of a scheme that will do or not, we will thank them for bringing it forward. They say: "We have dealt with this scheme very broadly indeed," and that is what they have done.

Now, my Lord, I have to say a few words on the Thames Conservancy scheme. Of course your Lordship will understand that in making remarks on these public bodies it is from no want of respect to them, but merely a matter of argument in the course of this case. The chief difficulty about the Thames Conservancy's scheme seems to me to be that it is not a scheme for the Port as a whole, but simply a scheme for the deepening of the river. The result of that would be that suppose you take the Conservators' proposals, which came forward, I am bound to say, rather late, if you take their charge of £160,000 per annum; that is to say, £60,000 a year in tonnage dues and £100,000 on goods, before any other scheme to deal with the rest of the port or the docks can come forward, you find the trade of the port already loaded with this large additional charge, which is not likely, one would think, to assist any other scheme which is required to deal with the rest of the port; that is to say the deepening of the locks and the provision of facilities and all that sort of thing. I dare say it is a possible scheme as far as it goes, but the answer to it is that it does not go far enough. I do think there is a fair comment on that. Ought a body in the position occupied by the Thames Conservancy on this river to bring forward a scheme of that kind without any attempt to deal with the question of the port as a whole? Practically they bring forward a scheme which takes the cream off the ability of anybody else to borrow, and takes it off with a separator. I do think that the Thames Conservancy, even if they did not make themselves responsible for the whole of it, might put themselves in the way of bringing forward a scheme which can be looked at as a whole, because a scheme like theirs, which only deals with a part, is really impossible to criticise in any way, because it cannot stand by itself. But the chief objection to any scheme put forward by the Thames Conservancy is really the inherent unfitness of the Thames Conservancy as now constituted to carry out a scheme in this port. You are not now dealing with what a new body to be created in the future would be likely to do, but you are dealing with the ascertained qualities of an existing body, and you have to consider in the urgent circumstances of this port whether you can look to a body whose qualifications are ascertained as those of the Thames Conservancy are, for energy or initiative. I should like to refer shortly to two or three passages in their evidence. At Question 1384, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland said: "With regard to that I may simply say that the Conservators do not consider that the River Thames is a river that is up to date in the same way that many of the rivers are—the Tyne, the Mersey, and various others." That is their own view about it, and surely they must be well acquainted with the position of the river with regard to the docks. Then at Question 1390 he says that the shipowners had wanted them to move in the matter, "but we have been able to point out to them that it is perfectly useless their having the river deepened beyond what we propose to do until the sills of the docks are altered, because big vessels coming up would lie outside the dock and would block the whole of the river, and it would be no use at all unless they could get in." Surely that is the case of Lord Chatham and Sir Richard Strachan. They do not know which of these matters is going to be executed first. That did not carry them far enough, and they had to make an excuse for the top part of the river. They said that could not be done because they would have to spend a great deal of money in strengthening the foundations of the wharves down the river on both sides. That was the reason they gave with regard to the top part of the river. That is Question 1413. Then in answer to Question 1569 Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland said this, and he said it again afterwards: "(Q.) And you admit that it is desirable it should be done. (A.) I think so, and anything we can do to bring the river up to date we shall be willing to do and glad to do." Then at a much later time, at Question 7484 he said: "We are quite willing to carry out these works." You cannot get this body to any further point than saying that they are quite willing to do it, and the way they look upon it is, I think, shown at Question 7522: "What resolution have they come to in regard to that. (A.) We wish to be left alone to do our work as well in the future as we have done it in the past; we do not want to interfere with anybody else." Surely, my Lord, with respect to the Thames Conservancy, that is simply the attitude of the eldest oyster, who shook his heavy head; I think we go on to learn that he intended to preserve his connection with that part of the river bed which had hitherto been entrusted to his care.

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

11765a. (*Chairman.*) Will you continue, Mr. Daldy?—Now, my Lord, with regard to the proposals of the London Chamber of Commerce, one feels that everybody before this Commission must be grateful to them for bringing forward what is really the heaviest evidence in the case; I mean the evidence of those leading merchants, the best known men in the mercantile world, who have come forward and stated their opinion as to what is required in the port, and so on. But whatever the weight of the London Chamber of Commerce as claiming to represent the mercantile community in London may be, we must look at their proposals *per se*, and I think we must say that their scheme has this unfortunate defect: they propose a guarantee and they have not got one, and of course no public body would give a guarantee except upon its own terms or upon terms which it has agreed to accept. So that the proposal of the London Chamber of Commerce cannot stand by itself, and I think they must have felt that. But the principal feature of it if you look at the terms of it is, that they would avoid competition by means of the dock warehouses with the private wharves and warehouses. Their point as I understand it, in connection with that is that they would buy these things in the first instance and then sell them off again. Of course this question of the severance of the warehouses from the docks is a question upon which an argument from me would probably be of no value to the Commission, and I shall not attempt to go into it. One feels the great difficulty of it, and one feels that we are committed by our proposal to a competition, a modified competition, but still a competition, going on between public authorities and the owners of private wharves and warehouses. The London Chamber of Commerce practically suggest a means by which that might be avoided, but at the same time they do not as a matter of acquisition and purchase affect to be able to separate the warehouses from the dock part of the undertaking. They say they would buy it and sell it off again afterwards. I do not think as far as that goes that that is inconsistent with any proposal that we have made. I apprehend that if the port authority, expert in all the affairs of the port, came to the conclusion that these warehouses should be gradually disposed of, or let on lease, and so not made part of their undertaking, there would be no difficulty in that being done under the scheme that we propose. That is all I have to say about the London Chamber of Commerce.

Then I would add a few words on the scheme which the dock companies have brought forward, which has naturally been very fully discussed here. In passing to that I wish to say once for all, that before this Commission we have intentionally avoided any question of the value of the docks. That is a question of extreme difficulty, of course, and even if we were disposed on other grounds to go into it one feels that the docks are coming here asking for further charging powers, and are therefore obliged to depreciate matters in their present state to the lowest point, and it would be something like hitting a man when he is down. Therefore we say nothing about it. The Commissioners may take it that we do not want to buy the docks on bad terms, but if we buy them we are willing to give fair terms. That is the beginning and end of the matter. But when you buy an undertaking like that you get something corresponding to the money you spend, and really the more important sum to be considered is the five millions or so which must practically go as further expenditure in deepening the river and providing facilities to the port. I certainly agree that the dock proposals ought to be very carefully considered not only because they have been put forward in a serious, careful way before the Commission, but because of the way in which they have been put forward with great frankness and great care. I have already indicated what seems to be the great difficulty in these dock proposals. They propose to charge the barges, which, of course, must bring the goods to the dock

quays, and then they propose to charge the goods, so I think it will be seen that they are proposing a higher charge than they ought for their services; and I do not think it is at all got over by making an exception for transhipped goods. That really is rather an instance of what no doubt will go on, and what has gone on for a great number of years, in these docks—one interest has had to be cultivated at the expense of others. Of course, if transhipped goods are to be exempt it must mean that the burden of the charges which transhipped goods ought to bear as a matter of payment for services rendered will fall upon some other goods, and the transhipped goods will be assisted at the expense of those other goods. The docks in putting their proposal forward consider that this difficulty about the highway, as it were—the free water clause is resolved by making a case for a charge; and they are bound to assume, and of course do assume, that that clause could be considered, and, if necessary, put aside by Parliament. The first point really to be considered, as I submit, is whether the docks could carry through their proposals on anything like what one may call a reasonable charge answering to the services which they actually render to the goods. Of course, it is going a long way to say that an alteration in the public rights would be made in any way at the instance of private company, but assuming that you do it, and assuming that, as I say, you enable the dock companies to make a charge somewhat corresponding to the value of the services they render, I think the moment it is looked into on that basis one cannot help seeing that so far from a proposal of that kind amounting to a complete scheme for the port, it really would result in a very small sum of money; it would not give nearly enough really to build this extended dock which the dock company put forward as the principal point in their improvements. Then this was pointed out, I think, to the Commission, and it is really nothing more than an instance of the difficulties which the docks have been in and the unfortunate condition which the absolutely insolvent state of these docks has helped to bring about. One finds on looking into the tables of capital expenditure that for the eleven years from 1889 to 1899 the average on the whole of the London and India Docks undertaking was £50,000 or £60,000 for capital expenditure on improvements. In the Clyde on an average of the same years it was over £200,000 a year, and in the Mersey for the same eleven years it was something like £270,000 a year. Those figures may, of course, require some reduction, and some allowance may have to be made, but they do show in the main the unfortunate state into which the condition of these dock companies has brought this port. There is a passage in Mr. Scott's evidence which I should like to call your attention to upon this point. It is question 5850. It is as to the way the Dock Company completed their proposals. Mr. Scott said: "At present the Thames Conservancy do collect certain rates, and I would give the Thames Conservancy or whoever is the river authority the power to continue to collect those rates. I think shipping should pay perhaps a trifle more, but I think that all goods coming into the river should also contribute. I think that body should have the power of levying a small toll, not only on goods coming into the docks, but on all goods brought into the port or exported from the port.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I think my learned friend will see by the answer to the question just before that Mr. Scott was giving his own ideas on the subject.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) Quite so, I understand that. Mr. Scott is a practical man, and I attach importance to his evidence as that of a practical man. So that it really comes to this: he is going to improve the docks by this abolition of the free water clause, and then in addition to that a further burden is to be put on the trade of the port by the charges to which he refers in this answer. Then I find a great deal of difficulty in understanding how the Dock Company could raise money on anything like the terms they suggest by means of these rates that they are proposing to put on lighters and goods. The comparison was made with the London and St. Katharine Debenture 4 per cent. Stock in the year 1896. I am very much afraid that not only is it a matter of inference from the evidence, but one could almost tell without, that if the Dock Company were enabled to raise any considerable sum they would have to pay for it something more like the six per cent. of the Millwall Dock Equipment Company. Of course as soon as you go into the question of borrowing money on those figures, the difference between that six per cent. and the three per cent. upon which the County Council could raise it becomes on any large sum an enormous figure.

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Then there is another difficulty in the way of the Dock Company's proposals. Their sheet anchor seems to be the provision of an extension of the Albert Dock—a well equipped dock no doubt—but there again there will be charges made in respect of the use of that dock. We hope it will attract a good deal of shipping, but it is by no means certain in the present condition of the port that the provision of facilities at that dock will not take away a corresponding amount of business from other docks. Of course if that is so it will not so far produce an increase of revenue for the Dock Company at all. One feels that if one put one's self into the position of a man who was asked to lend a considerable sum of money for the purpose of these improvements, that certainly would be one of the matters which one would take rather carefully into account. There is evidence, I think, before the Commission that some trades in small goods have already been driven away from this port by the existing charges, and in the face of that it is very difficult to say that higher charges would not have an increased effect in the same direction. It is very clear that the warehousing business is falling off; that the dispatch required is getting quicker, and so on. It is very difficult to see that you can impose higher charges or what in effect amount to higher charges; and as to the suggestion that the money could be raised at anything like four per cent., you must not forget that this undertaking is already burdened with a large debenture charge. I think we were told that it is nearly £3,000,000 on the London and St. Katharine Docks, and nearly £4,000,000 on the East and West India Docks; so that you start with a debenture indebtedness of £7,000,000, or something like that. There is one other thing I should like to say with regard to the dock scheme. They propose, and manfully propose, to apply part of that money to the payment of dividends for their shares. They say the shareholders put money in the undertaking, and ought to get it back. It is all very well to say, "The Commissioners will not stand that, but you may apply it in some other way: you may apply it for the benefit of the port." But the answer to it seems to me to be that when you consider the dock proposal you are bound to consider the terms of it, and it was part of their terms and what they put forward that there must be out of this charge a substantial payment to the shareholders of the Dock Company, and that cannot be done in the present state of things.

I have now a few suggestions to offer to the Commissioners with regard to our own proposal, that is the proposal of the London County Council, which is an attempt, I hope, to pour some oil on the troubled waters of this port. Of course every scheme has its difficulties, and no doubt this is not without them. I wish to say in plain language what is probably already sufficiently well before the minds of the Commissioners, that this is a case of municipal assistance and not of municipal management. Of course some arguments have been put forward in which it has been described as a case of municipal management, or municipal control, or something of that kind. I ask the Commissioners to put any argument of that sort on one side altogether, and let it stand as a proposal for municipal assistance and expert management. That is the way we put it. It has been said as one objection to our proposal that it would have the effect of putting the Port Authority under the tutelage of another authority. That is the word the City witnesses used, and, of course, it was based upon this, that on questions of further capital they would have to come to the London County Council. But I do submit that it is very easy to exaggerate that view of it, and to put it in a wrong way. It is true we propose, in the first instance, to have a certain number of members of the Council representatives on the Port Committee, and then we propose to have a control with regard to capital expenditure. Now, first of all, ought not the consumers to be represented in some shape or other on this Port Committee? Because, if so, if the consumers of this large metropolis ought to be represented there, that alone would seem to give a reason for some of the County Council and the ratepayers being there. That is one point. Then it has been said, of course, that in that way the same people get a sort of double control on the capital, as it were, but that would not be so. We say these ratepayers ought to have not a controlling voice, but a voice in the expenditure of income, and I suppose that would be principally what these elected representatives would be for on the Port Com-

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mittee. They would be there to have a voice with regard to the income.

Now the other point I want to make is this. If you are going to constitute this authority, and oblige it to come every time it wants to make fresh expenditure out of capital, and bow down its knee to the County Council, and ask for authority, and so on, it may be that would be a position which might be very undesirable. But, as I understand the County Council proposal, that is not really the position at all. What they say is this: "we are willing to come forward with a large sum for the purchase of the docks, for the deepening of the river, and for the improvement of the port." It may be that after that resolution has been come to, there would be what one might almost call office routine—the various instalments of the capital sum would be sanctioned from time to time by the County Council—but that is mere office work. When a body has distinctly passed a resolution, and come forward and said: "We have made up our minds, and are prepared to vote this large sum of money for this undertaking," and some years later on it may be necessary to make further capital expenditure, why should not that matter go to the County Council and be reconsidered by the ratepayers if that departure is to be taken? I do suggest that this expression, "tutelage," and expressions of that kind may very easily be pressed too far. Then it is said we could not get the men. My answer to that is that it may be that in every case you may not be able to get experienced men, but what you want in this case are men who will take trouble. I do not know whether the Commission know what proportion of the County Council are actually men who are or have been engaged in mercantile pursuits, but I believe it is very considerable. I do venture to say you will find men who are willing to take pains, and if you put a man on such a body without great mercantile knowledge or without a wide grasp of the state of the port, he is there side by side with, and has the opportunity of learning from, men who do know those things and have been there perhaps longer than himself, and it seems to me to be a very small objection to make to say that that is the class of man who would have to represent the County Council on such a body. I have another remark to make that may be worth making. I think it is only an argument against the management, but it has been said that the County Council is a political body. That has been put as an objection. At Question 7921, Sir Marcus Samuel said that no political issue was ever raised either at the election of their members or the business meetings of the Corporation. Then he went on: "And the great importance of this will become manifest when the Commission consider the evidence given on behalf of the Bristol Corporation, the witness, Mr. F. B. Girdlestone, clearly showing the mischief which had arisen from the fact of sometimes one and sometimes the other political body being in power." Sir Marcus Samuel has appealed to Mr. Girdlestone, and I appeal to him too. It is quite true he did say so in a case where the municipal body was managing the undertaking; there had been a turnover of parties; one party had gone on with one work, and then another party came in and wanted to do something else. That I point out is purely an objection to municipal management. Let me refer to another answer of the same witness, to which I attach great importance. This is at Question 4704. Mr. Girdlestone, I take it, is a man in a position in which very few men are; that is to say, he is an experienced dock engineer, a dock manager, and he is well acquainted with this municipal management of docks. Not a great many of his standing have that experience in this country. Will the Commissioners look for a moment at what he says, expressing his views about the municipal management of the docks. He says: "There is one great advantage, and I think there are a great many disadvantages. That is my personal opinion. I think that the advantage is that a municipal body owns a dock and borrows its money at the very lowest rates, having the security of the Borough Fund." That advantage, quite apart from municipal management, of course, there will be here, if this suggestion is acted upon. Then he proceeds: "I think also a municipal body gives no concessions or anything of that sort with regard to rates; that is to say, that the rates are fixed, and absolutely adhered to as regards both dues on ships and on goods." Surely the port authority of the kind which it is proposed to constitute would have at least the strength of a municipal authority as regards clearing away a great many of these agreements and preferences and allowances and things of that kind, which Mr. Girdlestone seems to think so undesirable. Then he goes on: "Then I think as the municipality is not working for a dividend, they are more anxious perhaps than a private company to maintain the dock concern in a high state of efficiency." Surely that is no argument against the port authority here—that they are likely to maintain the dock concern in an undue state of efficiency. Then he turns to the other side of the question and points out the disadvantages of which he had spoken before. He said first there was a difficulty in managing commercial concerns efficiently when tied up by the Borough Funds Act. That does not arise here. Then he said that the Committee's proceedings often met with fractious opposition in the Town Council. That, of course, does not arise here, because we have no municipal management. These questions do not touch the London County Council. Then he said: "I do not think in regard to labour that a municipality gets as much work out of the men as a private employer would." That may be so; I do not know as regards labour. Then he says, "There is very often a want of continuity of policy in a dock concern managed by a municipal body, the Board being constantly changed and many of the men elected to the Town Council having no great stake in the City property. I think there is occasionally timidity on the part of Town Councillors to act for the real interest of the dock concern, against public opinion. They are rather inclined to listen to public clamour, because, of course, they have to seek their seats every three years, and sometimes the fear of losing a seat makes them give way too readily to public opinion. Then there is a tendency in a rate aided concern to extravagance in capital expenditure." Now I have exhausted the whole of his objections, and all those things with the possible exception of labour seem to be the very things that do not, and cannot arise here. The last of them, the tendency to capital expenditure, would, I hope, be met by that control for which we are asking in the matter of the rates. The scheme we have put forward is that there would be the guarantee and the money would be raised, and we hope by re-adjusting rates and carrying on the business at a better profit that there would not be the need for further rates. But supposing that adjustment should be required, I think I am right in suggesting what is correct when I say that there would seem to be a very great advantage in a scheme under which you could make these alterations gradually, readjusting the burdens and so on by degrees, as compared with a scheme such as the Dock Companies' Scheme, or the Corporation Scheme, or the London Chamber of Commerce Scheme. It cannot be a desirable thing to put on the trade these large burdens all in a moment if you can possibly avoid doing so. There is room for considerable argument on many grounds for the management of the docks and the river being in the same hands, but I do not attempt to elaborate that before the Commissioners now. As regards the terms on which we could raise this money if our scheme were accepted, I think the Commissioners probably have it sufficiently clearly that the whole sum required could be raised at something like 3 per cent. within a very little, one way or the other. One need scarcely point out that on this fresh expenditure, which I put roughly at about 5 millions alone there would be a saving of £50,000 a year. I wish to point out one difficulty in our scheme, which is that we are unable to see our way to saying that the warehouses can be separated from other parts of the dock undertaking. We are not speaking as an expert body in the matter, but we have formed the best judgment we could upon the evidence, and really the dock companies and the Commissioners, who have the fullest information, are in a very far better position to judge than we can be. Not having been able to satisfy ourselves that these matters could be separated, our proposal is to purchase the whole of the dock undertakings. It may be that that lays us open to the suggestion and criticism that we shall be carrying on warehouse undertakings in competition with private wharves and warehouses. That, of course, is an objection, and the way we meet that, or try to meet it, is this; first of all this competition will be carried on by a public body of the highest standing who will not fight like directors do for a private interest, but who will be bound to carry on the concern—not only will be bound to do so, but who may be trusted to carry on the concern—in the interests of the port, as a whole, not in the interests of a particular undertaking, but with due regard to the common interests of all, wharfingers and warehousemen too. Then I think we are also entitled to remind the wharfingers and warehousemen that by the deepening of the river and the

consequent improvements which will take place, as far as one can make out their property will not be depreciated. Probably the improvements in the dock will be a very good thing for them. One feels it is a difficult question if you take a case like Tilbury and you sever the warehouses. It is in evidence that the warehouse business goes mostly up to the top, and if you deepen the river and then sever the business in the Tilbury Dock one does not know quite what would happen to the warehouses there. But probably the chief objection for the present purposes, and at the present time to the separation of the two things is the impossibility of apportioning the value of the dock undertaking on the one side, and the warehousing on the other, and dealing with them satisfactorily as a matter of purchase.

There are a great many things that I do not deal with. There are the suggestions for amalgamation of authorities and things of that kind, but I do not think it is in the least necessary for me to trouble the Commissioners with an argument upon them, more especially as you have present the special representatives of the interests in a great many cases. We have said that the Government ought to give some help, and I have mentioned one or two matters in which I think the Government have distinguished between London and other ports. It may be that in regard to the Woods and Forests dues, or in some other way, and perhaps to a larger extent, the Government may be able to help. We have placed it distinctly on our resolution, and it is distinctly part of our opinion that the Government ought to do what they can.

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I now conclude what I have to say. I hope the scheme we have put forward will be found in many respects to be a very valuable scheme. A great feature of it is raising the money at a cheaper rate. I must conclude by admitting what I think I have said before, namely, that we do put it forward as being applicable to a state of things where all the different interests must, if necessary, give way. With that recommendation of the scheme I leave it in the hands of the Commissioners.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD, called to address the Commission.

11766. (*Chairman.*) You appear to address us on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce?

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) Yes, my Lord. In addressing you on behalf of the trade interests as represented through the London Chamber of Commerce, I must confess to your Lordship that I approach my duty with a considerable sense of responsibility; partly because the problem before this Commission is very complicated, but still more so because the interests which are entrusted to me to represent for the moment are of the very greatest kind, and the task is undoubtedly a very great one. Of course there are other points of view than the point of view of the trader. The historic claims of the Corporation must be considered; the vested interests of the dock companies and the established rights of wharfingers, lightermen, and others are all elements to be considered. But, after all, the paramount consideration, the consideration which must be present, I submit, to the mind of every thoughtful person is; how can this inquiry benefit the trade of the Port of London? When I speak, therefore, on behalf of the traders I feel that I am representing, perhaps, in a sense the most important interest that is before the Commission. In dealing with their case there are certain broad considerations of public policy which were touched upon now and again in the course of the evidence, questions of the balance of trade power, and, intimately associated with that, the balance of financial power, which are considerations which cannot be absent from the minds of the Commissioners, but which I should not think of touching upon, as being altogether too wide for any discussion here. Nor will I touch upon any of those interests which are separately represented. It may be that here and there the scheme put forward by the London Chamber of Commerce clashes in certain details with the schemes, or the proposals, or the interests of other parties whom you have heard, or will hear, but I do not propose to deal with the question in that minute way. I should submit that the matter must be looked at broadly as one big question. In dealing with it I would like first of all to touch upon one point which Mr. Daldy mentioned, and that is this. He said it is incumbent upon counsel here to show an imperative case for change. Now, my Lord, an imperative case for change has been shown. I think the evidence gradually accumulated through the last 29 days makes up such a case; but I am not sure that it is incumbent upon us to put the matter as high as that. It is true that the Terms of Reference use the words "necessary for the promotion of the trade of the port"; but I do not think that the word "necessary" is used in any pedantic sense. "Necessary" in its strict sense is a very strong word. What I submit it means is that it is sufficient for us to show such grounds of expediency —expediency of so high an order that it almost amounts to necessity; if we can show considerations of that kind it is sufficient.

Now, my Lord, what are the questions which are before the Commission? They are really two-fold. First there is the question of whether any change should be recommended. Upon the first of those two questions it seems to me there is no real difference of opinion. For instance, take the question of structural and physical improvements in the port. The question of the depth of the water has been touched upon by my friend, Mr. Daldy, and there was a large volume of evidence from shipowners and others which was carefully considered by the Commission in the earlier days of the proceedings, showing that at the present time the depth of water is insufficient or is very close up to the margin of sufficiency for the big vessels which are coming more and more into use. This is what Sir Thomas Sutherland said at Question 1992: "I think with regard to the port, in the first place, that it is a very great danger that large vessels such as we and others now employ should not be able to lie with safety off the dock entrance or in any part of the river above Erith." Mr. More, when he was examined, at Question 271, by Sir John Wolfe-Barry with regard to the delay which vessels have to suffer in the river, admitted that there were several hours of delay incurred by the shipowner in the event of a ship arriving at low water. You have the matter summed up in a certain sense by two shipowners. Mr. Anderson at Question 2094 said: "What we find is that most of the owners will try to avoid London; they will want to be paid more if they are to come to London; they will certainly prefer an open charter, which gives them the chance of not coming to London, rather than a charter where there is the option of sending the ship to London direct."

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Mr. Pembroke, another shipowner, at Question 8331, said: "Now and for some time past all owners of tramp steamers, unless they have full cargoes of grain in bulk, do what they can to avoid having their vessels at London, owing to the large expense and delay incurred there." Looked at even from the point of view of the docks themselves, Mr. Baggallay, who was the engineer of the dock company, said at Question 843 that if the Thames were deepened throughout 30ft. it would assist the docks very materially, because, although ships coming on the top of the tide come up now, it would be a very great advantage if they could remain in the river a longer time. So I take it upon that point it is a sort of common factor in the discussion—common as between shipowners, traders, and the dock companies—that there must be a deepening of the channel, if not in the immediate future, at all events in the very near future.

Then passing from the channel of the river to the question of the docks, you have to consider the matter as a whole. The river and the docks really form one complete whole so far as the port is concerned, and it is important to consider what structural changes or improvements are necessary there. I will not deal with the minutiæ of the thing. There were lots of little details discussed about storage sheds, cold meat stores, improved machinery, and things of that kind. But here you have the London and India Dock Company, who came before you, and through their chairman saying, first, that there is, as I understand his statement, a present necessity, or almost a necessity, for a dock in the vicinity of the Albert Dock, and then he sees looming in the distance a very much bigger matter. Then he says at Question 5663 that in ten years time he thinks that the authorities of the Port of London will have to face the question of an extension down at Tilbury. As it seems to me, if it merely stood upon those three great structural changes the case for an alteration of some kind is proved, and the vital question before the Commission on that aspect of the case is: is it possible for the existing administrations, such as they are, to carry out those important changes? There are two great authorities to consider. There is, first of all, the Thames Conservancy, and then there is the London and India Dock Company. The other docks are smaller, and I

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think for practical purposes we may treat the London and India Dock Company as representing that interest. Now what is the case with regard to the Thames Conservancy? I am not going over the whole history; it has been adverted to, and it must be within the recollection of the Commission. Here you have a public body which makes something which is almost in the nature of a Parliamentary bargain in the year 1894. They have certain powers entrusted to them, and the exercise of those powers was carefully considered by a very responsible Commission, and their report was made. The recommendations of that Commission are not carried out. True, because the Thames Conservancy lacks what is financially necessary. I am not going to criticise or say a word with regard to the conduct of the Thames Conservancy in that matter. It is not a question I would submit, for any individual officer of the Thames Conservancy; it is a broad question of public policy pursued by a public body. You have the fact that for seven years after the passing of the Act of 1894 they have abstained from taking any steps to carry out what was in the mind of Parliament at that time, and what was recommended subsequently by the Commission of Inquiry, and that fact does seem to me so eloquent that I do not propose to deal with it any further.

Now with regard to the dock companies. The Millwall Dock Company admit that although they have the legal power of raising money, or legal authority to raise money, their credit is exhausted. With regard to the London and India Dock Company, I am not going over the ground which has been gone over by my friend Mr. Daldy, but it must be quite clear upon those statements that they have put before the Commission, showing the state of their capital and the state of their credit, that their financial position is not so rosy as to enable them to raise the necessary money on reasonable terms or upon any other terms than such as would constitute a real burden upon the trade of the port. But, my Lord, apart from the question of finance there is a much wider issue as between the traders of the port and the dock companies, which has a very direct and material bearing upon this question, and that is the question whether, in recent years, the dock companies have shown a real grasp of the situation, and whether, at the present day, they are sufficiently in touch with the requirements of the trade of the port to justify you in recommending that they should have increased powers of any kind whatever. Let us take the year 1891, because, although that is ten years ago, the individuals are to all intents and purposes the same—I mean the individuals who at that time governed the administration of the docks. In 1891 the dock companies, in consequence of the labour problem which faced them, gave up, to a large extent, the discharging of vessels in the docks, or, at least, not entirely—but they initiated that change, and they did so, as Mr. Scott informs us at Question 6496, with only approximate data before them. It was a very momentous change in the administration of the port, and they adopted that policy without seriously considering whether, from the financial point of view, the policy which they were about to pursue was a wise one or not. Now, this is, if I may say so, the great point against the administration of the docks with regard to this question; for the whole of the succeeding ten years they have gone on developing that line of policy without ever considering whether it was a wise one financially or not. My authority for making that statement will be found at Questions 6503 and 6504. I asked this: "Since you began this course, in the year 1891 or 1892, have you ever considered the possibility of making a profit for yourselves on the work of discharging vessels?—(A.) No, of course not, because we surrendered the right to do it—a right that we always claimed. (Q.) And from that, do I understand you have never gone into the question to consider whether you could make a profit upon the work?—(A.) Of course not." The mere form of the answer seems to me to suggest an extraordinary want of appreciation of the details of administration in these matters. At the present time you have 82 per cent. of the goods in the docks discharged by others than the dock company. They still discharge 18 per cent. themselves, and that 18 per cent., according to the evidence of Mr. Hardy, does show a profit which is reasonably satisfactory.

Then, passing from that particular point to the agreements with the wharfingers, those agreements have been challenged frequently in this room, and they have been the subject of very anxious inquiry amongst the traders. What is broadly the effect of those agreements? This is another branch of the dock companies' business—the warehousing branch. You have got two trading interests which are in direct competition with one another—the wharfingers' interest and the dock companies' interest—and you find that the dock company, as it were, cut themselves off and hamper themselves, in what should be a trade competition, by agreeing with the wharfingers that their rates which they would charge to the traders shall always be higher than the rates charged by the wharfingers. That is, I submit, directly cutting themselves off from a source of profit. Take for example the evidence given by Mr. Rogers, when he was speaking on his own behalf in respect of his individual trade. It is at Question 8684. He said: "Most of our goods liable to these charges are lodged not in the premises of the dock company, but in the public waterside wharves along the Thames. The reason for this is that the charges at the public wharves in our trade are on the average about 10 per cent. less than at the docks. The wharves are also nearer the centre of business, and their system of delivery is much quicker than that of the dock. If it were not for the lower charges at the wharves, we should, in most cases, prefer to store goods at the docks in order to save the delay caused in lightering up and down the stream." I will not cite any further evidence upon that point; but I think that the mere fact of their entering into such an unprofitable, or such an extraordinary, agreement is one that throws considerable doubt upon the wisdom of the dock administration.

Then I want to come to more recent history. In 1896 they propounded a bill, and after considerable discussion in public meetings, they withdrew that bill. In 1900 they introduced another bill, and in 1901 they introduced yet a third, which was a very substantial modification of those proposals which they put forward in 1900. The bill of 1900 had never been before a committee or been threshed out, and yet in that twelve months the dock company made very substantial modifications in their scheme; and what it seems to suggest to my mind is that in the year 1900 they came forward with proposals which were very inimical to the interests of trade, which they had not fully considered. So that within the short space of five years you have the dock company twice propounding schemes which frighten and alarm the trading interest of London, and they did so without full consideration of their schemes which, when the thing comes to the pinch, the dock company cannot, or will not or dare not support. Now, my Lord, the reason why they felt bound to go back from those two schemes I think is very obvious. They are out of touch with the feeling of the traders in the port. In the long run an administration of this kind must depend for its prosperity upon meeting the requirements of the trade, and upon being in touch with what the traders want. Then it is because the dock companies are not in touch with the trading interest that they feel themselves so weak that in the year 1896, and again in the year 1900 they are obliged to abandon proposals which they seem only to have partially considered. There is plenty of evidence to show that they are out of touch with the trade. As Mr. Scott said, they assisted to alter the form of the bill of lading. When I was asking him a question about that he seemed to doubt whether he had used the word "assist," but at Question 5596 he did use that word. They did that notwithstanding the congestion upon the quays which the new system of discharging involves. That congestion and the piling up of cargo upon cargo and the delay which they cause to the trader are very serious items indeed to the trader; they affect him day by day in the conduct of his business; they throw upon him a very serious expense, and yet in spite of that very important consideration the dock companies being, as I say, out of touch with the interests of the trade in the port, carried through that scheme and assisted it to the best of their ability in spite, as Mr. Scott said, of very strenuous opposition.

Then take the question of consolidated rate. That question cropped up time after time in the evidence given on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Rogers, in his evidence at Question 8701, said; "This consolidated rate includes a number of services which are not required in a vast number of cases. For instance it includes one, two, or three months' rent, according to the nature of the goods. In former years the system of warehousing goods for comparatively long periods was very convenient; goods only arrived at certain times of the year, and were kept in the docks until wanted. Customs duties also were heavy, which rendered it desirable to keep goods in bond, in order to save interest on capital. In modern trade pro-

longed warehousing is quite unnecessary, but, while the system of business has changed, our dock companies have not moved with the times." That is not an isolated opinion of Mr. Rogers'. He was speaking, I think, then on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. I say it is not an isolated opinion, because you will find that Mr. Blackburn, speaking on behalf of the wool trade, at Questions 8890 and 8891, said that although the system of business in the wool trade had changed materially in recent years there had been no modification either in the charges, or the system adopted by the dock company. Then there was that still, if I may say so, more dramatic evidence given by Mr. Powell with regard to South American hides, at Question 9534. He explained how that trade was entirely lost to the Port of London by the want of facilities here. He told us how it had gone to Antwerp, and he was very closely examined by members of the Commission with regard to it, so as to test the value of what he was saying. At Question 9537 Sir John Wolfe-Barry asked him this: "And you say London stands alone in not granting these facilities? (A.) Yes." Then later on he went on to explain that this was a very large trade, and he said it requires systematising, and that it is because at Antwerp and elsewhere systematic arrangements are made for dealing with the trade that the whole of that trade has deserted London and gone to foreign ports. Then, my Lord, there is another witness to whose evidence I should like to draw attention, as it bears on the same point, and that is Mr. H. B. Smith, who gave evidence with regard to the dried fruit trade. He was dealing with currants, almonds, dates, and other commodities of that kind, and he was very carefully examined by Sir Robert Giffen. At Question 9884, when he was asked a question about raisins he said, "London buyers are the cheapest buyers, and would be able to compete against any other buyers. Merchants here can buy cheaper than anybody else, because they buy larger quantities. If we could get the facilities for discharging the goods here without any great cost we should still do the business. The matter practically is so hampered by the heavy charges, and more particularly by the delays, that the trade has gone for that reason." My Lord, these are representative witnesses. I think nobody could have been in the room and heard Mr. Smith's evidence without feeling that he was a man of considerable ability and knowledge of what he was talking about. Then at Question 9886 there is this: "They are dealing in Greece and Smyrna with people that they do not know very much about, and they very often get badly treated. You may take it that in all cases if London could work on equal terms they would get the business." I do not want to go over the whole ground, but you heard a great deal of evidence from the traders. I ask you, is not that cumulative evidence to show that the present administration by the dock company is so out of touch with the necessities of the case that the dock company ought not to be trusted with increased powers lest by any means there should be any such injury to other branches of trade in addition to those injuries which have already been detailed before you. There was evidence given on our behalf with regard to the congestion of the barges. I will not deal with that; I have no doubt that other counsel who represent their interests more particularly will address you upon that point. That congestion is a most important matter to the trader, because, as you have heard, he has to pay for the demurrage. It is not in the interest of the trader that there is that congestion. It is a very serious imposition upon him in the conduct of his business that he cannot get his goods sometimes for a week, sometimes for a fortnight, sometimes even for three weeks, and has all that time to pay demurrage for a barge which has to be in attendance waiting for his goods. I think I have directed attention to sufficient of the evidence to show that, at all events, in the opinion of the London Chamber of Commerce, the two existing authorities, the Thames Conservancy and the dock companies, against whom, of course, we have no hostility in any sense, have not shown themselves in their respective spheres so wise and far-seeing and so prudent in their administration with regard to safeguarding the interests of the port that they are worthy of any further confidence or any further powers. But supposing that all those facts that I have referred to were entirely different, there is this further problem which you have to consider, that is: must not this question of the Port of London be taken as one comprehensive whole? Now this question comes up for discussion; is it wise any longer to have these different divergent jurisdictions, all dealing with different parts of what should be one complete and united whole? The defect and the disadvantage of having different jurisdictions was evidenced very clearly by what happened with regard to the Yantlet channel, which is dealt with at Question 460, quite early in the proceedings. Yantlet Channel was dredged by the Thames Conservancy, and then, having been dredged, was not buoyed by the Trinity House——

11766A. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) It was not dredged, it was found to exist.

(*Mr. Rowland Whitehead.*) I must apologise. There had been directions that it should be dredged, and it was found to exist as a channel, and was not then buoyed by the Trinity House. I do not want to go into the question as to which policy ought to have been pursued, and whether that channel ought to have been made effective by buoying or not. That is neither here nor there for my purpose. Here you have two co-ordinate jurisdictions. There may have been good reasons for it, but when the wisdom of the general policy came to be discussed with the representatives of these different interests you will find that Mr. Kent, the Secretary of Trinity House, said, at Question 495: "It is no use doing certain things below a certain line if they are not also done above that line at the same time." Then Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, at Question 1391, speaking for the Thames Conservancy, when he was referring to the question of dredging, says: "I do not think it would be much use unless you make a recommendation that the dock sills should be so lowered that the ships could get in," and Mr. Scott himself, at Question 5852, feels that there is this unity and necessity for as it were single-handed treatment of the subject, because he says it would be necessary to have the river improvements going on side by side with the dock improvements. That is the question put to him, and his answer is, "Certainly." It is a proposition which might almost be said to be self-evident. Here you get the three great interests which are concerned, and which are now in separate hands, all concurring in the view that these improvements of the river, dock, and so forth, ought to be going on in co-ordination with one another. I submit that the only right inference from that is that you cannot get complete co-ordination unless you have one body with a directing mind, and that was the view taken by Mr. A. L. Jones, the eminent shipowner. At Question 4947 this matter of unification was put to him by a member of the Commission. "I am going rather to the point of unification? (*A.*) Certainly, I would be very strong on unification; I would be very strong on undivided responsibility. (*Q.*) Then you do agree with Sir Thomas Sutherland? (*A.*) Certainly. (*Q.*) It is a very important point. (*A.*) It is. I think that where you have divided responsibility you do not get the same working; that is to say, that one-man concerns do generally a great deal better than others." Now, my Lord, I have endeavoured as far as I can to raise the inference in the minds of the Commissioners first of all to prove that it is undesirable to grant extended powers to the existing organisations, and then that it is necessary by inference from that that you should have some new authority constituted, which can deal with these improvements from the point of view of trade. But before passing to consider, as I must do, the form of the proposal which the London Chamber of Commerce placed before the Commission, I ought, I think, to say something at all events with regard to the proposals which have been propounded by the dock company. There are only two points upon these proposals which are really of vital importance, and those are these; first, the suggestion that the exemption clause should be abolished; and then, secondly, the suggestion that a certain tax or charge should be placed upon the goods. With regard to the exemption clause, surely the evidence before the Commission is clear enough that a system of lighterage and ready access for lighters to the ships, whether in the river or in the docks, is absolutely essential for the conduct of the business of the port. I will not cite you any trader's evidence with regard to that point, but I take the evidence of Sir Thomas Sutherland, the shipowner. At Question 1982 he says this: "What I say is that it would be impossible for us if we wished to do so to put the whole of our cargoes into these temporary sheds, and therefore we are compelled, whether we like it or not, to discharge a large portion of our cargo overside." Then Mr. Anderson, speaking for another large line of steamers, was asked by Sir Robert Giffen at Question 2117: "To keep to the

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actual fact for one moment, you say as a matter of fact that your business in Tilbury Dock could not be carried on without the barges? (*A.*) I think I might go that length, certainly," and even Mr. Hardy himself, the manager for the dock company, at Question 6908, said this: "I do not think that the practice of the port will admit of fewer barges being brought into the docks than come in now, except, of course, that barges sometimes come in for the purpose of harbourage, in which case they pay." I am not going over the considerations with regard to this that were referred to by my friend, Mr. Daldy, but I do think that it is an important consideration that here you have both the consignees of goods and those who are themselves owners of barges, and also shipowners, all concurring in the view that this system of lighterage is an absolutely essential feature of the port. And it seems very odd indeed that the dock company should come before the Commission and attempt to penalise what is an absolute necessity for carrying on the business of the port.

Then there is this important consideration which I must refer to, because it was dealt with by certain important witnesses called on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, and which is obviously a matter which has a direct bearing on this proposal; that is, the very serious depreciation which would accrue to the property of traders who have purchased waterside premises. You had a great deal of evidence on that subject—Mr. Rogers, Mr. Carbutt, Mr. Blackwell (of Crosse and Blackwell), Mr. Spicer, and others—all to the effect that they had relied upon the historical right to have this free entry to the docks, and had purchased waterside premises and expended large sums of money on those premises, and incurred various obligations which, as I submit, this Commission would not be justified in recommending they should be deprived of without very careful consideration indeed. Take the case of Mr. Blackwell alone. At Question 9121 he explains how his firm had taken a long lease for 999 years at a very large rental—I think over £1,300—and had expended on those premises £40,000 for the purpose of making them suitable for their trade; all upon the faith of this exemption clause. I am not going to argue the question of compensation, but if the question of compensation did arise, if the question as to whether that clause should be abolished or not did come before this Commission, and that became a serious and practical issue, I think the Commission would have to consider very carefully whether the sum of £50,000 or £60,000 a year, which is practically the sole benefit which would accrue to the dock company from that proposal, is an adequate return, considering first of all the question of compensation—I might almost say the right to some form of compensation—to those owners of waterside premises who had purchased on the faith of the exemption clause, and considering next the very serious injury there would be to trade for a result which is comparatively small.

Then the other feature of that proposal was the charge upon the goods. I do not propose for a moment to discuss what the effect of the charge would be upon imported goods. That might vary, of course, with different trades, and the extent to which any individual would approve or disapprove of any such proposal would depend very largely upon the prosperity of his individual trade. But take the question of exports. I put that point to Mr. Scott. It seemed to me to be a matter for very serious consideration indeed. Here was a proposal which amounted in substance to the taxing of the export trade of the country so far as it goes to the Port of London, and it is serious for this reason. Mr. Anderson, the shipowner, explains this to the Commission at Question 2099. "The ships that are willing to come to London are ships that expect to get cargoes from London; and if they do not expect to get cargoes from London they do not wish to come to London, and they try to avoid it." So that the question with regard to export cargo is one that has to be very carefully weighed. As Mr. Scott explained, 80 per cent. of the exports are delivered direct from craft into ship. So that under the proposals of the dock company the export trade would to the extent of 80 per cent. of it be doubly penalised. It would be penalised by virtue of the charge on the barge, and it would then be penalised by virtue of the charge on the goods. But take the evidence of Mr. Sargant with regard to the metal trade, because it is important to consider the thing in detail to a certain extent. At Question 9136 he said: "The margin of profit at which the business is carried on is, owing to Continental competition, extremely small, probably one quarter to one half per cent., and the imposition of the proposed charge would be specially onerous on metals and minerals of low value. The trade would practically be diverted to foreign countries, and thus many large industries, which at present afford employment to many thousands in London, would be destroyed."

Then evidence was given by Mr. Elborough with regard to chemical manure. He pointed out the keen competition there was. Then Mr. F. C. Hill at Question 9176 dealt with the question of lead, and he explained that if the proposals of the dock companies were put into force as regards his trade he would be obliged to move the trade to Antwerp, Australia, or some other place where the facilities were better and the charges lower. Then Mr. Spicer in dealing with the question with regard to paper, explained to the Commission most carefully how that is an article which follows other commodities. Sir Robert Giffen ascertained from him by a series of questions that it represents a very large employment of labour in London and in the country, and that it would be a very serious thing indeed if articles of that kind were rendered subject to the additional tax which the dock companies propose by virtue of their scheme. My Lord, as I understand the ground upon which the dock companies proceed is this; they say, "Oh, but look at Liverpool. They have a charge upon the goods at Liverpool." It was very difficult in the course of the evidence to keep the line of inquiry perfectly clear, but it is no good taking some isolated feature of some other scheme and applying it to the condition that you find in the Port of London. You must consider that as a whole, and the essence of the scheme at Liverpool is, as was pointed out by the evidence of traders; you have a low quay rate, and you have certain facilities at Liverpool which encourage trade. It may be that under other circumstances—I am not going into them in any detail, because I am not at liberty to do so—and in a different port, a charge levied in that particular mode might be fair. But then does it not after all come back to this; not what is the name of a charge, not in what form precisely it is levied, but how does it bear? What is the incidence of the total charge or charges upon the trade. That is a consideration of course which was excluded from inquiry, but it seems to me that the dock companies are not at liberty to import just one instance, as it were, of a different system, and say that instance works well under different conditions, and then say: "Apply it to these conditions and you must therefore necessarily get a beneficial result." It seems to me that you must take the thing as a whole or else you must not take it at all. The fact is, if I may say so, that the dock proposals of 1900 or 1901 will not be of any advantage to the port. My friend Mr. Wallace was much perturbed because some of our witnesses did not care very much whether they criticised the scheme of 1900 or the scheme of 1901. What did it matter. They are both dead. The point is not whether the dock companies are now going forward with either of those schemes; they may go next year before Parliament with a fresh scheme and even a more onerous one. The point is whether the proposals which they put forward in 1900 or 1901 were wise or unwise, and I think the evidence of the traders must have convinced your Lordship and the Commissioners that those proposals were injurious to trade, and that they would confer upon the dock companies powers which an authority of that kind ought not to have. The true remedy in the view of the Chamber of Commerce and the traders generally throughout London is that the best solution for the difficulty which your Lordship and the Commissioners have to solve is to be found in the establishment of a Port Trust, broadly speaking, after the pattern of that which you find at Liverpool. There is a very remarkable unanimity with regard to that. I do not say that that is so with regard to the details. When you come to discuss some details there is always inevitably an opportunity for difference of opinion between individuals, but the great broad unity of all parties who are really interested in the success of the port is a most extraordinary feature of the present inquiry. First of all, for the shipowners, at Question 2005, Sir Thomas Sutherland says: "I also venture to say that the future interests attaching to this question are too grave to be committed to the hands of private individuals, such as the dock directors are, whose policy must necessarily be based on the desire of their shareholders to secure a market value for their property, which it certainly does not possess at the present time, and is not entitled to obtain at the expense of shipowners." Then Mr. Anderson, of the Orient Line, says this at

Question 2104: "I generally agree with what Sir Thomas Sutherland said, that what is wanted is a public authority to take over and administer the whole system of docks and waterways of the Port of London, as has been, I believe, successfully done in the Mersey and elsewhere." Then what does Mr. Williams of the Atlantic Transport Company say? I suppose if there was any shipowner in the world who, according to the case the Dock Company have put forward, would have come forward to bless them and their proposals it would have been the gentleman representing the Atlantic Transport Company. Mr. Williams says at Question 2165: "I have given consideration to the subject and the present condition of the Port of London, and I have come to the conclusion that that condition requires to be amended, and that the formation of a Harbour Trust of a character similar to that created in Liverpool should be carried out." Then there was evidence given on behalf of wharfingers. I will not read any of that. No doubt it will be cited by other counsel. Mr. Moore at Question 2740 dealt with that point. Then over and above that you have practical unanimity as between the Corporation of London, the London County Council and the London Chamber of Commerce, each representing important interests, each having given this question very careful consideration. I agree there are differences as to detail; one body thinks that special prominence should be given to one factor in the representation, and another body thinks that some other interest should receive special treatment; but that does not affect the great broad principle, and with regard to this great broad principle I think there can be no doubt whatever—that the traders and the representatives of the important interests of London are all agreed that there ought to be one single administration on the lines of the Liverpool Trust. I do not wish to go into the matter more than I am obliged, but I ought perhaps, while I am dealing with this topic to refer to the position of the Chamber of Commerce as being really representative of the trade. The witnesses did not on each occasion state to the Commission the exact degree to which it could be said they were representative of the interests of their group in the London Chamber of Commerce, nor could they always go over the history of the evidence which they were about to give; but take an instance like that of Mr. Sargant, because he was typical. The extent of his evidence was the collective opinion of two hundred firms engaged in the metal trade. Mr. Spicer, when he was giving his evidence (at Question 9296), was careful to place before the Commission in full detail how it was that his opinion, when he came to speak on behalf of the private wharfingers committee, was really representative of a large body of opinion which had been carefully collected by means of meetings, circulars, and in other ways. Of course, you do not expect when traders come to give evidence that there would be absolute identity of view. I think that, perhaps, I ought to say, on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, that when they, as it were, allowed themselves to be the medium through which evidence should be offered on behalf of the trade, of course, they were very glad to be of any service to the Commission in that way, but, as the witnesses have stated, there were minute differences of view amongst the traders, and the Chamber of Commerce felt that the whole case from the point of view of the trader ought to be fairly placed before the Commission, so that they, as the tribunal to adjudicate upon the matter, might be in possession not merely of the broad view of the traders as a whole, but so far as there were individual dissentients from that view they also should have an opportunity of being considered and heard. Take, for example, Mr. Carbutt. Mr. Carbutt was carefully examined by an honourable and learned member of the Commission. He was careful to explain that, although he did not approve of any charge whatever being put upon his trade, still, in that respect, he differed from the point of view of the Chamber of Commerce. I feel bound to refer to this because there were undoubtedly minute differences of view taken by different trades with regard to the proposals of the dock companies. What I would like to draw your attention to upon this point is an observation which fell from your Lordship. The Commissioners seemed to be under the impression that there was a disinclination on the part of certain traders to help towards the improvement of the Port of London. Take, for example, Mr. Carbutt. He suggested that a tax would be a very serious and onerous burden in his trade. Speaking on behalf of the traders, I do not think that that is really their view, and I can only regret that any such impression should have been conveyed to the minds of the Commissioners. The point is this—it was brought out, I think, by Mr. Rogers—that if you get a public trust which is sensitive to public opinion and which is in touch with the trader, then probably you would get a readjustment of charges of such a kind as would produce an increased revenue from certain sources. That increased revenue would probably be sufficient to meet increased charges which are necessary for the improvement of the port. But suppose that were not so—it must be a matter of conjecture to some extent—suppose it were not so. Then Mr. Rogers, speaking with all the authority of the London Chamber of Commerce, said that whilst they strongly disapproved of any power being placed in the hands of private individuals representing shareholders to impose any fresh burden upon the trade of the port, they were perfectly prepared, if need be, to bear any increased charge so as to improve the condition of the trade in the port, always on the understanding that that power was vested in a public authority which was amenable to the representations of the trade representatives, and would be in touch with the needs and requirements of trade.

See 9375.

Now I pass from that matter to our own specific proposals. I do not propose to go into the matter in any detail except so far as may be necessary to point out certain matters of difference. The general views of the Chamber of Commerce were laid before the Commission by Mr. Rogers, I think, on the fourth day of the proceedings. He came at a later stage on the twenty-sixth day, and expounded the scheme which had been considered by the Chamber of Commerce. He expounded it with so much detail that it is not necessary for me to go over it in any way. I ought perhaps to say this; one fundamental condition of that scheme is that you must have a full and adequate representation of the trading interest. This is essential for the reasons I have detailed in dealing with other branches of the case. The next consideration is that which I alluded to only a moment ago—the expectation that there would be a readjustment of charges of such a character as would produce increased revenue. There would be probably the possession of a low quay rate and other facilities which would bring the dock administration into harmony with the spirit and movement of the day. Then there are two great and important details. They are not principles exactly, but they are certainly what may be called organic details in our scheme which I must press upon the Commission, and those are these; first, that there should be no tax upon exports. That seems to the Chamber of Commerce to be a fundamental point in which their proposal differs from the proposals of the dock companies, and differs materially to the public advantage. Then there comes this further point, the question of the separation of the warehouses from the docks. Once you come to consider a practical scheme that is a question of very great difficulty in a certain sense. There are two difficulties to consider. There is, first of all, the commercial difficulty as to whether it would be possible to carry on the business of warehouseman entirely distinct from the business of dock owner. Then there is the physical question as to whether the construction of warehouses and docks is such to-day that such a distinction could be effected. On that point I must, of course, be quite fair in pointing out to the Commission that there was no unanimity of the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Rogers pointed out the extent to which there was agreement, but there was a division of opinion. At the same time the overwhelming opinion of those who considered this question in the Chamber of Commerce was that it was possible to separate those two businesses, and that it was desirable in carrying out any scheme for the administration of the port by a public authority that those two businesses should be kept distinct. I think I ought to address myself to the question of this possibility, because it seems to me it is a very important and practical problem.

Mr. Hugh Colin Smith, a wharfinger, gave this evidence at Question 2531: "(Q.) Do you think it would be an easy matter to separate the dock business proper from that of the warehouse business? (A.) Quite so, just the same as my own business is separated from the dock company. (Q.) The suggestion has been made that the business of the wharves should be put under the central authority and warehouses as well as dock business should be put under that? (A.) It would be a large job. (Q.) You do not agree with that? (A.) Not at all. (Q.) Not merely is it a large job, but it is an interference with private enterprise to a large ex-

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tent? (A.) Yes, I think so; and I think it would be almost impossible, because its magnitude is so great; and really and truly a wharfinger's business is principally made successful or unsuccessful by looking into the minutest details. It is very difficult to carry on a large business of this sort at all. It must be done on a small scale more or less, and every item looked into most carefully. I think if it was done on a large scale it would be ruined." Then Mr. Major, who is another wharfinger, dealing with this question of competition between a Trust and wharfingers was asked this at Question 2969: "(Q.) Supposing the two were separated, although it would be a very large warehousing interest you think that it would not be too large for fair competition with the other warehouses? (A.) The fact of its size would be rather, I am inclined to think, a detriment to the warehousing company itself than to ourselves as wharfingers." Mr. Douglas Owen expresses the opinion that it would be advisable to keep them separate. This is at Question 5271: "(Q.) And I think you go as far as to say almost necessary? (A.) Yes, and inevitable." Mr. Rogers' evidence upon this point throws considerable light on the matter, because he is a practical man engaged in the trade. At Question 10166 he was asked this: "(Q.) If you think that the warehouse business is a declining business, what grounds have you for estimating the purchase value of these warehouses at nine millions when acquired? (A.) You must recollect that it is a very special business in many respects, and that what might not pay a general Trust, might pay a company or an association of a particular trade. For instance, the wool trade is an important trade. It might be worth their while to buy a block of warehouses and to give a very fair price for it, in consideration of their working their own trade. They would understand their difficulties and their advantages better than a general trust would, and they would be more flexible in their regulations. (Q.) Do you then wish to modify the opinion you have expressed as to the declining nature of the warehousing business by saying that you would not expect that it would increase or maintain itself in the hands of a public trust. (A.) Yes, that is what I mean. (Q.) The Chamber of Commerce do not anticipate that the warehousing business in private hands would decrease. (Q.) No; I think not. The great tendency is for people to take goods into private warehouses at present because the goods have to be sorted, weighed and measured out, and so on; and that would always take place." So much for the commercial wisdom, and to a certain degree, the physical possibility of carrying it out. As I understand, so far as the physical possibility is concerned, the crux of the problem is to be found in the St. Katharine Docks and the London Dock. That seems to be the effect of the evidence. It seems to me strange that in these days there should be any engineering impossibility of adjustment or re-arrangement, or that the engineering possibilities are such that there can be no alteration at these docks which would render feasible the separation of these two businesses. Considerable light was thrown upon it, even as regards those two docks by an answer which Mr. Scott gave at Question 6672, where he explained that even in these particular warehouses, the goods arrived there very largely not by ship at all, but by barge. That, if I may say so, is a very substantial modification of the difficulty, and goes in no small way to meet the difficulty such as it is. Mr. Scott, I admit, regards the separation of the two businesses as being a practical impossibility. He said so. Of course great weight must be attached to Mr. Scott's opinion. He gave his evidence very fairly throughout, and no one can fail to speak with great respect of anybody like Mr. Scott, who has formed an opinion upon a point of that kind; yet it does seem to me that if you look through the evidence you will see that the great volume of the evidence is against Mr. Scott. You have wharfingers; you have shipowners; you have responsible traders like Mr. Rogers and others; and you have not exactly the direct opinion of Mr. Coke, but you have the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce founded upon Mr. Coke's experience as Member of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and in Bombay—you have all this evidence which is in direct conflict with the opinion of Mr. Scott, and I do ask the Commission to consider that on that point the balance of opinion is against him, and to regard this separation of the warehouses from the other parts of the dock undertaking as being both practically possible and commercially expedient. Then you have in addition the evidence as to what takes place at foreign ports which was put in on behalf of the dock companies themselves through Mr. Broodbank, where he explained (it is given in great detail in Appendix 2 of the 25th day) that at Rotterdam, Bremerhaven, and other places, you have in every case these two things separate, even where you have municipal assistance or State control. That is the effect of the evidence and the appendix to his evidence.

Then there is one other point which we regard as vital. I will just mention it so that I may keep before you the points in our scheme which we regard as vital; that is the continued maintenance of the exemption clause that I have spoken of in detail. I will not go over any further details of the scheme nor the proposals of the dock company. It all seems to me, if I may say so, to come back to this one point; that in the consideration of these problems the paramount interest is the interest of trade, and that when you are weighing as you must the relative value of all the different considerations that have been put before you by the different interests which are represented, the final standard which you must always have in your mind so to speak, is this standard of possibility of maintaining and possibility of improving the trade of the Port of London. Speaking on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce I may say that we have no desire to inflict any hardship upon any individual or upon any company such as the Dock Company or the Lightermen's Company, or any other company; but the paramount consideration which I would ask the Commissioners always to keep in mind is this consideration with regard to the maintenance and improvement of the trade of the Port of London.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., called to address the Commission.

Mr. T. E. Scrutton, K.C.

11767. (*Chairman.*) You propose to address us on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes, my Lord. I am not sure who is entitled to the greatest sympathy—the Commission when the fifth Counsel rises to address them with a knowledge that seven Counsel more are waiting to follow him, or the Counsel who rises to address Commissioners who have listened to his lengthy and learned brethren for four hours already. I will endeavour as briefly as I can to put before the Commission the point of view which is important in the opinion of the Corporation of the City of London whom I represent with my friend Mr. Porter, and I will endeavour to remember, as I am sure the Commissioners will wish me to remember, that they are gentlemen connected with business who have been carefully listening to evidence for 29 days, and must, in the course of that 29 days have mastered somewhat the point they have to consider.

I appear on behalf of the third important public body that puts before the Commission a scheme for a public trust. I think it is of considerable importance that there should be that amount of unanimity among three very important bodies in London. When one gets to details naturally those bodies differ. Each of them, as is to be expected from human nature, has an idea that its own particular body should play the most important part in the scheme that is proposed; but that there should be a general agreement in regard to the solution of the difficulties on the line of a public trust is, I venture to think, of very considerable importance in approaching this matter. For the intervention of the Corporation I offer no excuse; none is needed. For centuries they were the historic body who had the government of the river under statutes. When the commerce of London developed so enormously that there was too much for one municipality, they promoted the Conservancy. They are still the sanitary authority of the port, and when the proposals made by the docks and objected to by the wharfingers first came before Parliament, each body interested came to the Corporation to ask for its support. I do not think it is possible for those bodies who then came to us, thinking our support of some value, to now complain if we give the Commission such independent and honest criticism as we have been able to make of their proposals.

I venture to think the first most striking feature when one comes to consider the mass of evidence that has been given to this Commission is the absolutely unanimous agreement that the river ought to be deepened substantially and quickly. It is a most striking feature of the evidence that you have practically no conflict when you come to look through the various bodies who disagree on every other point: body after body comes

before you and says that a substantial deepening of the channel of the river at an early period is of vital necessity to London. Of course, it has been the duty of counsel to abstract this evidence and put together the evidence upon various points. No doubt that is being done for the benefit of the Commission, or they have done it for themselves. But one was struck when one came to do it with the way in which witness after witness came and agreed upon that particular point. The only witnesses to whose evidence I wish to call the Commissioners' attention particularly are the witnesses of the dock companies, as to whom one was not so sure beforehand, that they would have come and said that the deepening of the river was an urgent necessity. I find that Mr. Baggallay, at Question 892 (in reply to one of the questions, which I cannot help observing as I read the evidence, Mr. Ellis has frequently put, summing up a page or so, that one would otherwise have had to read) said this: Mr. Ellis asked, "To sum up this matter, may I take it that you wish to leave us with the impression that, in your opinion as an engineer, a great and continuous deepening of the channel of the Thames ought to take place? (*A.*) Certainly." Then comes Mr. Duckham, of the Millwall Docks, at Question 1040: "Have you considered the Thames Conservancy programme. They propose to dredge to a width of 300 feet from the Albert Docks to Millwall Docks, with a depth of 18 feet? (*A.*) Yes, I saw that. (*Q.*) I gather from your evidence that you consider that insufficient? (*A*) 18 feet would be an improvement, but it would not be enough for the reason that I was giving you just now. Vessels that are fog-bound would probably get stranded or have to go back, say, 20 miles down the river, and then come up again." Then came Mr. Malcolm, of the Surrey Commercial Docks, at Question 1836: (*Q.*) "As I understand, you have come here as the chairman of this prosperous company, and you say to us: 'In the interest not only of this company, but of the port, it is imperative that the river should be made navigable for vessels of deep draught above as well as below Gravesend,' and so on. Do you lay great emphasis on that? (*A.*) I do lay very considerable emphasis upon it. I have found that vessels which ten years ago we should have treated as beyond the bounds of possibility in any of our trades are to-day vessels that we think nothing of; and I think that very possibly in ten years more we shall find the same state of matters prevailing again, and that the vessels of ten years hence will show an equivalent advance upon the vessels of to-day. (*Q.*) And would you wish us to infer that the desirability of deepening the channel of the Thames is growing more urgent year by year? (*A.*) Distinctly, I think so." Then Mr. Scott, who came to present the case for his dock company, at Question 5852 says: "It would be folly for us to build a dock such as we contemplate putting on the south side of the Albert Dock, a dock which, so far as we can see, will accommodate anything that can ever come up the Thames, unless the river were improved to such an extent as to allow these big ships to come up." So you have every dock company that comes before the Commission saying that it is vital to them and to London that the river should be deepened. You have all the shipowners coming. As they came before Sir John Wolfe-Barry's Commission, so they have come to this Commission to say that, urgent as it was in 1894, it is still more urgent to-day that the river should be deepened. The Chamber of Commerce comes; the London County Council comes through Sir Alexander Binnie; bargeowners come, and pilots come. Every interest connected with the river comes and says the deepening of the river is an urgent necessity. And last of all the Thames Conservancy comes—a little belated, a little stirred up by the action of this Commission—but the Conservancy itself comes and makes the most surprising statements. I should think it was unique for the governing body of an important river on which the capital of an empire was situated to come after the river had been under its control for 40 years and to say that the Conservators did not consider that the River Thames is a river that is up to date in the same way that many rivers are—the Tyne and the Mersey, and various others. They are the gentlemen who have been managing it for 40 years, and that is the record of their 40 years' work—that the Thames is not up to date in the way that many of the rivers are.

11768. (*Chairman.*) Will you give us the reference to that?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) It is Question 1384. Then the reason that the Thames Conservancy gave is this. They gave two reasons for the river, which they are in charge of, not being up to date. One is that they must wait for the docks. Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland said near the end of Question 1384: "I should like to point out that until the depth of the water over the sills of all the docks is very much increased there would be no practical advantage in forming such a channel, as vessels would have to wait at the dock entrances until the tide had risen sufficiently to enable them to enter the docks." Then again, Question 1391: "We quite admit that it ought to be done, but I do not think it would be much use unless you make a recommendation that the dock sills should be so lowered that the ships could get in." The second reason, which perhaps is the more important one, is that they have not any money to do it. This is Question 1389: "(*Q.*) Then why has nothing been done? (*A.*) We have increased the depth very largely, and we have increased it to the utmost of our means. We have got no further means whatever, and, as I pointed out in my evidence, it was only a pious wish expressed in the report—it was not an order." So that the body in charge of the highway of London comes and says: "It is not up to date; we cannot make it up to date; we have not any money." And whereas their income is £100,000 a year, they say the cost of the necessary improvement will be about £1,700,000. They said in effect: "The extra annual income we shall want, instead of our £100,000 that we at present have, will be another £160,000. We propose to levy that by dues on ships and by dues on goods, which will more than double our present income, and it will be necessary, therefore, to change our constitution. To a body which comprises already 38 members, we will add nine more, making 47 members in all sitting on the Conservancy, of whom 12 only would be shipowners and merchants. So that we get to this point; the river, it is admitted by everybody, needs most drastic measures as to deepening; and admitted by everybody, including the body in charge of it, that it cannot be done without a largely increased taxation and without a change in the representation at present controlling the river. Then that brings the Commission, I submit, at once to this question; when you are going to give this additional taxation, when you are going to make this change of constitution, is the present Conservancy the body that you would entrust with this work? I think in the last six years the present Conservancy has had ample opportunity of showing whether it is a body that should be entrusted with this great work. I was the junior counsel for the shipowners in the Conservancy Bill of 1894, Mr. Pember leading me. We thought we had done, and our clients had done, a very good day's work for the Port of London when the House of Commons accepted Sir Thomas Sutherland's instruction to the Committee that they should have power to deal with the dredging of the river below Yantlet Creek. The Conservancy, after the passing of that instruction in the House, consented to the clause that has been read to the Commission on to or three occasions binding them either to carry out the recommendation of the Commission which was to be appointed by the Board of Trade, or to come to Parliament for further powers in case they could not do so.

Now what was the history of that? It is well within the memory of the Commissioners what the history was. The Commission, which will always be known by the name of Sir John Wolfe-Barry, though one would not forget that Mr. Lyster and Sir George Nares were members of it, reported with the weight of those three names, after hearing a very large number of shipowners, and taking a good deal of evidence, that so far as their jurisdiction was concerned over the Leigh Middle Shoal, the 30ft. channel was necessary, but that there was a still larger area where they had no jurisdiction to make recommendations, because it had not been referred to them by Parliament, and that was the river above Yantlet within the area of the existing body of the Thames Conservancy, and though they could not recommend, they thought it highly desirable, as the shipowners pointed out, that above that limit too a channel should be provided. That report went to the Conservancy in 1896, and they had four years, from 1896 to 1900, to consider and to deal with that report. They clearly had not the funds to carry out the recommendation; that was quite clear. They had an alternative of going to Parliament, which was the other alternative provided by the clause to which they had consented. They did not go to Parliament. The reason that they gave, and I am bound to say, as

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one of the counsel concerned in the Thames Conservancy Bill, it was a very forcible reason to everybody who had been concerned in it, was that that bill had taken, I think, 28 or 29 days of the House of Commons Committee, and it must have cost an enormous sum of money to every interest concerned in their representation before that Committee, and the Conservancy were not inclined to face a second bill of that description and a second expenditure of money. But this, I think, is a matter which will impress itself upon the Commission; in their annual reports they took no steps to make clear to public opinion the necessity of the matter and the difficulty of their acting. They made no representations to the Government that a private bill was too expensive a procedure, but here was an urgent matter waiting, and an urgent matter which should be dealt with, if not by their body with limited funds, by means of some public bill that could be passed through the House. From 1896 to 1900, until this Commission was appointed, nothing was done. Then I will not call it a death-bed repentance, because that might be prophetic, but it is a surprising fact that shortly after this Commission was appointed, a number of public bodies, including the docks, did find that there were improvements which ought to be made at a very early period, in favour of which it was desirable to pass recommendations. To anyone who reads the evidence in those days when counsel were, unhappily for themselves, excluded from taking part in the proceedings, it is curious to see the stages by which the Commission screwed up the Conservancy to definite proposals as to what should be done for the purpose of deepening the river.

Now, my Lord and gentlemen, I think if you look at the history of the Conservancy during that six years, from the time that the Wolfe-Barry Commission was appointed to the present day, it is in itself a reason why when you are granting new taxation, which you must do, and new representation, which you must do, you should not grant it to the Conservancy. There is a further reason, I think, why the Conservancy is not the body to which this new power should be entrusted, and that is the constitution of the Conservancy itself. I doubt whether there is any other body in the United Kingdom which has power put upon it by the wisdom of Parliament, both to manage a harbour and the enormous up-river interests connected with pure water in the upper river valley with the control of the navigation. The attempt to put on to one body those two entirely distinct functions leads to a representation of the most extraordinary kind. You must not make your body too big—it is 38, I think, as it is—therefore you cannot give a large number of representatives to any particular interests, and the number of interests that want representation is enormous. So you go through a large number of County Councils which have nothing whatever to do with the Port of London, but all of which came to the Conservancy and asked for representation—Oxfordshire and Berkshire and Buckinghamshire; and Hertfordshire, too, I remember, got a member through the persistency of their counsel before the Committee, and the county borough of Reading and the water companies and all sorts of bodies which have no interest in the Port of London find themselves upon the body which has to regulate the Port of London. If the Conservancy were cut into its two natural divisions, one which should deal with the tidal part of the Thames—it might be a question of some difficulty as to whether it should be at London Bridge or Richmond—and another body which would deal with the pleasure navigation and the water supply of London and the part relating to the water companies, one could understand the division; but to put into one body dealing with totally distinct functions these members representing all manner of conflicting interests and then to leave them each fighting for their own respective interests, to between them sort out some scheme which should benefit the harbour of London is, I submit, a task almost beyond the wit of man for anybody to achieve. Therefore, as a second reason I find in the constitution of the Conservancy itself a reason why it should not be entrusted with these additional powers. Just to conclude this part of the subject, the opinion of Sir Thomas Sutherland, given at Question 2072, is very striking as to the position of the Conservancy in London. Here is the chairman of the biggest shipping company in the Port of London speaking of the body which controls the port so far as the river is concerned. He says: "The reason why the Thames Conservancy could not feel very much confidence in coming before Parliament is, in my view, because the Thames Conservancy does not, as a body, command the confidence of those at large who are most deeply interested in the welfare of the Port of London." Then he advocates the division of the control of the upper river and the lower river into separate bodies. One does not wonder at the shipowners having a somewhat strong feeling on the subject. Here are they providing the whole of the income for the lower river navigation by their shipping dues, and with three representatives on a body of 38. Such a provision of funds, and such a representation is in itself sufficient to condemn the existing state of things.

(Adjourned to to-morrow morning at 10.15.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PORT OF LONDON.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

Tuesday, 2nd July, 1901.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. LORD REVELSTOKE (*Chairman*).

The Hon. ALFRED LYTTELTON, K.C., M.P.
The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT WELLESLEY PEEL, M.P.
Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D.
Sir JOHN WOLFE WOLFE-BARRY, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.
Rear-Admiral Sir JOHN HEXT, K.C.I.E.
JOHN EDWARD ELLIS, Esq., M.P.

CECIL OWEN, Esq., *Secretary*.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., and Mr. GEORGE WALLACE appeared on behalf of the London and India Dock Company.

Mr. LEWIS COWARD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company.

Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS appeared on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company.

Mr. T. E. SCRUTTON, K.C., and Mr. J. B. PORTER appeared on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London.

Mr. F. F. DALDY appeared on behalf of the London County Council.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. R. W. HARPER appeared on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Wharehousekeepers' Association.

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN appeared on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

Mr. HORACE AVORY, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company.

Mr. CLAUDE BAGGALLAY, K.C., and Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the Promoters of the Thames Lightermen's Bill.

Mr. ROWLAND WHITEHEAD appeared on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. JOSEPH SHAW appeared on behalf of the North London Railway Company.

Mr. F. P. M. SCHILLER appeared on behalf of the Short Sea Traders' Association.

The Hon. J. D. FITZGERALD, K.C., appeared on behalf of the Commissioners of Sewers for the limits from Lombard's Wall to Gravesend Bridge in Kent; the Commissioners of Sewers from Gravesend Bridge to Sheerness in Kent; the Commissioners of Sewers for Havering and Dagenham and other levels in Essex, and the Commissioners of Sewers for Rainham and other levels in Essex.

Mr. SCRUTTON, K.C., recalled to further address the Commission.

Mr. T. E. Scrutton, K.C.
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11769. (*Chairman.*) Mr. Scrutton, will you continue your speech?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) My Lord, last night I had got to this stage in my argument. I had pointed out to the Commission the obvious agreement as to the necessity for deepening the river; the fact that large additional taxation was necessary in order that that deepening should be carried out; that obviously with that taxation a considerable increase of representation of the body paying it must be made; and that it was undesirable that the increased powers should be given to the Thames Conservancy for the reason of the extremely varied powers that that body has at present to carry out, and its extremely composite character owing to the number of interests it has to represent, and the fact that it has found, owing to the small funds at its disposal, very great difficulty in doing anything during the ten years it has had the powers. Of course, one sees the difficulty that the Thames Conservancy has been in. They had very limited funds. The one Bill that they had been engaged in in Parliament in 1894 had been a very expensive one, and one can understand their reluctance to indulge in that struggle again. When one comes to consider their constitution and the desirability of separating the Upper and the Lower River, I suggest to the Commission that a very strong case has been made, so far as the deepening of the river is concerned, for entrusting those powers to a new body, and not to the existing Thames Conservancy.

Now, when one has got to that stage in the argument, there comes a new and very important feature in the problem. The largest Dock Company in London comes to the Commission, and says in effect: "We are in such a position that we cannot deal with the needs of the Port of London so far as they affect us without very large additional powers of taxation being conferred upon us." The considered language in which that is put by the representatives of the London and India Dock Company is very strong in the sixteenth reason that Mr. Scott gives for his proposal, which you will find at the end of the answer to Question 5771. It is this: "That the utmost care and economy have been unable to make the London Docks a financial success, in face of wharfage and warehousing competition carried on against them, with all the advantage on the side of their opponents." He says that the utmost care and economy have been unable to make the docks a financial success, and when one looks at the grounds that were put when they came with their printed documents to the Corporation, the vice-chairman of the Dock Company, in a passage which was not merely the irresponsible rhetoric of a barrister speaking without notes, but the printed statement of an important body, said this, which you will find at Question 6019: "The dock companies of London are in a very serious financial position. It is unquestionably unsatisfactory to have the docks of the Port of London managed by companies which cannot develop it as it should be, and which cannot meet the demands for capital expenditure commensurate with the size and importance of the port." Then in Question 6021 Mr. Scott, recognising whose the language is, says it accurately states the present position, and that is why he wants to get relieved from that position. Then he speaks with regard to the extent of the expenditure that is necessary at Question 5637 in answer to Sir John Wolfe-Barry: "(Q.) We have had a description of it, but

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I wanted to get from you as Chairman of the Dock Company, what amount of capital you had in view as necessary, within, say, the next ten years, for bringing the Port of London up to what may be called modern requirements?—(A.) I think the £2,000,000 will quite cover all we want within the next ten years." So that the Dock Company is face to face with a position in which without further taxation they cannot meet the necessities of the port, and want a capital expenditure of two millions within the next ten years.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) I am sure my friend will not object to my reminding him that that was further dealt with the next morning by Mr. Scott, particularly at Question 5662. Your Lordship will see that that question was put at the end of the day, when Mr. Scott had been all day in the box.

11769A. (*Chairman.*) Yes. He qualified that on the next day.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) The way in which Mr. Scott proposes to deal with that as representing the dock company is that he asks for powers to put a rate on barges, which will raise for him £56,000 a year, and a rate on goods which will raise for him £177,000 or £178,000 a year. His proposals are contained in the answer to Question 5626: "Power to charge dues on barges with a maximum rate of 4d. per ton, estimated on the basis of 3d. per ton to produce the sum of £56,250; and power to levy dues on goods estimated to produce the sum of £177,833." That is £234,000 a year in all. That is the proposal of the dock company, and this comes, of course, in addition to the extra tax which is necessary for the deepening of the river. The object for which this dock company levy is necessary is stated with the greatest frankness in the answer to Question 5626. The first matter that they mention is that they will not pay a higher dividend on their stock than 4 per cent. That is the matter that they put foremost. There is the capital on which sufficient dividend is not being paid, and they want to pay a dividend which shall not exceed 4 per cent.; and in answer to me (Questions 6042-3) Mr. Scott said that if they paid up to 4 per cent. it would absorb £150,000 out of the £234,000 that they were asking for. So that the greater part of the increased levy that they ask is appropriated in their view to increasing the dividend on their present capital up to 4 per cent. They are ready to bind themselves to certain improvements which they estimate to cost £720,000. That is dealt with in Questions 6602-9, in which in detail Mr. Scott goes through the matters, and proposed to put himself under obligation to carry them out in ten years. If that £720,000 were raised at 3½ per cent. it would mean an annual expenditure of £25,000 a year in interest, and of course there would have to be something for sinking fund as well. So that £160,000 is to go to make their dividend up to 4 per cent., and a capital expenditure is proposed in ten years, which can be dealt with, including a sinking fund of £40,000 a year. That is the position in which the London and India Dock Company come before the Commission, and they are one dock company out of four or five existing in London. So that at present you have some powers to be given to some body for deepening the river. That is the first increased taxation, the second increased taxation being a request from the London and India Dock Company that you will give them the power to raise a tax of £230,000 a year. When they got so far it was obvious that the Commission would say, "What about the other dock companies? Is this tax which you, the London and India Dock Company propose on goods and barges peculiar to you, or do the other companies want it?" Then we get face to face with a really very comical situation. See what happened next. There come the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, the Surrey Commercial Dock paying regularly 6 per cent., with the exception of last year, when because they were blocking one of their entrances and making a new dock, they reduced it by one per cent, and were able to pay 5 per cent. The Surrey Commercial Dock are able to raise, and are raising, £800,000 for their new dock on their existing credit. Their existing credit is so good that they can raise £800,000 necessary for their new improvements, without any recourse to additional taxation. They come to the Commission and ask for power to levy a tax on barges and goods. They make no proposal to the Commission to spend the money so raised on any additional works. They give no estimate to the Commission of what they expect to raise by the tax on barges and goods, so far as represents their docks. They show no necessity to the Commission for such a tax, so far as regards their works. They are paying a good dividend, and they can raise all the money they want. They do not want any more improvements, but simply because the London and India Dock Company have come and asked for this tax, the Surrey Commercial Dock come and ask for it, without any pledge as to what they will spend it on, and apparently the only place to which it will go is the pockets of the shareholders, who are receiving 5 per cent. this year, who have been receiving 6 per cent., and who will probably in the future receive more. As far as the Surrey Commercial Dock is concerned I venture to think that is a most amazing proposal to come before the Commission with. That was the first act in the comedy. The second was the performance of the Millwall Dock Company. They also had to consider what course they should take. The Millwall Dock Company were in this unfortunate position owing to causes which one does not wish to go into too much connected with their managing director. They found themselves in a condition of complete exhaustion of their financial resources. No doubt, partly to blame is the trust reposed in their managing director; still more the absence of supervision of that managing director, which resulted in his not being found out during a series of years, but when Mr. Duckham explained the position of the Millwall Dock he had to say (Question 1027), "The Millwall Dock Company have exhausted their resources, and have no capital." Then at 1066 he says, "We have been struggling (and they have been struggling at the other docks too) year after year to make both ends meet, and we have scarcely done it." Then at Question 1084 he says, "At present it (the dock) is very much starved." Then at Question 1081 about £50,000 or £60,000 is wanted to make up for leeway. At Question 1087 £70,000 or £100,000 for a new lock; and they have a million and a half of capital on which no dividend is received. In spite of this unfortunate position, when Mr. Trotter, their Chairman, came before the Commission he did not ask for any increased powers of charging. The first question I asked him in cross-examination, Question 7053, was this: "The London and India Dock Company have come forward with proposals for increased powers of charging. Do you ask anybody for increased powers of charging? (A.) We have not asked for any such powers yet. (Q.) Neither on lighters nor on goods. (A.) We ask for nothing at the present time. (Q.) Is increased money wanted for improving the entrances? (A.) No, I do not think so at the present time." That, of course, would not suit the position of the London and India Docks, because it is very odd that there should be certain docks in the port which were having these powers granted to them, and certain other docks which were not, and so something took place underground. We do not know what it was, but at the beginning of the 23rd day, Question 8463, there was one of those little incidents which have happened at the beginning of some of the days' proceedings of the Commission. A witness whom one does not quite remember, but thinks one has seen before, suddenly appears at the table, and says he wants to correct question number so-and-so, and before the Commissioners or the Counsel have found out what the statement is that he wishes to correct he has got out of the witness-box and the next witness is going on with his evidence. This is what he said: "It has been represented to me that my answer to that question was interpreted as meaning that the Millwall Dock Company did not feel that there was any grievance in regard to the amount of goods that come in in barges and do not contribute to the expenses of the dock." Then he goes on to say they ask for powers. "We hold exactly the same opinion on that point as has been put forward in the evidence of the London and India Dock Company. (*Mr. Ellis.*) What you really wish to say is that it does not depend on the decision of the London and India Dock Company; it depends rather on the decision that may be come to by the Commission? (A.) That is so. (*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) If the decision should be favourable," etc. So that in consequence of "it has been represented to me" by someone unknown, but someone who I fancy is sitting on my right at the present time, Mr. Trotter does come forward, and he asks, as I understand now, for powers to put some unknown dues on barges and goods. He also gives no estimate as to what it will produce to his dock company if such powers are given him, and he also gives no account as to what the money shall be spent on if it is granted. You have then up to this time the London and India Dock Com-

pany asking for a specific sum with the pledge as to what part of it shall be spent on; you have the Surrey Commercial Dock asking for a sum not mentioned, with no pledge as to what it shall be spent on; you have the Millwall Dock asking for a sum not mentioned with no pledge as to what it shall be spent on. Then you have the two minor docks. The Regent's Canal Dock (Question 3630) say they do not ask for any charge on barges or goods; they say they would like it, but it is no good to them, because if there were such charge on the barges, barges would not come to their docks at all; therefore they do not ask for it. As I understand, the Poplar Dock objects altogether to charges on barges. That is the position in which one finds oneself as to these increased charges which are asked for by the various dock companies.

Now, one of the matters which, no doubt, the Commission will have to consider, is whether, if they have to grant to a body, which I suggest should be a new body, increased powers for taxation on the river it is necessary or desirable, in addition, to grant a separate power of imposing taxes to the existing dock companies, or whether the necessity for creating a new body for the deepening of the river is not the opportunity for putting the whole port under one authority, constituted for that purpose, and for the purpose of purchasing the dock business. I suggest if one approached the matter even with perfect dock companies, that the opportunity given by the necessity for creating a new body for deepening the river would be an opportunity for making one port trust for the whole river, and avoiding the duplication of authorities which exists at the present time. I think that position is strengthened when one considers a little the relation of the dock companies to the trade of the Port of London. I am almost afraid to say that I and my clients do not take a position of hostility to the dock companies, because that statement is always received with most incredulous smiles by the dock companies' representatives who sit on my right. The fact is, I think, that the gentlemen from the dock companies have got into such an autocratic position that they cannot conceive of any criticism except that which is hostilely directed to them personally. The position my clients wish to take is simply this. The dock companies have done their best, or what they thought to be the best, for their shareholders, to whom they are directly responsible. It is inherent to their position as people who have to satisfy shareholders, and have not sufficient funds to work their docks, that they should, in endeavouring to satisfy their shareholders, have caused great friction in the trade of London. It is that position which is felt to be undesirable and which we think would be removed were one port trust constituted which would deal with the whole matter. It is a remarkable thing, I think, that so far as I have been able to trace, not a single shipowner has come forward to express satisfaction with the management of the docks. So far as I have been able to trace, not a single shipowner has come forward to say that the docks are managed satisfactorily. Some of them have said that they manage them as well as they can with the funds at their disposal, but I do not think one of them has said that they manage them satisfactorily. Now, may I take the three or four sample shipowners who have been called. I will take first Mr. Pembroke, whom I myself called. His evidence was given on the 22nd day. My recollection is that Mr. Pembroke was examined towards the close of the afternoon, and that several members of the Commission were not at that time present. I may perhaps direct—I think I am entitled to direct—the attention of the whole of the Commission very carefully to the evidence given by Mr. Pembroke. Those members of the Commission who are engaged at all in the city will know the standing of Mr. Pembroke as a commercial man. Those of us who are engaged in commercial litigation are well acquainted with his position as a commercial arbitrator; he is one of the gentlemen most often chosen in the city to deal with commercial disputes owing to his great knowledge of commercial matters. Those members of the Commission who were present when he gave his evidence, I think I am justified in saying, must have been impressed with the business-like way in which he gave that evidence. He came before you as a representative commercial man; he has been president of the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom, and he is one of the men whom one would like to see on the new port authority if it is created. Now, see what he says at Question 8332: "In common with most other lines, the number and size of our vessels has increased largely, but the berth and quay accommodation has remained as it was, and our repeated requests for more room have always been met with the answer that there is none to give. We have had to curtail the dimensions of the steamers we are now building, because the length of the boat must not exceed the dimensions of the lock which forms the entrance to the Albert Dock, and the depth of the vessels for loading purposes is limited by the draught of water available there. A single berth and shed on the south side of the Albert Dock is allotted to us for the discharge of our steamers. This is only 385 feet long, and only four of our fleet of 14 vessels can be accommodated there without overlapping our neighbours' berths. Our berth is practically continuously in use by us, and we often have two, and sometimes three steamers arriving about the same time; the result is that we have to berth two vessels alongside of each other, to the great delay of the discharge of both, or to let one lie with her cargo untouched until the other vessel is emptied. The shed accommodation is inadequate to receive the cargo of more than one vessel. The berth is a considerable distance from the meat stores, and the frozen meat for the dock stores has to be loaded into trucks, and the handling and risk of damage, especially in the hot weather, are most detrimental to the cargo. The berth alongside the meat stores, I may say, is quite unsuitable for the discharge of our vessels, as it is in the narrow cutting between the Albert and Victoria Docks, where the water is too shallow, and the width insufficient to allow of barges lying at either side."

11770. (*Chairman.*) We have all this evidence before us. I do not know whether you think it necessary to read it fully?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) As the Commission have it before them, perhaps I need not read it at length. I call the attention of the Commission to that answer as representing Mr. Pembroke's view of the accommodation of the dock. Now take Sir Thomas Sutherland, at the end of the answer to 1991. "We feel strongly under the present port system and dock system that shipowners are not on solid ground at all, but are very liable to have their business further interfered with in the interest of the dock shareholders, and without increased efficiency or advantage to the shipping world." Then Question 1996: "The docks are poor we know very well, and have to manage their business with most rigorous economy, but undoubtedly if you walk through the docks and see the state of their quays, and if you look at their tugs, which are pretty well coeval with Noah's Ark I think, and their appliances in general, you will see that the expenditure is kept down to its lowest possible point, and one which I should myself say is hardly compatible with efficiency." Again, at Question 2005, he urges the appointment of a public trust. Without reading all of it, I may point out that Mr. Anderson, of the Orient Line says the same thing at Question 2104, and also Mr. Williams, of the Atlantic Transport Company, at Question 2165. I do not think my friends will find any shipowner taking a different view from that taken by these four representative shipowners as to the present relation of the dock company to the trade of the port.

11771. (*Chairman.*) Are you going to refer to the evidence of Mr. Jones at all; I notice you have missed him out?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I had not taken a note of that. I took those four as samples; there is Mr. Beckett Hill as well, of course. I will tell your Lordship at once why I did not refer to Mr. Jones specially, and that is because the Elder Dempster Line, represented by Mr. Jones, is not specially a London line. The Elder Dempster Line is rather a Liverpool line than a London line. I was referring more especially to the London lines; the Orient Line and the P. and O. Line are especially connected with London. There was a matter I was going to deal with, but as time is going on I content myself with indicating it rather. I read the passage of Sir Thomas Sutherland at Question 1991: "We feel strongly under the present port system and dock system, that shipowners are not on solid ground at all." That was not enlarged upon at that time because Sir Thomas Sutherland was not asked any further questions that brought out what he meant, and possibly it was not quite in the knowledge of the Commission to what he was referring. But in my cross-examination of Mr. Scott I put a series of changes of system during the last ten years which have rendered it exceedingly difficult for trading interests to know what is the position they stand in from time to time. The dock company has been short of funds; it has tried every expedient it could to increase its funds.

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Doing its duty to its shareholders it has been continually making fresh proposals by which it might raise more funds. That is very justifiable in the interests of its shareholders, but it is most difficult for the trade of the port to be carried on if continual attempts in one direction and another are being made to raise more money often without regard to what existing contracts with the trade may be. Without going through it in detail I put to Mr. Scott a series of matters that had gone on in the last ten years, beginning with proposals which were referred to in the London Association case, which I mentioned, in which the proposals put forward by the Dock Company were condemned by the Court of Appeal as an imposition on the public, a matter which I think Mr. Scott had omitted to keep in his mind when he said his only crime was poverty; then going on to the proposals in 1896 which caused some very crowded meetings in the City of London, proposals to deal with wharves and taxes on goods; continuing in 1899 when the tax was put on barges and levied for 5 months, until it was declared to be illegal, when the money had to be repaid on Mr. Justice Mathew deciding against them. That series of attempts to make up for the financial position of the dock by levying taxes in various directions could not but affect the trade of the port. Shipowners and traders did not know from year to year, or from month to month what their position might be, because the Dock Company were continually trying to raise new revenue, and that must affect the trade of the port. I do not go into that further; it is a matter of considerable importance to the trade; it is a matter which has to be considered in seeing whether to the company, which has carried on this business in that way, further powers are to be given, or whether this friction is to be relieved by making one body which can deal with the whole trade of London.

Now another matter which I want to say a word about is this. I am aware of, and have accepted loyally, the decision of the Commission not to deal with matters of charge, but I do want to emphasise this. I think the Commission must have been struck by the number of traders who came up and wanted to raise the question of charges. You have shut that out. I agree you would have been here for another year or two if you had gone into it, but is it not a most significant matter that trader after trader, representing traders from section after section, should come saying, "The thing I complain of is the charge."

11771A. (*Chairman.*) We must be consistent and not go into that.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I am trying to accept your Lordship's ruling, and dealing with it from the point of view of the system.

(*Chairman.*) It is obviously what they would come to say. It would have been very remarkable if they had not said so.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) If the Commission had been considering the Liverpool system I do not think there would have been representative trader after trader coming to complain of the Liverpool charges.

(*Chairman.*) I do not follow you, but at all events I think we will not discuss the charges to-day any more than we have on other days.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) If your Lordship pleases. I think I may point out this, and I want to say this one sentence and no more. It may be that you have left one side of the Port of London untouched in not having dealt with that question.

From that I pass to a question which is one of system. Traders have been allowed to say one thing, and several of them have said it—that what they complain of is the system by which a large management rate is charged on goods, when they get into the hands of the dock company, for a number of services many of which are not wanted. That has been compared with the Liverpool system by which goods lying on the quay for a short time, 24 hours or 48 hours or 72 hours, incur no charge except the dock and general dues which all goods pay, and are then liable to charges if they stay longer than that time, which has the effect of making the consignee take his goods away quickly. Now when the dock companies come before you, as they do, in support of their claim and put this case: "See the number of goods that are coming into our dock, going overside into barges and paying us no dues at all," one question which one might ask one's self as a question of management of the dock is: "Have you made it worth their while to take goods through the quay and by carts, or are you charging for everything that goes on to the quay, the full management rate, with rent for two months and a number of other services which may not be required?" Again, I am not going into figures, but the rice people came and said that the management rate for rice was so much—4s. 2d. I think it was; and the answer that was made by the dock company was: "What is the good of talking about rice; none of it is put upon the quay." Surely the answer is obvious: "None of it is put on the quay because the rate you charge if it is put on the quay is such that it is impossible for rice to bear it; you assume that all rice going on the quays is going to stay there for two months, and have all manner of services done, which it does not want."

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) There is no rent charged for rice.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) There is a consolidated rate or a landing rate on rice.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) A landing rate, but not a consolidated rate or rent for two months.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) It was the landing rate that they objected to, which covers a series of services, and which they all said was too high, and then the dock people said: "What is the good of having a landing rate, because you never put it on the quay, and none of it becomes liable?" Then the answer is: "For what you would do your charge is too high, and it would never do to put the goods on the quay." As I gather, Mr. Scott's suggested solution for the difficulty seems to have been the adoption of the American clause for all trades. I cannot help thinking there must be considerable misunderstanding about this if that American clause is supposed to be the solution of the difficulty. In the report of the case of Borrowman, Phillips and Co. v. Wilson, which has been put in evidence, and which is in the Appendix No. 17 to the 27th day, you have the custom of the Port of London found as it was in 1891, which was before the year that the American clause was introduced. This is paragraph 10: "It was the custom of the said Port of London that a consignee of goods had the right to delivery of his goods overside, and therefore free of landing charges if he were ready and willing to take delivery of the same within 24 hours after the arrival at her place of discharge of the vessel in which the goods were borne." That has been the custom of London for many years, but another custom has been grafted on it which has been the subject of judicial decision. I am not going to read reports to the Commission. There is a legal member on the Commission who, if the reference is given, will be quite competent to verify the reports. I refer first to the case of Petrocochino v. Bott, which was in 1874, long before this American clause was introduced. That is reported in Law Reports, 9, Common Pleas, at page 355. That was followed by the case of Marzetti v. Smith, which is reported in 49, Law Times Reports, at page 580. It will be seen that long before any question of this American clause had arisen in the Port a definite custom had been established by which the ship arriving put all her goods on the quay because it meant quick despatch. Then if the goods owner came with the barge within 24 hours from the time of arrival and said, "I want my goods," the shipowner must deliver at his expense from the quay. If he came after the 24 hours the dock company could keep the goods and charge their rates upon them. And the liability of the shipowner was discharged when he put his goods on the quay as to loss. That was the first case of Petrocochino v. Bott. So that there was nothing particularly new in this American clause when it was introduced in 1891 except that there were two things which were different. Up to that time the goods owner had had to come within 24 hours of arrival. The American clause gave him two days longer—72 hours. It was in his favour. It gave him more time to come. The Dock Company did not under the American clause get the goods paying charges on them till 72 hours after. Under the old custom they got them 24 hours after arrival. That was the first difference in the American clause. The second difference was that the cost of putting the goods from quay to barge was levied as a separate sum of 1s. 9d. distinct from the port. I think, as Sir Robert Giffen pointed out, that merely comes to a matter of book-keeping. If, for instance, you are going to pay freight for delivery to a barge, it does not make any difference in the system that you separate it into two sums, and say that you pay freight and then for

transport from quay to barge you pay so much. You will not pay more in the whole, because if the consignee has to pay something for part of the process separately, it reduces the freight. He does not have to pay the same freight. It is really only a matter of book-keeping. It would be a difference on the price at which the man in England buys the goods on the Bill of Lading from the man in America. To suggest, as Mr. Scott did at one stage, that it is this introduction of the American clause which has made the prosperity of the American lines, and which will change the whole future of the Port of London, when it is merely a very trivial variation of the custom which will be found to exist in the two previous cases is, I think, to make a suggestion which is quite inadequate to the solution of the difficulties which have to be met. As a number of our own witnesses have said, supposing that every ship in London had all its goods put out on to the quay and put none of them over the side into barges, the only result would be that you would have all the quays blocked and the ships blocked, and the barges if they came to take away the goods, would get in the way of the next ship which came to discharge her goods. So much for the solution of the American clause which is suggested.

Now, assuming that the Commission are of opinion that they have to make a new body for deepening the river, I would suggest that it is desirable that the new body should take the sole control of the port and docks rather than that a series of five or six different powers should be given to five or six different docks. If one comes to face the question of a public trust, there seem to me to be three questions which the Commission has to consider. First, what shall be its constitution in principle—I am not going into detail; secondly, from what source is it to raise its funds; thirdly, from what source is it to get the purchase money with which it is to purchase the docks to start with? Of course it can go on raising its funds once it has got the docks, but it has to get the funds to purchase the docks before it can begin to raise funds for carrying on its work.

11772. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You really mean capital and revenue?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes, that is really the way I put it. Where is it to get its capital from—the expenditure which it is to start with, and how is it to get its revenue after it is set on its feet? With regard to its constitution, I submit to the Commission the working of other ports, and the expenditure of other ports, points to this being substantially a body governed by the dues payers; that a substantial power on the new port trust should be representative of those who provide the money, whose direct interest it is to get the thing efficient, because it is their ships and their goods that are using it; to pay sufficient money to make it efficient, because it is their ships and their goods that are using it, and not to do more than is necessary to make it efficient, because they are the people who are paying. When you look at the three ports which are conspicuous examples of success in that way, you find Liverpool with six-sevenths of its representatives who are dues payers. There are 24 out of 28, the other four being representatives of the Conservators of the Mersey. You find the Tyne, with half its number dues payers, and that the dues-paying element is increasing because the Tyne began as a municipal body, and the dues-paying element has increased until half its number are dues payers You find the Clyde, with 15 dues payers to 10 municipal representatives, and with the proposal now before it to put on six more dues payers to two municipal, which would make it two-thirds dues payers. I do not know whether that Bill is through Parliament yet, but, if it is carried, it will make it two-thirds of its number. All of those are bodies spending large sums of money on dredging; the Clyde and Tyne largely, and Liverpool spend money on the Bar of the Mersey. All of them you find to be bodies having no aid from the rates, raising their revenue simply through their dues on ships and goods. All of them you find to be bodies which have been able in the administration to reduce the charges they are making on trade, while maintaining the highest efficiency. I say that those facts of experience point very strongly to the fact that the new body, if one should be appointed, should be a body on which the dues payers should have a large majority of representation. Now, would you look at the figures that are given by the three schemes before you; the Corporation, whom I represent, propose 24 out of 40 should be representatives either of the dues payers or underwriters. The London County Council propose that 10 out of 30 should be representatives of the dues payers, which I suggest is much too small a proportion. The Chamber of Commerce propose 25 out of 49 should be dues payers. The comment which I make on those figures is that a body with 50 members is probably too large a body for careful administration. Another comment which I make upon the constitution of the body is this: I find that the London County Council propose that on this body they should have a third of the number; that is to say, they should have a number equal to the dues payers; they should have 10 out of the 30, and that, in addition to that assistance, which I think was my friend Mr. Daldy's phrase for it, they should also have the control of all the capital expenditure. That is a matter which the Corporation does consider is a very serious blot upon the system, and it is a matter which I want very carefully to put shortly before the Commission. It is a proposal that one-third of the body shall be representatives of the London County Council, and that, in addition to that control or assistance, all capital shall be controlled by the London County Council. Now, there is an aspect of the matter which, I think, does demand very careful attention by the Commission, because it was recognised as a very serious matter by the representative of the London County Council, who gave evidence. Every member of the County Council, except the aldermen, is elected by popular election—by a large constituency. Both sides say that no politics enter into the elections for the London County Council, and each side uses the political associations of its respective favourite in conducting the elections, and one knows from the history of the London County Council that there has been a very large labour element upon that body. Mr. Gosling came before the Commission and gave evidence as the Secretary of the Watermen and Lightermen's Trades Union, and also as an Alderman of the London County Council.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) Not as an Alderman of the London County Council.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) At all events he said in his evidence that he was an Alderman of the London County Council. Mr. Tillett, the leader of the Labour Party, was I believe, an Alderman of the London County Council. Now the Corporation does think it a serious matter if at the time of any labour difference affecting the administration of the port, say a docker's strike or the recent watermen's strike, there should be an element on the Port Trust directly connected with that labour dispute, and which has to go for election to a constituency largely affected by that labour dispute. Mr. Gosling naturally does his best for the interests of the union of which he is secretary, and I have no doubt would always do his best for the interests of that union. The same applies to Mr. Tillett. Assuming that during that strike one-third of the body which is managing the Port of London is directly elected by the constituencies to which it will have to go at the next election to justify its action in this particular strike, and with a body controlling all the capital expenditure, every member of which (except Aldermen) has to go to a constituency and justify his election in a case where a matter particularly appealing to popular prejudice may be raised at the election, the Corporation do feel it to be a serious matter, and they submit to the Commissioners as a serious matter whether it would not be desirable to keep this body controlling the Port of London as far as possible free from popular election, and any danger that might involve coming into the administration of the port. One need only think for a moment to see what might have been the effect at the time of the docker's strike if the port had been managed by a body of which numbers were members popularly elected who would have to justify to their constituents their action during the strike. If it is said: "Oh, but you have one side already, because you have the shipowners on the body," the answer is that the shipowners are providing all the funds. In drawing up the scheme, should the Commissioners propose a scheme for a Port Trust, I hope the Commission will give great weight to the consideration which seems to the Corporation of great importance, that is, the desirability or undesirability of having such a popular element as this on the management of the body. Now, that I am not putting forward a matter which merely appeals to the Corporation, may I just read to the Commission the evidence of Mr. Wood himself on this point. At Question 7308 I asked him about this matter: "Now one other question. Have you considered the difficulty of a publicly-elected body which might have a large constituency, managing an undertaking which employed a large amount of labour, in the case of strikes? (A.) Yes. (Q.) Do you think it is a serious

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matter? (A.) It is a very important matter. (Q.) In the time of the dock strike it would have been a serious matter, would it not, if the dock had been managed by a publicly-elected authority? (A.) Yes. Of course I cannot tell what might have happened. They might not have had a strike. (Q.) It is a serious consideration? (A.) It is a serious consideration; but I am not advising that the County Council should be the authority." So that Mr. Wood admits it to be sufficiently serious. He will not advise that the County Council should be the authority which should manage this matter, but he does advise that a third of the body should be the County Council, and that the County Council should have the whole control of the capital expenditure, although he feels it to be so serious that the County Council should not manage it themselves simply because of the difficulty that they might get into.

Now one other comment I want to make on the question of representation. My friend Mr. Daldy justifies the representation of the County Council on the ground that they are representing the interests of the consumers. Mr. Daldy on several occasions during the sittings of the Commission has asked the question of witnesses; are not many of the goods coming into the London district? and when he has asked that question and the witness has said "Yes," he has, he thinks, established the basis for having members of the County Council on, representing the consumers. It occurred to me to ask one witness what he meant by "the London district," and the witness promptly said that he meant from Ipswich to Southampton. Well, the jurisdiction of the County Council is extensive, but I do not know that they can represent or claim to represent England from Ipswich to Southampton, which is the justification for their being put on as representing the consumers. So much for that point of my friend Mr. Daldy. That is what I want to say about the constitution.

Then the second matter is the question of finance, or "revenue," to use Mr. Ellis's phrase. When one finds Liverpool, the Tyne, and the Clyde all raising a very large portion of their income by dues on goods, irrespective of services rendered, one is, I submit, forced to the conclusion that a very considerable element of the revenue of the new port trust must be a due on all goods entering the river, not depending on the way in which they are carried—whether by barges or not—a due on all goods entering the river—in the same way as the Tyne and the Clyde already levy the dues; and when one sees the enormous quantity of goods that do enter the river I think one is justified in saying that in all probability the dues on goods would enable the trust to pay its way. On that I want to refer to a little more evidence later on. I want to say this now; it is suggested that the dues on goods alone will add an exorbitant and unnecessary burden to the trade of London. It certainly is the hope of those who are concerned in this matter, that together with dues on goods will come such improvements in administration as will cause the quicker discharge of ships and the lowering of freight, so that what the goods pay in their increased dues it is hoped they will gain in the smaller freight that they will pay. Just to illustrate that, let me say this; when Mr. Pembroke gave his evidence he gave some comparisons of his actual ships at London and Liverpool. I will only take one instance, that of the first ship he gave, to show the Commission by figures how it was the London ship discharged 2,300 tons in six days at a cost of nearly £700. The Liverpool ship discharged 500 tons more goods in two days less, at a cost to the ship of nearly £300. So that there the ship was saving some £400, but in addition to that the ship took two days longer. Then I asked "What was the cost of demurrage," and he said £60. So if you cut down the discharge in the case of that London vessel from six days to four days you would save £120 on the voyage of the ship, irrespective of any saving in the cost of goods, and, as Mr. Pembroke said in his evidence, we should hope to take less freight if we could make quicker discharge at London. He said they do take less freight for Liverpool than for London, because they are employing the ship for a less time. Therefore it is not right to say that we are going to make the port more onerous, if it is accompanied by a system which will make the ship pay less freight. Then with regard to the question of barges——

11773. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Before you leave this question, when you say "dues on goods," do you mean dues upon all goods, whether they go into dock or discharge in the stream.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes. Like the Liverpool Town and Harbour dues—anything that comes into port.

11774. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Using the word "port" for the whole river and docks combined?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes.

11775. (*Mr. Ellis.*) In the sense that Mr. Pembroke used it in his answer to Question 8363?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes. That is exactly the way I wish to use it. That is the proposal which the Corporation desire to make: not merely on goods coming into dock, but upon all goods which come into the port, as being a river where vessels can lie and discharge, whether in the stream or in the dock.

11776. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Or alongside the private wharves?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes.

11777. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Your phrase is "entering the river?"

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes; entering the port in the sense of the port over which the port trust will have jurisdiction. Now if that is the main source which is to be added to the present revenue, that leaves me only the very important and difficult question, the capital question. The port trust must start by buying the docks at a fair price. Where is the capital expenditure to come from?

11778. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) When I interrupted you I think you were going to say something with regard to barges.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) I am obliged to you, Sir. What I was going to say about barges was this; the Corporation do not consider, if such a duty on goods is imposed, that it is necessary to charge the particular vehicles carrying them. The ship that brings them in will have paid the shipping dues, and the goods brought in will have paid what is analagous to the town and harbour dues. It does not seem to the Corporation that it is necessary at present to decide to charge in addition the vehicle or the barge which takes them away from the ship, any more than it would be necessary to charge the cart which takes them away from the quay. It is not a matter upon which they express a final decision, because it might be that the new port trust, considering all the matter, might consider such a thing desirable. No doubt they must have the barges controlled by careful bye-laws, and bye-laws which are enforced, but they do not propose anything in the nature of a tax on barges except with regard to the question of a possible licensing fee, which might arise if the functions of dealing with the barges were put under the new port trust.

Now, thirdly, I come to the question of capital funds, and I wish to say this before approaching that question. I think Mr. Daldy was a little unfair to us in criticising our scheme as unworthy of the body that put it forward, and useless to the Commission. I do not find that Mr. Daldy has put forward any scheme at all. The first question I suppose is; how much will this trust have to spend? I agree you cannot settle it accurately, but about what capital expenditure do you contemplate to set up that trust? When you ask the County Council that question they say: "We never discussed this matter. If we have to buy it afterwards it is inexpedient that we should discuss it. Therefore as far as we are concerned we deliberately leave you in the dark as to the amount of funds which as capital expenditure we think will be necessary to set up this new trust." They have the figures: they said they had made the calculation; but they did not give the figures to the Commission: they intentionally abstained from giving them to the Commission. When you say the source is to be the rates, the boundless patience, and I suppose the unlimited pockets of the ratepayers, you are of course again relieved from saying how much you are going to spend on the port trust. Now what do the Corporation do? The Corporation have attempted roughly to put before the Commission figures which show that this scheme can work, and I shall deal very shortly with those figures in a moment. I have not heard from Mr. Daldy any serious criticism on those figures. The criticism that I heard was this; he said, I see from Sir Marcus Samuel's table you propose to put a due of £12,000—that is 1s. a ton—on steel and iron exported. How do you think the trade can stand that? The answer is

simple. If he looked at Liverpool he would find the same due on steel exported was put on at Liverpool, and that the quantity of steel exported was double the quantity exported from London, which at present does not suffer from the 1s. a ton due on steel. Now what does one find as to the question of capital expenditure in the other ports? Both Liverpool and the Clyde and the Tyne are able to pay their way with a tax on ships and on goods entering the port without any assistance from rates, and without any allowance from the Government. They are able on that security to raise very large sums of money. Liverpool has raised nearly twenty millions of money on the sole security of dues on shipping and goods with no rates behind and no Government guarantee, and has done that although there are only eight millions of goods per year in Liverpool as compared with some fourteen millions in London. The Tyne finds it unnecessary to have any rate assistance or any Government guarantee to raise the large sums of money which have been necessary for the deepening of the Tyne. The Clyde has been able to make all its improvements in the same way without coming on the rates of Glasgow or asking for a Government guarantee. Now can London do the same? Mr. Pembroke expressed his very careful opinion in answer to Mr. Ellis at Question 8361, that London could do the same. Mr. Ellis was putting to him the possibility of the rates not proving sufficient. Question 8361 is: "Supposing that were insufficient, have you any other reserve in your mind? (A.) I cannot conceive that it can be insufficient. The amount of cargo is so enormous, and the rate could be made sufficient, and it would not bear heavily upon anybody in my opinion." Then at Question 8368: "(Q.) If one guarantees a thing one may have to pay? (A.) Yes, but I think if a large trust, with an important body in connection with it, had the power to put a small tax upon goods, they could raise amply sufficient for all purposes. (Q.) And you give us that very useful information from your experience as a trader of the port? (A.) I do. (Q.) You have long years behind you, and a great amount of business? (A.) Yes, I have seen a good deal of it. (Q.) You have no doubt whatever that there is no necessity for either rates or taxes? (A.) No; that is my opinion. It would be a great advantage, of course, to have a Government guarantee; no doubt the money would be found somewhat cheaper. (Q.) Do you put it in this way? If you put a charge you could make a balance sheet without going to the exchequer or rating? (A.) I do." That is the opinion of one of the most experienced commercial men in the City of London. As to the ultimate working of the trust, Mr. McKinnon Wood agrees with him. At Question 7298 I was asking him as to the differences between Liverpool and London. "(Q.) In Liverpool they are able to pay their way and make large improvements solely by dues on ships and goods. You propose to go on the rates. Do you not think that London might do it on ships and goods? (A.) Ultimately I do. The difference is in the origin of the body. Now we are face to face with urgent improvements in the river on which money must be spent." So that Mr. McKinnon Wood thinks when a trust gets to work it will find itself perfectly able to get on with the revenue that would be raised from dues on ships and goods without coming on the rates. Sir Marcus Samuel takes the same view in his evidence.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Mr. McKinnon Wood's answer at Question 7299 is, "Not to come on the rates, but to use the rates as security."

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes; to have the rates behind in the first instance. Our suggestion is that neither Liverpool nor the Tyne nor the Clyde have found that necessary; neither in Liverpool nor in the Tyne nor in the Clyde are the rates behind as security, yet Liverpool has been able to raise nineteen millions of money. But if there is any doubt about it the Corporation have thought first of all if this stock was made a Trustees' investment stock, one obstacle to raising that money would be removed. The making a stock a Trustees' investment stock does not make people invest in it; there will be many business men in London acquainted with the goodness of the security who might be able to invest in that case if it were a Trustees' investment stock.

11779. (*Chairman.*) Is the Corporation sufficiently confident of the ability of the proposed new body to work the Port and the finances of the Port at a profit to suggest that the new stock should be made a Trustees' stock before any actual proof is given that it is a good security?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) That is the suggestion of the Corporation, and it is the suggestion of Mr. Pembroke. Mr. Pembroke knows the security, and he says he is perfectly confident with regard to it.

11780. (*Chairman.*) I was asking whether it is proposed that it should now be made a Trustees' stock?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes, my Lord, that is the suggestion of the Corporation.

11781. (*Mr. Ellis.*) From the very beginning?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes, from the very beginning.

11782. (*Chairman.*) Before there is any profit and loss shown for the year's working?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) There is no profit and loss shown for the year's working, but there is a trade coming in to London of fourteen millions. Now, you start with that.

11783. (*Chairman.*) There is the question of working expenses. Whether you could show a net profit sufficient to guarantee the stock is the point.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) The Corporation believes with Mr. Pembroke as to that.

11784. (*Chairman.*) He does not say anything about Trustees' stock?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) What Mr. Pembroke said was to this effect: "I am quite confident, knowing the trade and the cost of working as I do, that the thing can pay its way simply with a tax on goods and ships without any guarantee and without any rates." Here is a man who is very well able to form an opinion, and if he is right in that, and if the Corporation take the view that he is right, they are prepared from the start to say that it should be a Trustees' investment stock. It is a question, of course, whether he is right. He knows a good deal about it.

(*Chairman.*) I was only asking the question in order to clear up the point.

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) That is the proposal of the Corporation. I am not speaking on my own authority here. If the Commission look at the report of the Corporation it starts with, "Shall be made," not "shall be made in the future," but "shall be made now," a trustees' investment stock. Of course there is the further suggestion that the Government should be asked to guarantee, in view of the importance of the Port of London and of Woolwich Arsenal. That is a matter which is also before the Commission.

With reference to the margin of security, which is really, of course, the question, may I point out the significance of the figures which were given in Appendix No. 1 of the 22nd day. I am not going through them, but what they show is this; if you had in London what you have at Liverpool—that is to say, if you put on town and harbour dues analogous to those of Liverpool (for which no work is done at Liverpool, because all work is paid for by the payments made to the master lumper and the master porter, and the payments at Liverpool are payments for the goods coming into the river), you would have a surplus of £700,000 a year. That is simply calculating, on the goods which come into London, that they pay the dues on goods which are paid at Liverpool. Mr. Daldy thinks he has disposed of that by saying "Oh, but you are putting the Liverpool dues on goods on to the top of the London dues on goods, and, of course, if you multiply by two you get a surplus." But that, respectfully, quite misunderstands what the Liverpool dues on goods are. They are not dues for goods. When the goods come to Liverpool the master lumper takes them and puts them on the quay, and he is paid for doing it. The master porter does all the sorting and delivery, and he is paid for it. When all the work is paid for there come the dues, for no work done at all. Therefore, if you take the present dues on London goods into the dock as analogous to the master lumper's charges, and the master porter's charges, and the charge for rent after three days, which I think it is at Liverpool; if you take them standing on the same basis, you still have Liverpool goods paying a sum for which there is no equivalent in London at present for town and harbour dues. If you just assume that the London goods pay the town and harbour dues as well as the Liverpool goods, you still have, according to Sir Marcus Samuel's evidence, a surplus revenue, after paying the capital on all the money raised, of £700,000. Of course that leaves an ample margin for the matters which Mr. Daldy mentioned about keeping up the channel and improvements and matters of that sort. We have put those

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figures before the Commission in order that the Commission may see that the Corporation has good grounds for this suggestion, which is Mr. Pembroke's suggestion also, that the dues on the enormous quantity of goods coming into London make an ample security without the necessity of going to the rates. Of course this is a matter of figures, but we have endeavoured to put before the Commission some financial justification for the proposition which we put before them, which is contained in the tables handed in by Sir Marcus Samuel, giving the effect on the Port of London of the imposition of dues on goods similar to the Liverpool port and harbour dues. It would also have this advantage in the view of the Corporation, that it would not be necessary, if you did not charge the rates, to have a representation through the ratepayers of a popularly elected body. That some representation might be thought desirable one may assume, because we find both the Tyne and the Clyde think it desirable to represent the municipalities, although Liverpool does not, and although Liverpool, curiously enough, does not think it necessary to represent the consumer, as Mr. Daldy thought ought to be done. Having dealt with those three points, we submit to the Commission that the conclusions which the special committee of the Corporation have drawn are justified, and should be acted on by the Commission. To summarise the matter, we submit that the causes which at present operate against London are the diversity of the administration, which we ask to be remedied by one port trust; and the inadequacy of funds, which we ask to be remedied by giving that port trust a power to impose a taxation on dues. That the port trust, when constituted, "should have the appointment of pilots, and the superintendence of pilotage, the fixing of their charges, the regulation of watermen and lightermen, and, in fact, the whole of the powers at present exercised on the Thames by the Thames Conservancy below Richmond, the Trinity House, and the Watermen's Company, and also those of the dock companies, and any other bodies having control over the river or docks, except the port sanitary authority." Now, it will be said: "Are you not very inconsistent in absorbing every other body except the one you yourselves have?" Now the Corporation have considered whether it would be desirable to suggest that the port trust, in addition, should be the sanitary authority. The port sanitary authority is not a body specially dealing with trade; it is dealing with the sanitary condition of the river and port in the interests of the inhabitants of London. These interests may be directly opposed to a trading body. It is the interests of ships *quâ* ships to get rid of their ashes and their rubbish by throwing it overboard, and for the trader it is an extremely convenient and economical way of doing it. It does seem to the Corporation that it is desirable that that particular function which is not a trading function, which is a sanitary function connected really with the metropolis, should be left in the hands of a body independent of the port trust. If that is done, you, I believe, are in this fortunate position, that nobody has come to this Commission to make any complaint of the administration of sanitary matters by the Corporation. It is not done at any expense to the rates. It is done without complaint, it has been done very successfully in the past, it is not a matter directly connected with commerce, so that it might be put under the same administration as other commercial matters; it is a sanitary matter, standing on a different footing from commerce, and that, in the opinion of the Corporation, justifies the exception that the port trust should have those functions, except that of the sanitary authority.

11785. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Would you mind explaining a little more clearly to me what you mean by the phrase, "in the interests of the inhabitants of London." Does London, in your mind, mean within the ambit of the control of the City Corporation, or do you mean the wider London? You see the point in my mind?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes.

11786. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You use the expression "in the interests of the inhabitants of London"?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes. I was thinking at that particular moment largely of the interests of those persons bordering on the Thames below London Bridge, because the ships above are very few, and it is not a serious matter. It is below that it is important; the ships lying in the pool and lying in the docks, throwing rubbish overboard.

11787. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You see what is running in my mind. I want to clear it up?

(*Mr. Scrutton.*) Yes. The two points that I should submit for the consideration of the Commission are the two really that I have practically made one, that the functions at present exercised are not commercial but sanitary, and therefore stand on a different footing from the other functions which it might be suggested were part of the functions of a port trust. Secondly, that you are dealing with a body which is now exercising them without any expense to the rates and without any complaint made against them, and therefore a body which there is no *primâ facie* reason to disturb, as it is at present doing the work well, without expense to the rates. Those are the two points I wish to make with regard to the sanitary authority.

In conclusion I would wish to say this, the Corporation have put forward this scheme as an honest endeavour to deal with a very difficult question. Should the scheme, or anything like it, find favour in the eyes of the Commission, the Corporation will do its best to bring it to a successful issue. They feel that the condition of the Port of London, both as regards the deepening of the river and as regards the improvement of the docks (giving credit to everybody for trying to do their best on limited means) is most unsatisfactory, that it is urgent that it should be remedied, and that the remedy should be one body substantially on the lines of the Liverpool body, which shall deal with the whole Port of London, including the docks, with one policy, instead of its being dealt with piecemeal by different bodies with different policies, and should deal promptly and on a large scale with matters which are extremely urgent, in its opinion, for the welfare of the country.

Mr. JOSEPH SHAW called to address the Commission.

Mr. Joseph Shaw.

11788. (*Chairman.*) We understand you appear on behalf of the North London Railway Company?

(*Mr. Joseph Shaw.*) Yes, my Lord, if your Lordship will permit, I should just like to address a few remarks to you on behalf of the North London Railway Company, the owners of the Poplar Docks. As you know, the Poplar Docks are part of the Port of London. I have never seen a case similar to it; the Poplar Docks are a dock within a dock, and that makes the questions raised before you, or some of them, of very great importance for the North London Railway Company, who own this dock, and not only to the North London Railway Company, but all the other railway companies who have access to Poplar Dock over the North London Company's lines. As you know, originally this railway, which is now the North London Railway, was formed to be a connecting link between the river and the docks and what is now the North-Western Railway. The Dock Company were then part owners in this company. They held shares which, I believe, they have since sold; but the importance of this is particularly great to all these railway companies, because, as a matter of fact, all this trade has grown up in this peculiar way in this dock. Poplar Dock has been, as you have heard, a prosperous concern; it is well equipped, and it has been doing a large business. I will only just refer you to one question and answer in the evidence. I am not going to refer you to the evidence; you have heard it all so carefully, my Lord, and I do not think it worth while to refer you to it. But Mr. Scott appreciated the enormous importance of the barges coming in and out of the Poplar Dock. It is at Question 6178: (Q.) "Now I just want to ask you a few questions about the barges. It is almost essential, is it not, to the trade carried on in the Poplar Dock, that barges should come in? (A.) Yes, I should say distinctly so." Of course, that will show you that the main point I am on is the question of the barges coming in free. The way in which this question has got before you as a Commission is that it is said the Port of London is ailing, and all the physicians are called in to see what can be done to remedy it. No doubt, from reading the evidence of Sir Thomas Sutherland, Mr. Alfred Jones, and other big shipping people, something must be done. The question arises how it ought to be done. You have heard various schemes of various people, and you have heard Mr. Scott's suggestions on this point. Mr. Scott's suggestions are to make further charges.

As a business man I have never found, when a business is ailing and failing, that the best way to cure it is to put an extra charge on. That is not the way that we suggest that this ought to be dealt with. If you look at the evidence of Mr. Alfred Jones and others, you will see they want more equipment and better facilities. Instead of acres of water space lying idle, as you will see for yourselves if you go down to the India Dock, what they want is to put up such equipment and such plant as will enable it, with the capital already expended, to be utilised to the best advantage. With regard to the suggestion of putting charges on the barges, everybody knows that London has grown up a free lighterage port. The trade has grown up under those conditions. Look around the world, and you will find that any alteration in the conditions under which a trade has grown up very often puts a bar to the trade itself. The Port of London has grown up as a free lighterage port. The only other case I know of which is comparable to this (which is also a free lighterage port) is the Humber. All you have to do, my Lord, is to look at the Acts dealing with the Humber, and you will see attempts have been made to do away with the free lighterage there, and they have always failed. Also in the case of the Port of London attempts have been made from time to time to do away with this free lighterage. So far they have always failed, and I hope they will fail again. This free lighterage is more essential for the Poplar Dock than perhaps for any of the others, for this reason; we are the connecting link between the Midland and all the other railway systems and the river. The Poplar Dock is the terminus of this big railway system, and it is treated, of course, as a railway terminus. Anybody who had gone a short time ago to the docks would have seen enormous quantities of ammunition coming from the Midlands going into the barges and sent down the river to Tilbury to vessels going to South Africa. Every ton of that was paid for by the railway companies to the dock, because for every ton of stuff that goes over the Poplar Wharf under the agreement a payment is made over to the dock companies. All our trade is an over the staith trade. We are not allowed to do the other trade by our agreements. So that it is essential, if anything is done to the trade of the Poplar Docks, that it should still remain for us a free lighterage port. My Lord, of course the point that I want to make is in answer to the question as to how the money is to be raised for equipment and so on. I am going to make a suggestion. You have heard the suggestion from our witnesses. The North London Railway Company are prepared to buy up the lease of the Poplar Dock. You have heard that from Mr. Dunn. Under the lease we are paying a little over £5,000 a year to the docks. It is a lease of 999 years: that has nearly all to run, of course. That will give a sum of ready money to whoever you choose to hand over the Port of London to. Let us buy our terminal station, but not only must we buy our terminal station, but we also ask leave to buy the entrance into the Blackwall Basin; because owing to our unique position we cannot use our dock without going through the Blackwall Basin. We have no entrance by ourselves into the dock. One of the Commissioners raised the question whether it also is the entrance to the West India Dock. Of course the Board of the North London Railway Company did not then consider it worth while, and I will tell you why in a moment; but I am instructed now to say that if this suggestion of mine on their behalf is found favourable in the eyes of the Commissioners, they will consider the advisability of also taking over and equipping as a railway dock the West India Dock. Up to the present moment they thought so little of it that it was not worth while practically considering that question, because they (the dock companies) are practically doing nothing. I believe a ship an acre a year is about what they are doing. I want you to consider the suggestion of the purchase of the Blackwall entrance. I will refer you to Section 45 of the London and St. Katharine's and East and West India Dock Act of 1888. "Provided, nevertheless, that nothing herein contained shall authorise the East and West India Dock Company to sell or dispose of the site of their Blackwall entrance and basin, or of their south dock eastern entrance and basin, and the North London Railway Company and their tenants shall have at all times the same facilities and rights of user for the purpose of access to their docks of the south dock eastern entrance of the East and West India Company as they now have in and over the Blackwall entrance." We have been protected by Parliament so that they were not to have the power to sell that without our having a voice in the matter. Parliament has recognised the importance of this. I want also to point out to you that that proviso has been repeated so late as last year.

There was just one argument of Mr. Scott's I should like to mention, and that is the argument about the old monopoly. I am not going into it; I am only going to mention it to say I join issue. Of course the monopoly of the East and West India Docks your Lordship will remember, and that was the reason put forward by Mr. Scott that free lighterage was granted in those days. All I ask you to do, my Lord, is to look at the history from then; look at what Parliament has done since then. They have always maintained the principle of free lighterage in other cases. Even in cases at the very time that that monopoly came to an end, you will find in Acts of Parliament that free lighterage is kept alive. It has always been kept alive right up to date. I do not want to go into the whole of it, and I only want to point it out. There is just one other point on that. You will always find that that is in the rating part of it, and not in the other part. I think I have shortly put the points that I want the Commission to consider on behalf of this railway company. I do not want to take up your time by referring to the evidence further. Those are the points that I hope, my Lord, you will consider, and the suggestion that I have made I do think will be of some assistance in order to help in this question of finding anyhow some money to start with, that we are prepared to assist to that degree and find some of the capital.

I would remind your Lordship also that at Liverpool the North-Western Railway have their own dock. In a trust of this kind the shippers are, of course, at one end of the string; the dock is the conduit from the consumer, the railway company is the other end to get to the consumer. The railway facilities are of a great deal more importance now than in the old days, and in dealing with this thing we ask not only for the North London, but the other railways connected with the North London, that some railway representation should be given to any trust you would be pleased to recommend.

(*Chairman.*) That came out very clearly in your evidence.

Mr. F. P. M. Schiller called to address the Commission.

11789. (*Chairman.*) You address us on behalf of the Direct Short Sea Traders' Association?

(*Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.*) Yes, my Lord; in presenting my credentials I desire to point out that the Direct Short Sea Traders' Association are not only shipowners on a very large scale, but they are also wharfingers on a very considerable scale, and their wharves extend from just above London Bridge for a long way down the river. In order to give you some idea of the importance of the Short Sea Traders in the Port of London, I may mention that their tonnage, although of course in comparison with the ocean liners it is a small one, in point of fact becomes important, because their voyages are very frequent, so that the amount of goods tonnage that they bring into the port is very large. In fact, it is more than the ocean liners. They actually contribute towards the expenses of the port 50 per cent. of the money that is at present paid. The Short Sea Traders carry, as I say, more than half the tonnage of the port, and the dues which are levied on those vessels are smaller than those levied on the ocean going ships, which pay three farthings a ton, whereas the Short Sea Traders only pay a half-penny a ton. Of course, that being so, they do represent the major part of the trade of London. Those tonnage dues are levied under section 155 of the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, which Act contains certain exemptions which we think ought to be removed. There is one matter further which I should like to deal with at once, and that is the argument from analogy of other ports. My clients do feel

Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.

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very strongly on the matter, because it is a matter which interests them, and, as I hope to be able to show, interests the general prosperity of the port. The analogies which have been drawn from the Tyne, the Clyde, and the Mersey, and foreign ports, are wholly fallacious, because London differs from those ports. Take, for instance, Liverpool. There is no analogy between London and Liverpool at all as regards the imposition of dues. If London were a new port, and you were going to arrange an ideal port from the outset, very possibly it might have to be worked on the Liverpool lines, but what you have to do is to adapt the old port to the new requirements, and it would be an exceedingly dangerous thing, as we submit, to levy anything like town dues. The effect would be most disastrous, because London labours under this disadvantage, it has far more competing ports, both home and foreign, at its doors. Liverpool is geographically in a very much better position to be able to stand those town dues.

(*Mr. Ellis.*) The witness did not deal with this at all. This is not founded on evidence. It is a speech at large now; it is purely in the air.

11790. (*Chairman.*) Kindly keep to the evidence given by your representative. Why did not your witness tell us this at the time? His examination in chief should have pointed out the differences between London and the other ports, not counsel afterwards.

(*Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.*) I do not think at that time the question had arisen.

(*Chairman.*) The port is no different from what it was a fortnight ago.

(*Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.*) I do not think the question of this analogy between Liverpool and the other ports had arisen at the time Mr. Cattarns was giving evidence. My Lord, the reason we are here is to keep as far as possible the port in its present state, simply bringing it up to date. We have propounded a scheme which you will find in Question 3527. As far as we understand, it has been objected against the port that it is a dear port. Let us see where this objection comes from. The objection comes from the people who use the docks. We do not use the docks. On the other hand, what we say is this; London is not a dear port at all. If it is a dear port, and that objection is well founded, then it is a dear port by reason of the dock dues, and nothing else. We say, we who discharge into lighters find London a very cheap port, and a very good port for our purpose, and we do not want to have any further taxation put on unless we are going to get in return for that taxation attractions that will bring further trade. Now a large amount of the proposals amount to this. What we say is; we do not complain of anybody, we do not complain of the Conservancy, who have done their work so far as they could, exceedingly well; but what we do feel is this; we say a central authority unquestionably is needed. That you will see is the first resolution which was handed in by Mr. Cattarns. We say it is desirable that you should have a central authority to control the matters of the port, and not have it divided. The details of that central authority can be left for future discussion. We say, in all probability the proper way to constitute that central authority would be to have the traders who have to pay the expenses represented as largely as possible upon that central authority. Then, the next thing we say is, that it would be disastrous to apply any part of the funds thus raised to the purchase of any of the existing docks or wharves. Putting it quite shortly, what we say is this; the dock company are the people, if anybody, who can manage docks. They have been at it all their lives, and it is not likely that the new central authority which has been suggested, either by the Chamber of Commerce, or the County Council, or the Corporation, will be any more competent in managing the affairs of the docks than anybody else. We say that the result of buying the docks by any port trust will lead to this disadvantage. Either you will get the municipal competitive trader, which is not a desirable thing, or else you will get a total destruction of competition; and what we say upon that is that the very life and soul of the port, and the prosperity of the port is due to competition being kept alive. We do desire to impress upon you that it is most important that nothing should be done which will interfere with the competition of the traders. Then we say that we ought to have no taxation on the lighters, and no taxation on the goods, because that would lead to the very monopoly which we say is destructive of the trade of the port, and I will show you in a very few words how that will work. The docks used to have a large amount of warehousing; they lost it, it is no matter how they lost it, they have, in fact, lost it by the evolution of trade, the introduction of steam, and so forth. It has gone away. What are they asking to do? They are coming here and asking you to recommend to Parliament that they should have these fresh powers. They have got the old unexhausted powers of levying money on shipping, and they are asking you to give them a new power to tax goods. Either those unexhausted powers are useless, in which case they ought to be struck out, or they serve some purpose; they can be put into force and then they do not want new ones. If they do not want new powers, it looks very much as if what we feel is in point of fact the real cause which has induced the dock companies to apply for those powers is their real motive, and that is this; at the present moment the lighters go in free, and, mark, those are the lighters which carry the goods from the docks to our wharves and to our ships. What will be the effect of imposing a tax on those lighters or those docks? Why, it will put the docks on the basis of unfair competition with the wharves and with the Short Sea Traders. They will be able to warehouse these goods, and they will have to warehouse them, and it will destroy the competition between the wharfinger and the dock company. The effect of that will be very disastrous to us, because we want to get our goods as cheaply as possible, as our trade is to a large extent merely a transhipment trade, and of course it is plain, that being so, the more goods we can get into the Port of London the more prosperous we shall be, and therefore from the peculiarity of our position our prosperity is really synonymous with that of the port. The more prosperous we are, the more goods it means coming to the port, and *vice versa*, the more goods coming to the port the more prosperous we become.

Under those circumstances what we say is, that whatever money is raised and whatever money is spent, ought to be spent in order to make the port more attractive. We want more despatch. As far as the docks are concerned we say we cannot help them; the docks for us are never any use, because they are and always must be too slow. The shippers come in every week and we cannot afford to wait while we can get in and out of the docks and discharge. It is an incident which we do not complain of as mismanagement on the part of the docks at all. It is an incident of dock trade. We say that the Port of London is not a dock port; that the main portion of its trade is a wharf trade and a lighter trade; that it always has been so, and always must be so. What we want to have first of all is a central port authority. We recognise the necessity of that. We want increased facilities and attractions for the port. What we suggest is this. We want, of course, greater depth of water. We want the water made so deep that we can attract and bring up to London the large steamers which at the present moment are only capable of going to the Port of Liverpool. We want to bring those large steamers here; and we are quite willing to run the risk of foreign competition so long as the taxation which is imposed offers further facilities for bringing up goods. We say the proper way, or, at any rate, one way of doing it, is to establish in the river jetties and T piers, and to dredge the channel out to such a depth that at low water these large steamers can come up at any time and at all tides and discharge their goods from their holds into lighters alongside the jetty. If that is done we say it may hurt the docks. I daresay it will hurt the docks; we are prepared to face that; but if the facilities required hurt the docks, in the interests of the trade of the port, we cannot help it. The docks, after all, are only a commercial undertaking, and what we look to is to bring the largest amount of goods that we possibly can into the Port of London. We say that the proper way of doing that is by way of dredging this channel and supplying facilities as cheaply as possible, because, as we say, we users of the port will have to pay our fair share of the expenses incurred. What we say is this, that the expenditure on T piers and jetties is infinitesimal in comparison with the expenditure of making the docks really do their work such as is suggested by the Port Trust taking over those docks, and that it is equally effective, because the lighterage system is already in vogue and well understood by everybody; and that those goods can come from the big vessels by lighter just as easily as they can come by lighter now from the ships that unload into the docks. We suggest, therefore, that among other things the money should be

raised first of all by a tax on the ship. We are perfectly willing to bear our share of that; and we suggest that the dues raised should not be more than enough to meet the interest on capital expended, and enough to pay for maintenance and depreciation. That is all we want, and these gentlemen who have experience of the port feel confident that the port is fully equal to meet the expenditure of deepening the river and affording these facilities, and they think that the result of that would be that more trade would be attracted to the port, and that even if there were extra expenditure, owing to the increased facilities, they would be able to compete not only with ports at home, but also with the foreign ports at their door. That is what they have recommended, and that is what the resolutions which were handed in by Mr. Cattarns at Question 3527 go to show. Upon the question of the possibility of working these T piers a certain amount of evidence has been given which is important. Mr. Cattarns himself, I think, was not cross-examined about it by anybody, but Mr. Jones in the Questions from 4993 onwards, deals with that matter, and he deals with that matter in connection with Antwerp. He puts it that the system of T piers works very satisfactorily in foreign ports. Sir Thomas Sutherland goes to the same point. The advantages of that as we say are obvious. We are not going to involve our ratepayers, or anybody else, or the port, in any very great expenditure. A certain amount of substantial expenditure, of course, there must be. What we say is that we can by that means avoid having to take over out of municipal funds or other funds what practically amounts to the dead capital of the dock company, and it is that against which we are struggling, because what the Short Sea Traders' Association does feel is this, that all these schemes that have been put forward, with the exception of their own, do not tend to cheapen the port. What they desire as far as possible is to have the port cheapened, and they think that if you can substitute other facilities which would cheapen it, in the interests of the port it should be done. At the present moment every one of the schemes put forward involves an enormous amount of capital, and of taking over that capital which has ceased to be remunerative. The short sea traders say the docks are perfectly competent to manage their own business, and sufficiently competent to earn a sufficient income to meet all requirements provided they will write off that dead capital and set their house in order. After all they are only an ordinary commercial undertaking, and if a man engaged in commerce loses his capital he has to write it off. Why should not the dock companies do the same? Why should they, to the peril of the port, demand extra powers of taxation, and why should they give rise to a general scheme of taking over an undertaking which they themselves complain of as not being sufficiently remunerative for their capital, and taking it over at a valuation for the dead capital? Another objection which we have against the present dock scheme is this, which is dealt with in the tenth paragraph of the resolution in Question 3527. It is not only the question of outlay. At the present moment there is no guarantee at all, if you look at the Bill. There is absolutely no guarantee at all on the Dock Bill that one single penny piece of the money that they collect from these dues is money which will go in improving the river or in lowering the sills. I will ask the Commission to look at the fifth paragraph of the resolution in Question 3527.

(*Chairman.*) I do not think we need ask you to discuss these matters further. The resolution put in by Mr. Cattarns as representing the Short Sea Traders' Association seems to clearly express it, and we understand it. It seems to us that you have touched on the principal points.

(*Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.*) What I was going to say about it was this; there is nothing in the Bill to compel them to lower the sill. *Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.* 2 July 1901.

(*Chairman.*) We do not want to discuss the Bill.

(*Mr. F. P. M. Schiller.*) If your Lordship pleases. The danger is this; that if the ship comes up in a deepened channel, and the sills have not been lowered, it can come up at all times of the tide, and if it cannot get into the dock it has to anchor in the fairway, or the channel, which at the outside is 600ft. wide, and the ship is nearly as long as the channel is wide. The ship anchors, swings with the tide, and two results may happen. It may be a fruitful source of collisions, and the ship may also get its nose fixed in the mud and either capsize or break its back, as has happened on more than one occasion down at Bristol. That is a danger which we wish to point out, because our ships coming in there frequently are particularly exposed to that danger. Then we say—and I think it is agreed on all hands—that the channel should be deepened and broadened, and the suggestion which the Short Sea Traders make is that it should be a minimum depth of 32 ft. Then there is a question which arises with regard to the embanking of the sides of the river. As to that the Association says this; it is very possible that there may be engineering difficulties in deepening and widening the channel, and very likely it may be that retaining walls would have to be constructed in order to avoid that evil. Then no doubt there would have to be capital expenditure on that. But at the same time they want to point out that that land so utilised for forming that retaining wall is a very favourable place for the building of jetties and piers. So that not the whole of the capital expenditure employed for building those retaining walls would be unremunerative, and as to the portion that is unremunerative they say that it enables them by offering superior facilities to compete with other ports; and not being a very large expenditure it is worth while making it. Then as regards the taxation of lighters and goods what we say is this; it is simply an attempt on the part of the shipowners or the dock companies to saddle the payment of that tax upon the cargo owner. He is the man who pays the lighter, and it is suggested that for no advantage that he gets the cargo owner is to pay a tax on the goods; he gets no services rendered and he gets no corresponding advantage. We say that is bad, because it destroys the competition by enabling the warehousemen to be competed with by the dock companies. Under those circumstances what we say is that if the Commission can see their way to it, this is not a case for any very drastic change, but what we desire in the interests of everybody, owners of ships, owners of cargo, and owners of quays and wharves, is that the existing state of affairs should be disturbed as little as possible consistently with the efficient working of the port. What the Short Sea Traders, who use the port more than anybody else, say, is this: "You will not improve matters by a dock scheme. The proper thing is to dredge the channel of the river and to dredge it deep enough to afford attractions to trade which has not yet come to the port." We say: "Spend the money on affording attractions to bring trade which has not yet been to the port, and, if the money has to be raised, spend it on fresh objects which are not burdened with debts already, and raise the money not out of the public funds, but raise it from the shipping of the port which uses the port." The Short Sea Traders say they are perfectly willing to contribute their quota. If there is any more wanted you must not go to the public funds, but in the first instance tax the shipping of the port; and if there is to be a tax we say that the proceeds of the tax ought not to go into the pockets of a private corporation to swell its dividends, but they ought to go into the pockets of the public authorities, and ought to be used and spent in improving the facilities of the port.

Mr. R. W. HARPER called to address the Commission.

11791. (*Chairman.*) We understand you address us on behalf of the Wharfingers' and Warehousekeepers' Association? *Mr. R. W. Harper.*

(*Mr. Harper.*) Yes, my Lord. I appear for the industry which has a very large value, as your Lordship has heard. It is one which is in a sense the attacked body here, because the original proposal is a proposal by the dock companies to place a tax upon the lighters frequenting the docks, and a charge upon the goods, the direct effect of which would be to divert business now going to the wharves and to impound it so to speak in the dock warehouses. Except so far as I am attacked with regard to that, I disclaim any hostility with regard to the docks. We have had to work with them in the past, and unless the result of this Commission should be that the docks are replaced by some public trust we shall have to work with them

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in the future. Therefore, except in so far as it is necessary for answering the case that it is sought to make in attacking us, I shall not attempt to attack them; but perhaps I may just clear the ground with regard to many of the topics that have been discussed here by saying this as regards one or two of them, which will only have an indirect bearing on my clients' interests. For instance, take the question of the deepening of the channel. With regard to that, while we should be glad of anything that assisted the Port of London in that way, it would not directly benefit us so much. We conceive that that would be properly met, as has been suggested, by a tax upon all goods coming within the limits of the port—coming physically there by water—providing that the funds so provided were applied by some authority which could not devote any portion of it to fostering competition with us or any other body. Of course, in any proposals to alter the course of trade which has existed for a great number of years, there are very great difficulties, and there is danger that you may drive it away. It is a very delicate thing, and very susceptible to any change which may be brought upon it which is not brought about by any commercial requirement. It is very well illustrated by what Mr. Ryder told us about the habits of the Customs with regard to bonded warehouses generally. He told us that they tried as far as possible to follow the trade, and to do what the trade wanted, instead of forcing upon it the placing of the goods in particular places; but as was pointed out by Mr. Rouse, speaking for the coffee dealers, the trade would not go except to certain wharves. In fact, people have preferences; it is just what you find in London with regard to all particular trades. Why is the dry goods trade found at Wood Street? Why does Colonial produce go to Mincing Lane? Why does corn go to Mark Lane? You cannot divert these things from their regular places. You must accommodate yourselves to those requirements if you are going to do business there.

Now, starting with that as a basis, what I am concerned to maintain here is what has sometimes been termed the privilege of free water. I do not call it a privilege, I say it is the other way about; that the dock companies got privileges against the general public, and against bodies that were then in possession of the rights of taking bonded goods, namely, the legal quays which had been in existence for some centuries before, and the price which it was suggested was paid was not paid by a tax levied upon them, but paid out of the consolidated fund and collected from dues, and was paid solely for the time during which they were given an absolute right to have all West Indian produce of a particular kind warehoused as well as landed in the docks. The Commission has not yet had its attention directed specifically to the statutes, and at the risk of wearying you for a few minutes I should like to direct your attention to them, because I do think there are a few leading characteristics there to which attention may well be drawn. The first is the Act of 1799, and in that Act, after making provision for what I think has been sometimes called the City Canal, which, although it is now the southernmost of the docks, does not materially affect the matter, you will find by section 56 the directors were empowered to make wet docks. Section 57 provides for the warehouses, and then come two rather material sections. This is with reference to a question put by Sir Robert Giffen to one of the witnesses, I think Mr. Scott, as to the power of getting materials from the bed of the river. Section 66 of that original Act provides that, but Section 65 which immediately precedes it, provides for a still wider power, namely, the power of getting materials from the land of adjoining owners which have not been acquired. Without going into detail through them all, I may say that you will find that again at Section 90 of the London Act of 1828, and you will find the powers again in Sections 51, 52 and 53 of the East India Act of 1803.

11792. (*Chairman.*) What is your proposition on this?

(*Mr. Harper.*) My proposition is, shortly, this; that Parliament has there given a power which habitually has been given to no other body except the surveyors of highways, for the repair of highways. It shows, therefore, that in making these docks Parliament has not treated them as a part of the Port of London in the loose and general way in which we sometimes now use the phrase, but as a part of the general highway.

11793. (*Mr. Ellis.*) This is connected with the free water to your mind?

(*Mr. Harper.*) Yes. In point of fact, Parliament has made it part of the Thames, and every right which any individual possessed of going on to the Thames was to continue to exist in those docks, and the docks got special rights and special privileges of a character precisely analogous to those given to public officials who have charge of public highways of going on private lands for materials, adversely to the private owner, making, of course, such compensation as should be found proper. I do not say that is found in all the Acts. I do not wish to weary the Commission with details; it is found in almost all of them. The notable exception that I have is the London Dock Act of 1800. But that was the old London Dock, and it was, I take it, even then immediately surrounded by buildings from the description of what had to be pulled down, and the sand from the river was probably a more important thing then. That is my proposition with regard to that. You are here having Acts passed, so to speak, to widen the accommodation of the river, and I think the original preamble of the Statute of 1799 shows that. The preamble related more particularly at that point to the old City Canal; it reads: "Whereas from the very great and progressive increase of the number and size of ships and other vessels trading to the Port of London, the River Thames in the said port is in general so much crowded with shipping, lighters, and other craft that the navigation of a considerable part of the said river is rendered tedious and dangerous, and there is a large want of room in the said port, for the safe and convenient mooring of vessels and access to them. And whereas great inconveniences are also experienced in the said port for want of regulations concerning the navigating and mooring of vessels in the same. And whereas want of accommodation for the landing and shipping of goods, wares, and merchandise has for some years past been experienced by reason of the confined and crowded state of the legal quays in or belonging to the said port. And whereas great delays, accidents, damages, losses and extraordinary expenses are sustained from the aforesaid causes, to the hindrance of commerce and the great injury of the public revenue. And whereas the said evils might in a considerable degree be remedied if a navigable canal for ships and other vessels were made," and so on. Then it provides what is to be done. That shows that there was then a congestion of trade generally, which was being met in this way, and that the public convenience as well as the private profit of the undertakers was present to the mind of Parliament. In 1800 the London Dock Act followed. In that there was a provision for compensation to the owners of legal quays which was found in the Act of 1799 and which we have had detailed in evidence. It resulted in somewhere about £600,000 being paid to the various interests, wharfingers, lightermen, and others who were proved to have been prejudiced by the erection of the West India Docks under the Act of 1799. By Section 110 of the Act of 1800 the Treasury had power to purchase the legal quays between London Bridge and the Tower of London. There again there was a provision for making warehouses and docks, which it was felt would come into competition at this particular point, and the Treasury had power given to do that. So things went on. In 1803 came the East India Docks; in 1825 came the St. Katharine's Dock. But in 1823, as the Commissioners will remember, there had been the Committee upon foreign trade, to which reference has already been made. I think it very remarkable what followed immediately upon that Committee. There is very great difficulty in getting access to that report, but immediately after that Committee had sat, and I presume reported, I think it very remarkable what we find in the preamble of the very next Act of Parliament. It must be remembered that Mr. Scott, who is the spokesman of the docks here, is the lineal successor in title of the company that was established in 1825 under that Act. The preamble reads thus: "Whereas it is expedient, for the further encouragement and extension of commerce, that the accommodation of the Port of London should be improved by the construction of additional wet docks, with proper gates, sluices, locks, inlets, and outlets, for the reception and discharge of ships laden with merchandise; and that additional wharves, quays, vaults, warehouses and other places of secure deposit, should be constructed for the landing, housing, bonding, and shipping of goods, wares, and merchandise. And whereas it is desirable that such docks, wharves, quays, vaults, warehouses, and other places of deposit, should be situated as near as may be to the City of London, and established on the principle of free competition in trade, and without any exclusive privileges or immunities, but under proper regulations for the secure deposit and warehousing of

merchandise, and for the protection and convenient collection of the revenue," and so on. There you have as early as 1825 that further principle enunciated—that they should be established on the principle of free competition in the trade, and without any exclusive privileges or immunities. Mr. Scott's company is the successor in title now of that one. It takes the rights and burdens given by that statute. One of the burdens is the preamble, which shows distinctly, as I submit, that it was not, as he described it, an accidental survival. I think his exact phrase was that it had been overlooked, and had accidentally survived. It is to be found in No. 2 of his reasons, which are given at Question 5771: "The history of the wharfingers and warehousemen's businesses, which shows that when they first received the privilege of exemption it was in return for the compulsory diversion of business from their premises, that when the dock monopolies expired, the unimportance of these claims left them unnoticed either by the dock companies or the Government, but that when the expiry of the monopolies was followed by the extension of the legal quay and bonded warehouse system, those clauses largely assisted to enable the wharfingers and warehousemen to compete with the docks on advantageous terms, and had, therefore, become both inapplicable and inequitable." How does history support that claim? From that date, at any rate (I will refer to a slight change in the form of the clause which took place about that period), down to the present time uniformly with one exception, and, again, a most significant exception, Parliament has inserted the free lighterage and free delivery clause. The exception is this: In the year 1850 the Victoria Dock Act was passed. I fail to find in that Act the exemption clause. There then follows the Inquiry in 1853, and you do find in the 1853 Act the exemption clause inserted at section 45. You have, therefore, another dock started originally getting its Act without lighterage exemption, which had been in all other Acts up to that time, you find the Committee of Parliament in 1853, you find the clause inserted by Parliament, and then you find the dock company coming in 1855 and seeking to repeal this exemption. You have the debate in the House which follows. You, therefore, have the sequence of events. A bill allowed to slip through, the attention of Parliament drawn to it, the Committee dealing with it, the clause inserted, and then, in 1855, you have a debate in Parliament, and the House, by a large majority, on the initiative of the Government, declining to repeal the clause. You have the whole of these events happening within the compass of five years. What is the position of the port now? As everybody has said, and as I think it cannot be denied, it must be a barge port. What is the main feature of water traffic as distinguished from land traffic? It is its cheapness. I do hope that nothing that this Commission may advise Parliament to do will have the effect in any way of strangling the use of the waterways. We have in the past had quite sufficient illustration in this country of the way in which canals may be crippled by their being handed over to bodies which have distinct adverse interests, and which aim at promoting the use of their railways in preference to promoting the cheap form of transit for heavy goods by water. Anything which would have a tendency to divert traffic from the cheap form of movement on the river, either to carting or to railway traffic, would be a serious matter.

Now, I promised before I left it, to say one word on this point. We found originally that there had been an alteration in the shape of the exemption clause. As originally framed, it provided simply for the access of the lighters to the dock free; the reason, of course, being that those particular docks were being given the monopoly of the West India trade. Therefore, giving them the monopoly, and giving them extensive powers of charging in respect of that trade, you could not at the same moment take them away by saying that the lighter might go in free itself, and take away the goods. But when the 21 years had expired, for which, as I say, their encroachment on the public rights was permitted, the privilege of free entry was retained with the words added which gave freedom to the goods which the lighters carried. That has continued in that form since. Perhaps, though it is rather drifting away to another topic, I might, while I am dealing with the statutes just say what I have to say with regard to one or two other matters on them. There has been a complaint made by the dock officials of their trouble in dealing with barges. Now, again, an examination of the statutes will show that most of these statutes gave powers of dealing with barges as well as vessels, and imposed penalties upon offenders. I do not think I need trouble your Lordship's Commission with the details, I take typically as a late example the Act of 1874, when the East and West India Docks amalgamated, and when apparently it was present to their minds that some of their powers had not been as drastic as they might have been. In the preamble of that statute, the West India Dock Act of 1874 we find this.

(*Chairman.*) We need not trouble you to read it if you give us the reference.

(*Mr. Harper.*) It is simply that they found inconvenience arise from the practice of leaving lighters unattended in the docks. It is the last paragraph of the recitals. Then at Section 15, Section 104 of the principal Act is repealed, and fresh and more drastic provisions are provided for dealing with any obstruction by lighters, or the leaving of lighters and barges unattended in the docks. So there are powers in existence which at any rate will apply to Tilbury; I do not know in fact that they will apply to the Albert Docks; I think one would have to search through the older Acts, but there are in the older Acts provisions of an analagous character, though, perhaps, not so drastic.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) May I tell your Lordship, by way of information, that that section which my friend refers to was repealed in 1879.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) There is power to deal with the management of the barges in the docks, and penalties.

(*Mr. George Wallace.*) There is, no doubt, and if I may be allowed to say so as a matter of information to the Commission, there was a question about a bye-law which cropped up in the course of the evidence. My friend, Mr. Cranstoun, was against me in that case, and the question was whether we could enforce the bye-law or not. We found we could not because the section of the Act of 1879 was not so strong as the bye-law, and we found that the Act of 1879 was not sufficient. We tried the bye-law, and the High Court in the last few weeks has said the bye-law was bad.

(*Mr. Harper.*) In other words, having got the Statute in 1874, they went again in 1879 apparently (I take it from my friend's statement, I have not the Statute before me) they repealed this and took powers to make bye-laws, and on it they have made a bad bye-law.

Now, my Lord, I said I represented a large interest, and I think it has been put by several of the witnesses that the river-side interest, wharves and warehouses generally, represent from eight to eleven millions of money. The docks have been put variously, but I think the figure for them is some 17 or 18 millions of capital actually expended upon them, from the tables that have been put in. I think the Stock Exchange valuation is about 14 millions. At the present time, taking as I understand the dividend that it pays over all, I think in answer to Sir Robert Giffen it came out that the average dividend was somewhere about $1\frac{1}{5}$. Now I represent here an industry which has been in active competition with the docks, and has this merit and this claim to consideration, namely, that we are successful traders. We have never come asking anything. All that we find fault with in the docks is that they do not give us greater dispatch. I mean that as a body; there are individuals who have minor complaints which in the course of trade could easily be remedied, but want of dispatch means this in the case of goods coming to wharves; the wharfinger sends his lighter; his lighter is kept waiting indefinite times, and I am sure it will be in the recollection of the Commission that curiously enough the longest delays of barges in the docks that were handed in by some of the witnesses arose with vessels discharging on the American Bill of Lading, showing at any rate that it is not the universal remedy that it has been held out to be for the evils that have been complained of. What we want is an efficient regulation of the barges so that we can get our goods rapidly. That delay we must pay for ultimately, because although in the first instance we may have a running contract with our lighterman to fetch the goods, and that contract may prevent him charging more in that instance, yet it will come back on our heads afterwards if he finds that in the practice of things he cannot get his goods away as rapidly as he estimated. Now what are the docks proposing to do? They are in the position of monopolists as

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dock owners practically. Of course a small dock like Hay's Dock is practically only three wharves with room for a ship at each. The docks are non-monopolists as regards warehousing. As you remember, Mr. Holland in his memorandum tells you, it is the warehousing that pays. They are proposing to pay still more and to feed that which is not paying, namely, the dock part of their undertaking, out of our pockets. There will, as Mr. Scott admitted, probably be some diminution—I could not expect him to admit a great one of course—in the number of barges that would go to the docks if a tax were placed upon them. There would also be a considerable diversion of goods, and so they would get the advantage both ways, all to the detriment alike of the public wharfinger, whom I more particularly represent, and all those private traders who have erected their own wharves for their manufacturing and other businesses.

In some cases the tax which is proposed would be absolutely prohibitive, and in any case it comes to this; that here is a body with special statutory privileges which it is not exercising, which is seeking to ask this Commission to report that they should have further powers of taxing in another direction in order to make that competition more effective, in order to make that portion of their business which is admittedly paying, pay still more. I venture to submit that is a thing which should not be encouraged. We had it from Mr. Scott that he wanted about £356,000 to pay his preference and debenture interest, and that the taxes that he is proposing to put upon barges and goods will, he estimates, produce about £234,000 more. One has to consider what sort of displacement of trade is meant when one speaks of a sum like £234,000, which is raised by the comparatively small tax which was suggested. It means a very considerable disturbance, and, of course, if in addition to that the dock company can by that scheme get the warehousing of these goods that remain in the warehouses for longer periods, there is a still further source of revenue, because they are filling up those spaces which are at the present time vacant. In other words, they are feeding their warehousing business with a bounty in competition with outsiders, and they, as privileged persons, are asking for further rights, which is practically giving them a bounty at the expense of other people. I venture to hope that the Commission will not assist them in that. At the present time they do about one-third of the warehousing business according to Mr. Scott, and they could not do it all. But I am sure the Commission will not lose sight of the remarkable change that has been deposed to by so many different witnesses before this Commission in the course of trade in the last few years—the greater rapidity with which goods arriving in the docks or at wharves or elsewhere go into consumption, and consequently the diminution in the quantity of goods that require warehousing for any length of time, in addition to the fact that that which is called shedding will for much of the rougher class of produce do just as well as warehouses, will prove just as efficient and enable them to get their goods just as readily as if they had a form of warehouses built specially for the accommodation of such goods.

So that in fact there is a danger of an increasing diminution. On this particular point the interests of those whom I represent, the public wharfingers, are at variance with the interests of the private wharfingers. The private wharfinger is a man who, having got a piece of land adjacent to the river, puts his wharf there, takes his goods there for his own consumption, and gets the same benefit as I do of this free lighter clause and this free delivery clause. He takes his goods straight away and puts them into consumption at once. All that again has tended to diminish the business going to the wharves, but in spite of all that, we exist. If, as I trust, this Commission, before it reports, will take an opportunity of seeing the equipment of the wharves at the present time, and comparing that equipment with the equipment of the docks, I think the prosperity of the one as compared with the other will be explained in a moment. I believe the Commissioners have seen the docks, but I do not know about the wharves. If you go to the docks you find a type of crane with a fixed jib, therefore having a fixed radius of delivery. They were apparently all put down at one time. You will find in some of the larger docks they are practically all one size. Therefore the limitations imposed upon the ships that they can discharge, and the distance to which they can discharge into barges is a very serious thing. But when you go to the wharves you find quite a different state of things. You find there the most modern appliances and luffing cranes. You find there, as Mr. Edgar Wright told you, at Question 11534 that they can take goods out of the hold of a second ship lying in a tier at the wharf direct and can swing the goods a distance of 78 feet from the quay on either side; or if goods come straight out of the hold of a vessel discharging at the wharf he can discharge right over the vessel into a barge on the other side. As a matter of practice this is not done; as a matter of practice the goods are put on the quay. There was Mr. Birrell of the green fruit trade, who was, I think, a gentleman who impartially devoted himself to litigation both with the docks and the wharves. Mr. Birrell told us at Question 9411 that he got all his goods delivered overside at Fresh Wharf, and then took them away to another wharf, and he was cross-examined by members of the Commission as to how he got them, and it turned out that they were absolutely put upon Fresh Wharf, sorted there for him, and then put back again as all part of the free delivery. My Lord, that is exactly what the docks do not do. That is exactly what they have sought to evade by the introduction of the Atlantic Bill of Lading. As I have referred to that, perhaps I may just recall to your mind that case and judgment which was put in at Question 10863. I refer to the case of Borrowman, Phillips and Co. v. Wilson. The question as to how far there was any arrangement between the Dock Company and the Shipping Company was not in any way gone into. Mr. Lyttelton asked me a question as to exactly what the decision was upon. The decision was simply upon this, as I read it, that where you have a privilege established in favour of any one man by Act of Parliament he can renounce that if he chooses. It is quite another matter, I think, when you come to look at the North American Bill of Lading, to find exactly what craft have to do, and exactly how it is arranged goods should go on to the quay, and how they should be dealt with. The North American Bill of Lading is part and parcel of the scheme by which the docks were seeking to get the warehousing, and if you look at Appendix 2 of the 18th day for the terms of that, in Sub-clause B of the London clause you will find that "Craft which are in attendance for delivery, under above clauses and stipulations, shall wait free of demurrage their regular turn to receive goods or grain as required by steamer owners either from steamer or quay, or captain's entry craft." And then, when you turn to the monthly and other agreements, you find that exempted from all that are the goods of the company—that is, the dock company. Clause 11 of Appendix No. 1 of the 17th day says: "The company shall be entitled to free delivery to barge (either from quay or direct from ship) of any goods intended for warehousing with them elsewhere than at the wharf or quay at which the ship discharges, and in respect of which the conditions of overside delivery, save as modified by clause 9 hereof, shall have been complied with." That is the 72 hours for delivery. You have there a deliberate attempt to get that warehousing, and you have heard how in 1896 the commercial world was up in arms at it, and one has to consider what would be likely to be the effect of an attempt to force upon them any such general result as was aimed at by that clause. My Lord, it would mean dislocation, and I do not know what the ultimate result might not be—certain industries in the port would be ruined. It would destroy the industry I represent. It would cripple and prejudice those private wharfingers who, on the faith of this free water, have spent those large sums which I have mentioned. I may remind your Lordship, to take, for instance, Mr. Humphrey, of Hay's Wharf; he has recently spent a quarter of a million on the acquisition of premises, and all on the faith of this free water. Practically it is the only approach to the premises. Practically nothing comes to a wharf by road, and nothing comes by rail; it is their sole mode of approach. The dock companies themselves have throughout taken bills with exemption clauses time after time ever since the case referred to by Mr. Ellis in 1864, and therefore everybody who has spent money on wharves, be they wharfingers, dock companies, or private manufacturers, have spent money on the faith of that clause being there, and to alter that will be to alter the whole foundation on which the business has been built up. I am afraid I have occupied a very long time, but the interest I represent is very large, and

very important, and one which has survived in spite of these continual attempts to encroach upon it. I do not think, however, myself, and I told my clients so very early when they came to me, that mere criticism of a proposal of that kind is the proper way to deal with the matter. We ought to be prepared, where others have brought forward proposals, to say what we think. If the docks are not interfered with, we personally think that a small charge on all goods entering the port, if it was devoted to the improvement of the waterways of the port, using the word in the largest sense, the water of the docks as well as the water of the navigable channel, is a thing which would not only be justifiable, but in the general interest of the trade and commerce of the city and the surrounding country, would be most highly beneficial. To that extent that would receive our support, subject always to this qualification, that the funds so collected should go into the hands of a public body, should be administered by that public body for the general benefit, and should not be placed in the hands of our competitors in trade, who might use the fund adversely to us by employing as capital in one branch of their trade in which they are competing with us, that which was intended to be used in the other. We do not want anything, to use Mr. Scott's phrase, which can be smothered up in some way. We want an independent body to deal with it, and if an independent body has that, it seems to us the first essential has been gained for the improvement of the Port of London.

Now, my Lord, we possess advantages and we have disadvantages, and so have the docks. The docks first of all get the larger ships in the ordinary course of business, and they get the first chance of the warehousing of the goods. Then against the wharfinger it is just possible that the barges may not arrive within the 24 hours, and the ship may then land the goods on charges. In that case our right goes, of course. I will refer in a moment to the 493rd Section of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894. The consignee may not be quite ready with his freight, and in that case, because he cannot discharge freight, the goods may have to go into the warehouses of the dock company. Then, again, there is another point which Mr. Balfour Browne put. It was with quite a different intention, because his aim at the moment was to show how much more valuable the dock property was than it was represented to be on the basis of rateable value, but, as he put it, the docks, by which I take it he must mean the docks and the warehouses immediately adjacent which are rated with them, and as part of them, are rated at one-fourth of their value. A wharf is rated at full value with one-sixth reduction, and private manufacturing premises are rated at full value with one-third reduction.

Therefore again we are handicapped on that. Then there is another point that I put to Mr. Scott. The ship may outstrip her bill of lading. He does not think that will happen so frequently as formerly. I put a case to him of goods from Zanzibar, and he says he does not attach much importance to that. There is a case I merely mention as an illustration. It is not a thing for anybody to boast about, of course, because apparently it is utilised only to get rid of some portion of contribution to the National Revenue. The point is referred to by Mr. Ryder on the last day's evidence. Apparently the Treasury gave way on the point, but the Dock Company claimed they were entitled to have the Customs locks removed from any of the bonded warehouses whenever they did not require them for dutiable goods, and to use them for goods which were either duty paid or non-dutiable. The effect of that was that they were in a position to give facilities for the prompt clearance of tea, or any other commodity upon which an increased taxation might be expected, and, therefore, they got advantages there over the private warehouseman. That will be found in Appendix No. 5, put in on the 29th day by Mr. Ryder; and the point to which I refer with regard to the dock company is this, that in that Appendix there is a letter of the 14th of March, 1900, from the Secretary of the Joint Committee, Mr. Morgan, from which the following is an extract:—"The wording "of that letter hardly indicated our position, and has "led to some little misunderstanding. The docks, as "you are aware, being privileged under Act of Parlia- "ment, are in a different position to warehouses for "which bonds have been given, and the warehouses of "this Committee are available for free or duty paid "goods when clear of dutiable goods."

That is a special privilege which they have over the wharfingers. We do not want to have that privilege extended to us, but we should prefer to see that particular advantage go, as we are all taxpayers, and we are none of us, I trust, inclined to facilitate operations which tend to injure the revenue.

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Those are, substantially, their advantages. On the other hand, our advantages are, proximity to the markets. I think Mr. Fleming, the surveyor of Customs, spoke of that as well as others. Then there are the advantages of proper appliances for discharge, and the advantages of early and late work. Several witnesses called by the London Chamber of Commerce laid stress on that. At Question 9877, Mr. H. B. Smith specifically speaks of that. With regard to the appliances for discharging, you had Mr. Bennett and you had Mr. Isaacs. I think Mr. Bennett's phrase was that there was no finer market in the world than Tooley Street for provisions. You have advantages of that kind resting with the wharfingers, and it is on the balance of these two that one has to see where trade would go if any disturbance took place. I do not think anyone can foresee the extent of the disturbance with regard to a thing like provisions. The produce is heavy; it comes in large ships very frequently; it has to be lightered, and if lighters and goods have to pay this tax it may be a very serious thing, and may mean ultimately the transfer of the market from Tooley Street elsewhere. Those are material considerations affecting the docks and ourselves with regard to the scheme put forward, supposing your Commission should report that the docks should not be trusted with either the whole or some part of their undertaking. There has been once or twice a suggestion made that the whole of the riverside property should go, but I think in the eyes of all practical men that must be too visionary almost for consideration. It involves a huge expenditure of capital. You cannot separate from the public wharfinger the private individual who has put up a wharf for the purposes of his own business; the whole must go, or none must go, and, as I have said, it is certainly too visionary almost for consideration. But, supposing you think that the docks and their warehouses should go, it is obviously impossible, I should think, for anyone to contend, and I certainly was surprised to hear from Sir Marcus Samuel, and I was not surprised to hear Mr. Scrutton this morning slide gently over it, the suggestion that the docks and warehouses should be bought, and that certain bonded warehouses, to be determined by the trust proposed to be created, should also be purchased, which he himself admitted should in some degree compete with the other bonded warehouses which were left. My Lord, has ever in this country such a principle been allowed as that? Most of those gentlemen concerned with this matter are in some way concerned with commerce. How would Sir Marcus like to have a competitive business, possibly founded more recently, possibly with a greater amount of capital, bought up by a Government trust, and run with a Government guarantee at its back, in opposition to him? It seems almost impossible to find a business man putting such a thing forward. I must confess I was astounded to hear the Corporation of the City of London put its seal on that suggestion. I shall not say anything more upon that, because I think it too visionary for words.

See 9972

Then comes the suggestion of the London County Council. We do not like the notion of municipal control. I admit that the control proposed by the London County Council is of a modified form, but it is very real in spite of that. The practical work is to be left, according to their theory, to practical men, and that, so far, is sound, but when you find that the man who holds the purse-strings is to be elected by a popular body, you may at the precise moment when expenditure is necessary find those purse-strings closed, and you may find yourself in the very greatest possible difficulty. We do not like the notion of municipal control in any shape or form, and we do not think it necessary. We agree (and I will draw your attention in a moment to what Mr. Pembroke said) that the trade of London can support its own docks and support its own business, limiting that in the way I have proposed. Taking the proposal of the London Chamber of Commerce, that we are more in accordance with; but, there again, the proposal seems to us to err in giving undue representation to what I may term possibly nominated members. It errs in that it might compel the trust immediately to sell the warehouse property which it had acquired from the docks, which warehouse property it is perfectly, obvious the docks, having received that large

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sum for the purpose of their whole undertaking, might buy back at a comparatively small figure which the necessary slump in the market would occasion, and enter into competition in an aggravated form with us. We find fault with that; and supposing the Commission should think it contained the germs of a sound scheme, we should suggest that it needs very careful limitation of the manner in which the sale of the warehouses should be safeguarded in order that such competition should not be set up. It is suggested that there should be six representatives of the Corporation, and six of the London County Council, one of the Admiralty, one from the War Office, a representative of the Board of Trade, a great number of official representatives, and 25 elected members representing the body landing goods in the port, and the underwriters and others. My Lord, we infinitely prefer the Liverpool body, which has the merit of having stood the test of practical work, and having stood it successfully. Men whose livelihood depends upon the success of an undertaking like that are certain to take more real interest in it, and to work harder for its welfare than anybody gathered from the outside as representing any popular body; and we trust that in any decision you may come to with regard to recommending a scheme for a trust you will bear in mind according to our view what is wanted is the practical control—not that mere visionary control which was suggested by one of the witnesses, to put on one or two shipowners because they had the practical experience, and, if there is any leaven of officials, let that leaven be small.

Then, my Lord, there is the scheme of the Short Sea Traders' Association, which I need not say much about, because, practically, I do not think it differs very much from mine. There have been suggestions made to the Commission about public wharves to be created at which no warehousing should be done, but at which ships should land as they do at Antwerp. Possibly it would be more correct to call them quays. That, again, if it could be made possible by practical people, would have the support of the body I represent. Of course, we are not shipowners, and we do not understand these matters as to where a ship should lie safely down the stream; and, therefore, we do not attempt to make any suggestions to the Commission as to whether that is practical or not. We desire to say this, that it seems to us that the soundest mode of division is to divide the waterways from the warehouses. It will occasion the least possible friction, and the least possible displacement of trade, or alteration in the channels of commerce, and will leave the dock company with that which they themselves have described as the most profitable source of their undertaking. It will hand over to the public that which is essentially public, as I have pointed out, and which has been stamped with that character from 1799 by successive Acts of Parliament; and will, by the levying, as I suggest, of a tonnage rate upon goods, be provided with a fund for the maintenance of those ways. My Lord, we do not propose to interfere with the docks, on that scheme, levying their ship dues; and when we have heard from Mr. Scott a long account of how dividends have fallen with regard to these two companies, I think it right to remind your Lordship that within a year or so after the destruction, or, rather, the expiration of the monopoly of the West India Docks, the dividend of the West India Dock began to fall. The 10 per cent. was not maintained, I think, for more than three years after the expiration of the monopoly. At the time of the monopoly—I do not think your Lordship's attention has been drawn to this—they had power to charge no less than 6s. 8d. per ton registered tonnage. That is what monopoly brought. It carried with it 6s. 8d. per ton on the ship's net registered tonnage. Nobody can wonder that with such a power they paid 10 per cent. dividend. I do not suppose anybody would propose to give them a power to pay 10 per cent. again under such a privilege as that. I am trying not to give references to anything, because I am not stating anything except in the most general terms.

Complaint was made of the increased size of the barges, and the extra expense, therefore, of locking in and out. The deeper a barge is, the more comparable it is to a ship; and when an increase of 6d. a ton on the net registered tonnage of ships, as Mr. Scott says, which is still within their statutory powers, would produce them a revenue of £100,000 a year, it is extraordinary that he has not done it, when, turning to Mr. Duckham, you find at Question 981 exactly what is happening with regard to ships, because it is to be remembered that ship dues are still levied upon registered tonnage. Said Mr. Duckham: "With the introduction of steamers a large addition was made to the hull to accommodate the propelling engines, and the tonnage due to the actual size of the ship requiring dock space became so much more than the net tonnage upon which the dues were paid. During recent years the designers of ships have chiefly aimed at so forming them as to carry the greatest amount of cargo on the smallest amount of registered tonnage, and so it comes about that steamers having a carrying capacity of 4,000 tons, and a gross register of 2,500 tons, now pay dock dues upon a net register of 1,600 tons only."

So that, my Lord, Mr. Scott is keeping down his charges on shipping at the time the ship designer is concurrently scheming to produce a ship which shall remain of the old net registered tonnage, while her carrying capacity is enormously increased. A very striking illustration of that is provided by one of these ships using the Victoria and Albert Dock under the American bill of lading, the "Minnehaha." The "Minnehaha" has a tonnage of 13,403 gross, of 8,647 net, and she actually has a dead weight of 13,000 tons carrying capacity. So that there you have in one of the ships coming in under the American bill of lading, which they are letting in under the favourable terms—because you will remember on the 1s. 9d. discharging rate Mr. Scott himself said there was a considerable profit—something like 4,000 tons which is paying nothing.

My Lord, there is practically little more I have to say, because I have indicated my views with regard to the schemes which have been before the Commission; but there are just two matters. One is compulsory pilotage. It may be within the memory of the Commission that Mr. Hugh Colin Smith, who has been twice before the Commission, gave evidence on that point.

(*Chairman.*) We have a very clear recollection of Mr. Smith's evidence.

(*Mr. Harper.*) I was only going to say, my Lord, that that has the support of my Association.

(*Chairman.*) That we understood from the evidence.

(*Mr. Harper.*) Then there is one further matter which was referred to by Mr. Ryder, and it was the extension of the Customs hours. We trust to have the support of the Commission in asking for that.

My Lord, there was a misconception that arose with regard to the ship landing goods on the quayside. Section 493, Sub-section (4) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, which is a general statute, provides certain conditions under which goods can be landed, and it expressly enacts that: "If any goods are, for the purpose of convenience in assorting the same, landed at the wharf where the ship is discharged, and the owner of the goods at the time of that landing has made entry, and is ready and offers to take delivery thereof, and to convey the same to some other wharf or warehouse, the goods shall be assorted at landing, and shall, if demanded, be delivered to the owner thereof within 24 hours after assortment; and the expense of and consequent on that landing and assortment shall be borne by the shipowner."

(*Adjourned for a short time.*)

Mr. JAMES CRANSTOUN called to address the Commission.

11794. (*Chairman.*) You propose to address us on behalf of the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners.

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Yes, my Lord. With your permission I will state the case as it affects my clients. I need not occupy much of your time, because many of the arguments that have been used by my friend Mr. Harper are arguments that I intended to use. There are one or two points, however, to which I might draw your attention.

My Lord, we feel keenly on this question of the clause under which we are exempted from paying any

tax whatever. Our reason for doing so is that the right of free entry has lasted for one hundred years, and free delivery is now part of the custom of the Port of London. We say that the free admission of barges into the docks was absolutely essential at the time when the Act of 1799 was passed. The reason (as has been pointed out many times during this inquiry) was that the quays, the wharves, and the warehouses were full. Putting it shortly, the harbour itself was inadequate for the amount of shipping that came. For that reason the legislators and merchants at that time deemed it necessary to extend it. That was done by means of docks, and our case is that the docks were intended to be not only a place for the warehousing of goods, but also a place into which ships might go and discharge into lighters as they had done in the river. It was impossible for docks to supersede the necessity of having craft into which goods should be discharged, and we submit that it was not the intention at that time or any other to impose a tax upon the barge itself. It has been said in this case that remuneration or compensation was paid to lightermen. I do not think that there is any proof of that statement. Section 121 of the Act of 1799 expressly describes to whom compensation is to be paid. If I may put it very shortly, it was to persons connected with or employed at the quays, wharves, or other tenements which were taken away or rendered of less value. I think that the sole object of the compensation clause was that certain persons who had exclusive privileges (namely, those connected with the West India trade) had their privileges taken away from them and were to be compensated for the loss. Any person who was connected with that trade —not a lighterman, because he could not be said to be connected with that trade—who came forward and made his claim got the compensation. A lighterman required no compensation, the extension did not injure him; in fact it rather benefited his trade because there had been great congestion in the river. Barges lay there, we are told, for six weeks, and goods could not be lightered and there was little or no work for lightermen to do. Therefore the removal of numbers of ships from the river into the dock was rather to the advantage of the lighterman than otherwise. Lighters simply floated into the docks with the ships as their necessary attendants. I think it is perfectly clear that there is no satisfactory proof that compensation was made to lightermen as such. A case has been mentioned on this point, but the applicant may have simply described himself as a lighterman, or he may have had premises on the land that was taken for the dock, and it may have been for that reason that the compensation was given.

My friend has just informed you that in every Act of Parliament except one this exemption clause has been inserted. I think he was referring to the Victoria Dock Act, 1850. But I venture to submit that there is no exception. Section 42 of the Victoria Dock Act of 1850 says that "It shall be lawful for the company, from time to time, to take or receive for or in respect of every vessel using or entering the dock or lying therein or departing therefrom such reasonable rate or sum for every registered ton of such vessel as shall not exceed the rates or sums then usually paid in the Port of London for or in respect of any vessel using, or entering, or lying in, or departing from any docks in the Port of London surrounded with walls, and any such rate or sum shall be payable by the master of such vessel." It might be argued that the words "rates or sums then usually paid in the Port of London" could not include rates by way of a tax on the barges themselves. But I go further and say that the docks could not have taxed the barges under that clause because a barge is not included under the word "vessel." We may take it, therefore, that for a hundred years we have had this clause in every Act of Parliament, and as my friend has pointed out the custom of the Port of London has grown on the privilege that was given by Parliament in the year 1799. Vast sums of money have been laid out by reason of these Acts of Parliament, and the whole business of the Port of London has been carried on on the faith of that clause being retained. The question, therefore, of taxing barges is one of public importance. Our submission is that nothing short of absolute public necessity would warrant the Legislature in repealing this exemption clause. What we say is that the dock companies, after misfortunes which it is not my business to discuss, have no right to come on a particular occupation or trade such as the lighterman's, and impose a tax upon that particular trade to recoup themselves the moneys they have lost. We think it a great injustice that the thousands of pounds which we should have to pay should go out of our pockets into the pockets of the shareholders of the dock company. For what purpose? Not for the purpose of improving the whole Port, but for the purpose of assisting a particular dock company. Mr. Scott says: "The Committee now ask not to sweep away vested interests, but to be allowed to make a small charge for the use of their own legally vested property, which would enable the dock company not only to live, but also to bring the docks to a state of high efficiency." Can anyone imagine for a moment that this tax on barges alone, or even combined with the tax on the goods lightered in barges, is sufficient to bring the docks into a state of high efficiency? Although this proposed tax might practically ruin a great many lightermen, it certainly would not put the docks into a state of high efficiency. The income to be derived from a tax of 4d. on the tonnage of the barge and 1s. 6d. on the goods that are carried in the barge, although it would be a very heavy tax upon us, would be entirely insufficient to carry out the purposes which the dock directors have in view. Why is it that we are called upon to pay this tax? The suggestion is that it is for services rendered to us. The service that is suggested is connected with locking in and locking out. I do not think it has been mentioned by any of my learned friends, but you must remember that over all these locks there are public bridges. The docks are placed on land over which public highways went, and Mr. Baggallay has pointed out over and over again in the evidence he gave on the first occasion he was before the Commission, that with the exception of the Tilbury Dock there is not a single lock attached to the whole of these docks that has not a public highway of some description or other going over it. Before obtaining their concessions the docks were put under the condition that bridges were to be placed across the locks, and that these bridges were not to be kept open any longer than was absolutely necessary. Besides, in section 100 of the Act of 43 George III., chapter 126 (that is the Act of 1803), is was distinctly stated that: "The East India Dock Company and their successors shall, and they are hereby required at their own costs and charges, to construct and make or cause to be constructed and made such locks and other works as shall enable lighters and other craft loaded or unloaded at all times of the tide in a reasonable manner to pass and repass to and from the River Thames into and from the said docks and basins, and the said ships or vessels loading or unloading therein." There was the legal obligation on the part of that dock company to make and construct such locks or ways as to enable lighters or craft loaded or unloaded to go out and in at all states of the tide. Now how does that compare with their present position? The docks do not pretend to let us in at all states of the tide. Our complaint all along has been that if they would let us in as that Act of Parliament says they should let us in, there would not be this congestion that is spoken of. At the present moment they lock in three and a half hours or four hours before high water. Hence the congestion, for the barges have to be there for some considerable time. The dock officials say that all they are bound to do is to open the gates and let us in; that that is all the right we have. We do not claim any more. What we want, however, is, that control should be exercised by the dock company over the barges that are at the entrance of the dock in the same way as the traffic in a public thoroughfare is controlled. Now let me return to the question of bridges. Our contention is that if services are rendered to barges when being locked in and out, these services are rendered for the purpose of enabling the docks to carry out their own obligations. They are bound to do it. The evidence on this point (and we could not have better evidence) is that of Mr. Baggallay. This question was put to him (Question 6844): "Where is it that you lend assistance to the barges? (A.) I may say at all entrances where there are public road bridges, and where, if we did not hurry the barges through and render them every assistance, we should be causing great inconvenience to traffic along the roads. The Blackwall instance is a good one; if we did not get the barges through quickly there we should get miles of traffic on the road blocked; therefore we use our capstans and all the machinery we have, and put a tug there to help them through. But we do not do that at Tilbury, where there is no public inconvenience. If a man takes an hour coming in, it does not really affect us very much." Again, in answer to Question 839, in which he was describing to the Commission the various docks, he said: "I mention all these bridges over, because having

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to open so many swing public road bridges is sometimes a great factor in the delay at the docks." To Questions 916 and 917 he says that these bridges cause considerable delay to the locking and are a continuous source of trouble and annoyance, and in the answers to Questions 925, 929, and 948, he says they interfere very much with the locking of vessels.

11795. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Cannot the lighters go underneath the bridges?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I think not.

11796. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) They surely can at many states of the tide?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Certainly they do not go underneath the bridges if the tide is full. They could not. I am not quite sure whether in some states of the tide the lighters could not get underneath the bridges. At all events, in dealing with the claim for services rendered to barges the existence of these bridges must be taken into account. Our contention is that the rendering of these services is obligatory. The docks are bound to render them in their own interests to carry out their own undertaking.

11797. (*Mr. Ellis.*) In order to get this clear—you have told us that there is a public right over those locks in the shape of a road. Do you put it that the public right not only ensures that the gate shall be opened promptly and closed promptly in order to avoid the long lines of traffic that would ensue, but that it increases your original right to enter the locks. Does it touch your right?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) No, it does not affect my right at all.

11798. (*Mr. Ellis.*) It assists it practically as you have explained?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) Yes. Indirectly it assists us, but it cannot be said that the services are voluntary services rendered to the barges. Mr. Scott is claiming this tax for services rendered. He said (Q. 5887): "If the lightermen pay us a certain sum for the service we render naturally a certain obligation must fall on us which to-day does not exist." We contend that the obligation is already in existence, and that there are other reasons than the congestion of barges that call for these services.

11799. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You point to the traffic?

(*Mr. Cranstoun.*) I point to the circumstance that the roads going across these locks necessitate their prompt opening and shutting, and that barges are assisted in order that that work may be carried through. Now, while I am on the point of congestion I would refer to the 1879 Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade on the Navigation of the River Thames, which has been mentioned more than once in these proceedings, and in which the crowding of barges on the river was to some extent gone into. In the minutes of evidence I find that the principal dock master of the East and West India Docks was one of the witnesses called. In speaking of the towing out of barges there was no suggestion of any congestion so far as the docks were concerned. In answer to Question 4898 he said: "We have towed 30 or 40 out of the entrance at once, just to give them a start into the river." The dock master of the Surrey Commercial Dock was called, and Question 5178 was this: "But I suppose that the inconvenience in your docks of local crowding only takes place at the dock entrances?—(A.) Yes, just at the dock entrances." Mr. Maitland was called; I think he was connected with the London Dock. He was asked: "Do you find any inconvenience from the aggregation of barges so near the entrance?" His answer was: "Yes, that is where we do find inconvenience with the ships." That was in 1879, when I do not suppose the state of things was very different from what it is now. It was difficult for the dock companies then, and it may be difficult for them now, to perform their statutory duties, but for this the barges are not to blame. Under the Act of 43 George III., chapter 126, section 100, the East India Dock Company was under an obligation at their own costs and charges to assist barges out and in at all proper states of the tide.

The next expense that the docks say we put them to is the pumping of water to supply the loss which is occasioned by locking in and locking out, and the cost of dredging.

Now, is this an expense that is caused by barges only, or for which barges are responsible? I submit not, because when you have a large ship, say, of 10,000 tons, coming into the docks you have only to consider the displacement of water that she causes in the dock in which she is placed. The weight of water she displaces equals the weight of the vessel with everything she has on board. A barge has no such displacement as that. So far as the barge is concerned, it would be simply the cargo that it carried, plus the weight of the hull. It has no engines or machinery of any kind, and it would require a very large number of barges to go into that dock to displace anything like the amount of water that is displaced by a vessel of the tonnage I have mentioned. With reference to dredging, I submit that the barges are not responsible for that. It is a necessary consequence of the increased work in the docks, and it is in evidence that it may be owing, to a very great extent, to the faulty construction of the entrances to the docks. Another piece of evidence that was given by Mr. Baggallay was that the Thames water is muddier now than it ever was. If that be so, whether the water is pumped in or enters in the ordinary way upon the flood tide, it follows that more mud is collected than formerly, and more dredging is required. It does not follow that there has been a great increase in the locking in and locking out of barges. Upon this point, the very great expense of conveying the mud to Barrow deeps must be borne in mind. That is a distance that they were not bound to carry to until recent times. Under these circumstances, I submit to you that these expenses are not to be attributed to barges. Now as to the number and tonnage of barges that enter the docks. Mr. Scott has said that in the year 1899, 137,193 barges entered the dock, and taking these as of an average of 60 tons, the aggregate tonnage would be 8,231,580 tons. I desire to remind the Commission that this calculation is based not on the net registered tonnage (as in the case of ships), but on the burthen tonnage of the barges. It was pointed out to you that the gross tonnage of a ship is sometimes 2½ times more than the net tonnage. The principal witness on that point was Mr. Girdlestone, who (Question 4697) made this remarkable statement, which I will read. "There are two other matters I should just like to call the attention of the Commission to in regard to revenue. The first is that the present system of measurement of tonnage has led, and is leading still more than formerly, to great anomalies in regard to the weight of goods carried in the ship. The modern liner now brings 2 to 2½, sometimes even 3, tons per register ton, which is the unit of taxation in regard to the vessel. The consequence is, as regards the Port of Bristol, that as compared with the measurement in force in 1888, we are losing £6,282 per annum by the clever way in which shipbuilders manage to build vessels of small registered tonnage, but tremendous carrying capacity. I can submit figures to the Commission illustrating this matter so far as Bristol is concerned, but it is a very serious matter for all ports, because the modern vessel requires an enormous expenditure, a bigger lock, a deeper sill, and prodigiously increased shed accommodation as compared with the vessel which was in vogue ten or twelve years ago. All the dock revenues of the country are suffering from this system of measurement." Now, it has been given in evidence (Q. 3707) by Mr. Jacobs that 79 tons is the average burthen tonnage of a barge. The register tonnage being to the burthen tonnage in the proportion of three to five, the average register tonnage will be 47 tons. 137,193 barges would, therefore, aggregate only 6,448,071 tons—nearly two millions less than Mr. Scott's figures, and if we reckon the tonnage of barges in the same way as Mr. Scott reckons the net tonnage of a ship, the average tonnage would be 39½, and on this calculation 137,193 barges would aggregate only 5,419,123 tons. On this point I would also refer the Commissioners to what is said in the Preamble of the Dock Company's Bill of 1901.

Now another point that I have to deal with is the amount of the tax that is intended to be placed upon us. The proposal is that there should be a tax on the barge at the rate of 4d. a ton, and in addition to that there is to be a tax of 1s. 6d. on the goods that are carried in the barge. Now, compare that with what a ship has to pay. A ship of 1,000 tons register carries at least 2,000 tons of cargo. That ship may enter a dock with 2,000 tons at 1s. a ton, and she may also leave with 2,000 tons without extra charge. She pays only for coming in, and although she may carry 4,000 tons (2,000 in and 2,000 out) she pays 1s. on 1,000 tons only. That is £50. How will it be with a barge? If a barge

takes in 2,000 tons and brings out 2,000 tons, she would not be charged on 1,000 tons only, but she would be charged on 4,000, which is the burthen tonnage. So that the barge has to pay more than four times as much as the ship has to pay; 2,000 tons at 4d. for the barge, and 4,000 tons at 1s. 6d. That is, she would have to pay, if full, £333 6s. 8d., whereas the ship would only have to pay £50. That we submit is an anomaly that is absolutely fatal to this proposal. Why is the barge-owner to be taxed on the burthen tonnage of his barge, that is, on the full carrying capacity, when a ship is only taxed on her net tonnage, which is sometimes as much as two and a half times less than the gross tonnage. Besides, the exemption is still to hold good with regard to the docks' own barges, and these I am told are one-tenth of the number frequenting the dock; to barges engaged in transhipping goods; and to barges carrying coal. With regard to all these there is to be no tax. Now, when I point out to you that in one particular business alone, the Thames Steam Tug and Lighterage Company, a penny a ton on the goods that they carry would represent 5 per cent. on their share capital, that would mean £5,000 a year, which is the whole of the dividend the shareholders get, you will at once see how unreasonable it is that such a tax as this should be put upon us. As to a tax of 1s. 10d. on the ton, I am informed that it would be quite impossible for the lighterage business to bear it. The proposition of the dock companies, so far as the amount goes, must at all events be very greatly reduced, and as I said before, even if it be only a small tax that is to be placed on barges, that will cripple our trade, and will certainly not be sufficient to carry out the improvements that the dock companies desire.

The only other point that I have to deal with is the question of compulsory pilotage. We have no complaint to make against the pilots themselves, but what we do consider a great hardship is that the legislature in the event of a collision has relieved the ship of all liability when she has a compulsory pilot on board and has transferred liability to the pilot who frequently cannot pay, and if he can, is only liable for £100. We think this a point that we may well submit to the Commissioners, seeing that in foreign countries a ship under compulsory pilotage is not exempt from liability. I will refer to three cases on the question of the employment of pilots, one under French law, one under Dutch law, and another under the law regulating the navigation of the Lower Danube. In all these cases, although the shipowner was bound by law to have a pilot on board, the ship was not exempt from liability for damage occasioned by the negligence of the pilot she had on board. The first case is that of "The Augusta" in Aspinall's Reports, Volume 6 (new series), page 58, and page 161. It decided that although the employment of a pilot by a vessel entering the Port of Havre is by French law compulsory, such pilot does not as of right, as is the case in England, supersede the master and take charge of the ship, but, according to French decisions, the master remains in charge, the pilot being merely his adviser, hence, though the master may allow such pilot to take charge in fact the owners are not exempted from liability for damage done to another ship by the negligence of the pilot. The next case is the "Prins Hendrik" decided in 1899, and reported in Aspinall's Reports, Volume 8 (new series), page 548. The decision in this case was that although certain vessels navigating the River Scheldt are compelled by Dutch law to take and pay a pilot, nevertheless pilotage in those waters is not compulsory in the sense in which it has to be compulsory according to English law in order to discharge the owners from liability for the fault of the pilot. The last case is the "Agnes Otto" in 6 Aspinall's Reports (new series), page 119, where it was shown that the provisions of Articles 85, 89 and 92 of the regulations for the navigation of the Lower Danube making the employment of pilots by steamers compulsory, but confining their duties to pointing out the local peculiarities of the river and leaving the responsibility of the navigation with the master, do not relieve shipowners from liability for damage solely caused by the negligent navigation of the pilot. We have also to submit that a limit should be put on the liability of a master lighterman for damage done by his barge. As you are aware, he is compelled to have a licensed man on board, and if the barge comes into collision or does damage through his fault the master is liable to the full amount of the damage that has been done. On this question the Commission have had the evidence (in an answer given to Question 3772) of Mr. Jacobs, who cited an instance where a master lighterman was compelled to pay £2,000 for damages done by his barge to a steamer and her cargo, whereas, if the barge had been propelled by sails and registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, her owners' liability would have been £588, and no more. We contend that the right to limit his liability is as strong in the case of the lighterman as in the case of the shipowner. My Lord, I have nothing to say with regard to the particular Trust or governing body that should be appointed to regulate the Port, but whatever that Trust may be I submit that so important a body as the Master Lightermen and Bargeowners should be represented on the board of Directors or Trustees.

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Mr. Claude Baggallay, K.C., called to address the Commission.

11800. (*Chairman.*) We understand you appear now on behalf of the Thames Conservancy?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes, my Lord. I do not propose to follow some of my learned friends into much of the detail that has been given before the Commission. What I want first of all to draw the attention of the Commission to is this. Of course, representing the Thames Conservancy, I am in a sense in the position of being on trial. There have been, no doubt, a great many accusations made against the Thames Conservancy, and a great many suggestions as to their shortcomings and wrongdoings, but I have been most carefully through the evidence, and it seems to me that when one comes to look at the matter and summarise what the complaints against the action of the Thames Conservancy in the past have been, they come simply —if I may put it in that way—to an alleged indifference to the necessity for improving the channel. That is the sum and substance of the whole of the complaint. I have looked very carefully through the evidence, and I cannot find from beginning to end any fault-finding with the Thames Conservancy as regards any one of the number of duties they have to perform throughout the length of the river, from Cricklade, in Wiltshire, down to the Nore, except that one with regard to the channel of the Thames. I do not deny that that is an important one, and I am going to deal with it, but that is the only complaint. There was one suggestion, by a Mr. Matthews, a member of the London County Council, and a member of the firm of Matthews and Luff, ship brokers, about some moorings. That is a complaint made at Question 2334, which I think you will find, if it is a matter which is really worth consideration when you have all these important matters to consider, is sufficiently answered by Mr. Philipson's evidence at Questions 7544 and 7545. That is the only complaint I can find, and the whole complaint comes down to this; that the Thames Conservancy has not kept pace with the times in providing a navigable channel, either as regards the width or the depth suitable or sufficient to meet the requirements up to the docks. That is the whole complaint, and that is what I want to deal with; and in dealing with that I want first of all to assure the Commission that there is no object on the part of the Thames Conservancy in neglecting any such duty. They are not a financial body; that is to say, they are not a body like a dock company even, or a shipping company, or anybody else who have any dividends to look to, or anything of that sort. They are not a financial body in any sense of the word. They are simply a body of trustees, and nothing else, and, therefore, they have no pecuniary interest either in starving the river, or in increasing the charges they make for any services for which they have power to make a charge. Therefore any neglect which there may have been in respect of performing that one duty of the many duties which Parliament has put upon them must *primâ facie* be attributable to some inherent want of power to perform that duty. I think you will find that that is so when you come to look into it. Now let us just see what the history of the Thames Conservancy has been, and this will be material when I come to deal shortly, as I shall do, with some suggested schemes made by some bodies here for a new authority to deal with the river. Only as recently as 1857, only 44 years ago, Parliament created the Thames Conservancy. Why? Not as my friend Mr. Scrutton said yes-

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terday, at the instance, or at the promotion of the City Corporation. Nothing of the sort. Parliament created the Thames Conservancy in order, as appears from the preamble of the bill (the preamble of the bill is set out pretty fully in the evidence by Mr. Philipson at Question 3, and, therefore, I do not read it now) that they might take over the duties of the river with regard to the conservation of the river, and that they might take over not only from the Corporation, but also from the Crown, all rights in the foreshores and in the bed of the river itself; and that those duties of conservancy which had hitherto been performed by the various bodies—some by the Trinity House as regards the ballastage and various other matters, some of those as regards dredging by the Trinity House, and some of those as regards various matters by the City Corporation—should be placed in the hands of one body. That was the object of it, and Parliament created that body without any reference to the upper river at all. The City Corporation's limits of jurisdiction at that time were limited, so far as the upper river went, to the City boundary stone at Staines, which about a century ago was the top of the tideway of the Thames, because all those locks below that point have been made within the last 100 years or so. That was where the tail of the tide went up to at that time, and Parliament placed the whole of the tideway and the waters which were still under the jurisdiction of the City Corporation in the hands of the Thames Conservancy and under their control. The Thames Conservancy was a body of gradual growth. Parliament at first created only a small body of twelve members, but as early as 1864 they increased very largely—as you will see if you look at the Act of that year—the powers and the duties of the Conservancy Board, and at the same time they increased the representations of various interests upon the Board. Of course all those Acts now are consolidated in the one Act of 1894. All I want now to show is that what you are now asked to do is to go back and to separate this and take away from the Thames Conservancy what was the original cause of the Thames Conservancy being created. A very strong Committee of the House of Commons—a Committee of 15 members presided over by Mr. Gibson Milner—sat in 1865 and reported that the control of the upper Thames, on account of its impecunious position, should be added to the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy, and they were made the body to control it. What that Committee said in their report is all summed up in one short sentence. They said that the navigation of the upper and lower Thames should be placed under the same management. It was in consequence of that that in 1866 the Board of Trade introduced a bill, which became the Act of 1866, and which placed the upper navigation under the control of the Thames Conservancy. That is how it came about that the body which was originally created to deal with the tidal waters and the port came to be the body which had the upper river work to deal with. As I said, you have not had any complaint whatever with regard to the performance of their duties by this body except this one with regard to dredging. On behalf of the Thames Conservancy I am going to admit that the channel wants further dredging both as regards depth and as regards width. It would be of no use to deny it. No one questions that. The difficulty that the Thames Conservancy has had to deal with has been that they have not had the funds, and they have no funds available for this dredging. I think the evidence before you shows that the funds which they have at their command at the present moment are used to the full. There is no suggestion that they have any money which is free to carry out any further work. Now let me first see what took place in 1894 and 1896. In 1894 no doubt a reference was made by Section 189 which has been referred to several times, to a Commission, the Chairman of which was Sir John Wolfe-Barry. Now I know a good deal about that clause, because I had a great deal to do with the fighting of that clause on the bill of 1894.

11801-2. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Are you the Mr. Baggallay who brought up the clause?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes, I am, sir. I had a great deal to do with the drawing of this clause, and I will tell you what it was founded upon; the Ribble Navigation Clause, which I had also had to deal with a few years previously. This particular clause provided for two things. No doubt the Commission found a great difficulty in fully reporting upon that clause. I do not make any complaint whatever of that Commission not having been able to report in a way which the Thames Conservancy would have liked; in a way, that is to say, which would have helped them. There were two matters referred to; one was whether there was any dredging or other operation practicable for a certain portion of the river; the second was as to the probable cost of such dredging, and the means by which the funds necessary to meet such cost should be provided. The final clause, which was one about which there was a deal of argument, was this: "If any dredging or other operations shall be recommended in the report of the said Commission the Conservators shall, as soon as may be reasonably practicable after a copy of such report shall have been received by them as aforesaid, either proceed to carry out such dredging or other operations, or apply to Parliament for all such powers as shall be desirable to enable them to give effect to the recommendations of the said Commission." But the condition precedent to the carrying out of that last portion of the paragraph was never fulfilled. I am sure the honourable member will not mind my criticising that. I do not complain. There may have been very good reason for the report not having been made. I am only concerned now in showing how we, the Thames Conservancy, were in a difficulty in going to Parliament under that section, because, if your Lordship looks at paragraph 49 of the Commission's Report, they sum up their report in these words: "Having come, with some regret, to the conclusion that works in the river between Thorney Creek and the Nore cannot at present be recommended, we have found it unnecessary to proceed with the second branch of our inquiry, namely, the source from which funds should be provided for works of improvement within that area." They do not inquire into that; they do not report upon that; and, therefore, the very backbone which the Thames Conservancy required before they could go to anybody to get the money with which to carry out any work, was withheld from them. It would be no use for them to go to Parliament for powers at that time to tax the shipping, or anything else. It would have been said to them at once when they had gone before Parliament, "Why, the Commission said themselves that works in the river cannot at present be recommended." That would have been the answer if they had promoted a bill, or asked the Board of Trade to promote a bill. I am speaking of this matter as being a matter of dereliction on the part of the Conservancy in not complying with Section 189, because that is a matter which was argued. You, sir, will know, because you had some part in the Thames Conservancy Act of 1894, you know I had a great deal to do with that bill.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) The chief part, I think.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That was one of the reasons why we resisted that clause at that time. I think I cross-examined Sir Thomas Sutherland myself upon it, because where were the funds coming from to carry it out.

11803. (*Mr. Ellis.*) You admit that Section 189 *re* the Thames Conservancy is the crux of the whole matter?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I quite agree.

11804. (*Mr. Ellis.*) May I take it from you that the reason this mandatory enactment that the Thames Conservancy should apply to Parliament under certain circumstances was not followed up by them was that you considered the Wolfe-Barry Commission an inconclusive report in that respect?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That is absolutely what I am instructed.

11805. (*Mr. Ellis.*) It did not contain, in fact, such a recommendation, according to your judgment, as was meant by this last paragraph?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That is absolutely my point. You have grasped my point exactly. That seems to me to go to the root of the whole complaint, which has been made with regard to the Thames Conservancy here. It practically goes to the root of the whole complaint against them as a body, which is of being in default as regards a duty which they had got to perform. That is absolutely the position.

11806. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Of course you will not take it that I assent?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Of course, I quite understand that you are only asking me whether that is the position I am taking up. Now let me just follow that up for a moment, because that now brings me to my

second point, which is, would it have been any use for the Thames Conservancy, if they considered dredging was necessary, or would it have been any use for the Thames Conservancy if they were pressed to do so, we will say, by a strong body of shipowners or others, to have gone to Parliament to ask for money after that report? In the first place I say it would not, for this reason, because that inconclusive report would have been used by their enemies (we know there are hereditary enemies of the Thames Conservancy) against them. Another point it would have been used for would have been this; it would have been used to say (and I think I have perhaps dealt sufficiently with this just now), that it having been referred to that Commission, and that Commission having made that report in paragraph 49, the time had not arrived for placing any burden upon the shipping and upon the trade in excess of what existed. But I will assume for the moment that Section 189 of the Act of 1894, and that the report of the Lower Thames Navigation Commission—I purposely do not use an expression which has been often used here, the Wolfe-Barry Commission, because I think, from a question I saw, that Sir John Wolfe-Barry put, he would rather it should not be called the Wolfe-Barry Commission—it was the Report of the Lower Navigation Commission——

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Quite so. I do not want to absolve myself of the responsibility in any way. I had the assistance of two very able men, and I do not want it to be called merely my report.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) There is one question on the notes which makes it look a little stronger than that: I am alluding to Question 171, because there you are made to say that it was really the joint report of Admiral Nares and Mr. Lyster.

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Oh, no; I ought to have included myself. I signed it, and it was mine as well as that of the other gentlemen. You may take it, Mr. Baggallay, that that Commission was entirely unanimous.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I quite understand that, you would rather treat it as a unanimous report?

(*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Undoubtedly.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That being so, let me imagine for a moment the Act of 1894, Section 189, not acted upon, and the report of the Commission away. Let us eliminate them altogether from consideration for a moment, and see then whether the Thames Conservancy are liable to lay themselves open to a fair attack for not having gone to Parliament for further powers, because I quite admit that it might be that they had got a duty outside that section. I think the existence of that section would have made it very difficult for them to go to Parliament, having regard to that report, but I just want to see what would have been their position apart from that. Of course, they have got extensive dredging powers under certain sections of the Act, to which you have been referred over and over again, and as regards certain portions of the river, I do not think they would require any further statutory powers than they have got now to carry out the deepening. I do not know how that may be at the very lowest portions of the river, but, certainly, as regards certain portions of the river they have ample powers to carry out such dredging operations as are required.

11807. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have they money?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) No, they have no money. The spirit is willing and the flesh is willing enough, but the pockets are not deep enough. They have not the money to carry out this work. Now, in order to have carried out this work, they would have had to go to Parliament, and, assuming that difficulty could have been got over, which I have mentioned with regard to the existence of the Act and the inclusive report, they would still have had this difficulty. They must have gone very soon after their Act of 1894, when an attempt was made to settle all matters excepting that which was particularly dealt with by section 189, for many years to come. It was regarded then as being a settlement of all these questions for some time to come; I do not say for all time, of course. Parliament does not bind itself for all time.

11808. (*Mr. Ellis.*) Have you in your mind the debate which took place in the House on the third reading of the Thames Conservancy Bill, which is alluded to in Sir Thomas Sutherland's evidence. Let me refer you to Question 2075: "Especially the statement that was made on the 10th July, 1894, that this Act must not be regarded as a final settlement of that matter?—(A.) Yes," and I put that to him, which was admitted by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Of course, I quite admit that. No settlement in Parliament is a final settlement in that sense. What I meant was that this was a matter which was regarded as being finally settled for some time to come. I know it was so regarded on many hands. That is the only way I am putting it; and, of course, this would be a very early date to revise that settlement of 1894, unless there was some important change of circumstances which had arisen. But it would have been impossible, I believe, for the Thames Conservancy to have introduced a bill for providing the money. We will assume for the purpose of this, that the sum which Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland gave in evidence of about £160,000 a year would be necessary in order to carry out this dredging scheme. I think I have given you the figure right, £160,000. If they had come forward that would have meant putting burdens upon both ships and goods, or ships using moorings for loading or discharging, or for various purposes such as were suggested by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland. I have a grave doubt—and I have been this morning looking at Sir Erskine May's book on Parliamentary practice—whether that bill could have been promoted as a private bill at all. I have got a grave doubt as to whether it would have passed the House authorities. The magnitude of the interests which are affected, and the extent of the area, and so on, would have made it very doubtful whether the House of Commons would have allowed that to go forward as a private bill. But, even if it did, what should we have had to meet? We should have had to meet, in the first place, our sworn enemies of 1894, the London County Council. They would have been there again immediately. They did all they could to wreck the bill of 1894; and their report, which I was looking at just now, which was signed by Mr. Fletcher Moulton, as the chairman of the committee of the London County Council on the bill, and which he put in evidence, shows that they were determined to resist any attempt whatever to increase any of the charges or dues or burdens upon the trade or navigation in the lower river. What he proposed, and this was one of the things we had to fight out in 1894, was to take rating powers over the whole of the Thames Valley in order to find the finances for the Thames Conservancy, and for that purpose to take a majority of the representation of the Thames Conservancy. Of course, that was what became one of the great battlefields which had to be fought upon in the House of Commons before Mr. Jackson's Committee, when all the up-river counties resisted this proposal to tax. We should have had to fight the London County Council on any question of that sort, and we should have had to fight the London County Council on that question of whether the rates of London were not the proper source to which to go to secure the finances of the Thames Conservancy. Directly we had fought that out we should have had to fight it over again, and that bill cost in 1894 £12,000, according to the evidence, and the Thames Conservancy could not afford to fight it, and afford to promote a bill which would probably have been stopped on account of its not being a private bill. What the Thames Conservancy could not find was money, and that is all they have ever wanted. It is only from want of money that they have not performed this duty as they have performed all their others, and as they have performed all their other duties, and they have performed all their other duties without complaint, and they will never get that money until they get the support of a body like a Statutory Commission, such as that of 1894, which, unfortunately, did not help them, or until they get the support of a Royal Commission like yourselves.

11809. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Before you pass from that have you noticed Section 35 of that report?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I have read it.

11810. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) "Whatever may be done towards improving the upper river we recognise that it is highly important that all homeward-bound vessels should be able to reach, and foreign-going vessels able to leave, Gravesend at any time of the tide. We concur then with the view of the shipowners and others that much public advantage would be gained, if a navigable depth of about 30ft., suitable for vessels of the largest draught, were afforded, at least up to Graves-

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end." Armed with that could not you have approached Parliament again with that recommendation?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not think it would have helped us against our adversaries, who were willing to take advantage of every weapon they could, because that was dealing with a part of the river which was outside the limits, which were between Thorney Creek and the Nore Lightship.

11811. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I quite understand your point about that, that there was a certain condition to be fulfilled which was not fulfilled before the imperative duty which was laid upon you of carrying out these obligations. That imperative duty under Section 189 you say never arose, because it lacked the fulfilment of the condition at the end of the Clause; but I am looking at another Clause which did not lay an imperative duty upon you, but brought the weight of this very powerful Commission to bear upon the view of the shipowners that "much public advantage would be gained, if a navigable depth of about 30ft., suitable for vessels of the largest draught, were afforded at least up to Gravesend."

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not think that would have helped us under Section 189.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) I entirely agree.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) And I do not think it would have materially helped us if we had gone to Parliament, unless it had dealt with the probable cost or at all events with the means by which the funds necessary to meet such costs should be provided, which is in the upper part of that Section 189. I do not think that would have been strong enough to have carried us through. You will see the latter part of paragraph 49 I think would over-ride that, because the Commission there report that: "It seems to us that the financial powers of the Conservators, whenever the fitting time arrives for undertaking the works"—that is the works which they are dealing with between Thorney Creek and the Nore, at the top of paragraph 49—"should be dealt with as a whole; for though we think it is expedient to provide a deep water channel to Gravesend (or even possibly to the Albert Docks), it is of equal, and perhaps greater, importance that no financial burden should be so placed as to damage the commercial interests of the Port of London in the present severe competition with other ports in this and foreign countries." I do not think that in the face of that we could possibly have gone to Parliament with a bill even if we had got over all technical difficulties, unless we had been supported by a recommendation dealing with the sources from which the fund should come from that Commission, and dealing with the question of the works which ought to be done in that particular reach of the river.

Now, my Lord, whatever the complaints may be which have been made against the Thames Conservancy, whatever there may have been in those complaints there is no question of this that on the evidence which you have got before you the tonnage of the ships has been increasing, and the number of ships which frequent the port have been increasing. You will find this set out in Appendix No 5 put in by Mr. Phillipson on the first day. He says that there is a 12 to 14 per cent. increase in the period of five years ending 1899, I think it was, so that I do not think that the complaint in itself can be said to have any substance whatever.

Now, my Lord, let me come to the future. I have dealt rather with the past and the present, and I have dealt rather with trying to point out the difficulties which have been in the way of the Thames Conservancy in getting the money to carry out what they know is required, and what they would wish to be able to do. Let me now come rather to the question of the future, and I may say this at once. You have it in evidence from Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland as to what the Thames Conservancy would be prepared to do if they got the money. I am not going to labour that again, but it is the money we want. I am speaking of course purely of the question of the channel; the dock question has nothing to do with me; if you are going to deal with the docks, the Thames Conservancy do not want the docks or the wharves and so on. We only want to deal with the question of the channel and to justify ourselves. Now, with regard to that, I may say at once, supposing they leave the work to be performed by us, we should welcome the Commission indicating what dredging should be done. Let them indicate what width of river should be dredged, and the depths at certain places. We should welcome it, if they would only couple it with such a recommendation as would enable us effectually to get the money to carry it out. With regard to that, I have very little doubt that in a matter of this sort the recommendation would have to be for a bill introduced by the Government. I do not think myself that a private bill could pass through, dealing with this matter. Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland or any person connected with the Thames Conservancy would be very happy to give all the assistance in their power to carry such a bill through; but I am quite sure it would not be any use to attempt to deal with the matter by private legislation. We ask you to recommend the provision of the funds on the lines which were laid down by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland in his answers to Questions 7483 and 7484. I will not read all the details of it, but that includes a proposed increase of tonnage dues on vessels, a proposed abolition of the exemption from tonnage dues of certain vessels which are now exempt, a proposal fo the imposition of dues for use of river and mooring, by vessels not paying tonnage dues, and a proposal for the imposition of dues on vessels for the use of moorings, for loading or discharging cargo in the river. That is really what we ask you to do with regard to the future, if you come to the conclusion that you will leave the management of the river in the Thames Conservancy hands.

Now let me come to another point which I will dismiss in a very few words, and that is as to the three schemes of these three bodies which have been put before you, one by the London County Council, one by the Corporation of London, and one by the London Chamber of Commerce. With regard to the way in which the schemes and the proposals of the London County Council and the London Chamber of Commerce were put forward I have not a word to say, but with regard to the manner in which the Corporation of London launched their case I think I am entitled to complain a little, and I think I may say that Mr. Scrutton seems to have forgotten that at the present time he is only representing the Corporation of London, and not representing his father's shipping firm, which he represented on the Bill of 1894. That, I think, excuses all he said. Now with regard to those three schemes, all I am going to say is that there is so much difference in them that I am perfectly certain you would never reconcile any of those three bodies in a joint scheme, and you would never get the other two to accept one of those three schemes. If you go for creating this new body, or trying to create, or recommending the creation of it, in the place of a body which has been tried and which exists, I am perfectly certain you will put off the formation of a body for the Port of London to take over these new duties to as long a period as has elapsed since they first tried to create a Water Trust for London. It will be no nearer next year than that was 50 years ago. There are only one or two criticisms I want to make upon these schemes.

11812. (*Chairman.*) You are going to limit yourself, I suppose, to matters that touch the Thames Conservancy?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Quite so, because I do not care a bit about this Board. I would only say this about the Corporation of London. The Corporation of London complain that Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland said he could increase the number of the Thames Conservancy Board, and they said it would be an unwieldy Board. I do not know whether they were remembering at that moment that Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland's suggestion that it should be increased by nine members at the outside, would make it 47, while the Corporation are proposing 40 members. But the 40 members which the Corporation are proposing for their Board are to deal wholly with this part of the river. In the case of the Thames Conservancy they have two committees. It is on the evidence, so I need not labour it at length. I have got the existing committees here before me. They have got 38 members on their Board; of those, 20 act as members of the Lower River and General Purposes Committee, and deal with the port, and they include the shipowners, dock owners and wharfingers, and so on, as representatives. Then they have got another Upper River Committee, which has 20 members, two or three of the members being common to both; for instance, the chairman is ex-officio member of both, and so on; but for all practical purposes they have separate com-

mittees for the two parts of the river. Perhaps the Commission would like to look at that. The question of making statutory committees was very fully gone into before the Committee of 1894 (Mr. Jackson's Committee), and I remember that my friend Mr. Scrutton and I had a good deal of wrangling about it. There was a proposal then to make a statutory Committee, one for the upper part and another for the lower. That was gone into very fully at pages 1393 to 1403 of the evidence in 1894, and the Committee decided, after hearing the matter fully, that they would not provide for statutory committees, because they found from the evidence which was given before them that in practice the Conservancy Board always did keep two committees. They put on the committee for the one part of the river those who were directly interested in the one part, and they put on the committee for the other part those who were mostly interested in the other part. Therefore, the practical working of a statutory committee by a separate committee managing the length of the river who were directly interested in that part of the river was already amply provided for.

There was another suggestion which was made by the London County Council, I think in their scheme, and in one of the others also. I may treat that in this manner. I think it will be found that at no time, certainly not for a very long time past, has the Government made any grant out of public funds in aid of any harbour works at all in England. In 1861 an Act was passed for facilitating the construction and improvement of harbours, by authorising loans to harbour authorities by the Public Works Loan Commissioners, repayable in 50 years. No loan has ever been made under that Act. A loan has been made under other powers by the Public Works Loan Commissioners, to the Tyne Improvement Commissioners, and that has been repaid, but under that Act to which I have referred no loan whatever has been made. I may also state that a Royal Commission was appointed in 1858 to consider the question of the establishment of harbours of refuge. That Commission reported in favour of a grant of £250,000 to the Tyne Improvement Commissioners, for the purpose of the construction of piers at the entrance to the Tyne, and also a further sum of £250,000 for the purpose of improving navigation; but neither of those advances or gifts has yet been made. So that the probability of getting any support from public funds in that way is exceedingly remote. I do not think there is much chance of the London County Council even being able to get power to charge the rates of London for the support of an undertaking which is really a distributing centre for the country generally. I ought to remind the Commission that if any division of the river is made I think it would be no doubt far better that the division should be made at Teddington than at any other point. That that is so, I am instructed by the officials of the Thames Conservancy. and it would be just as well perhaps to bear that in mind.

There is only one other point I want to clear up; it does not form part of my argument, but I mention it in order to clear up a matter on the notes. It refers to a question asked by Mr. Ellis early in the proceedings. It was about the action of the London County Council members on the Thames Conservancy when a resolution was brought up and an amendment was moved by Mr. Charles Harrison, immediately after the Lower Navigation Commission made their report. It was in Mr. McKinnon Wood's evidence. It begins at Question 7266 and goes down to 7,278. Mr. McKinnon Wood was evidently under the impression that the representatives of the London County Council supported the action of Mr. Harrison in the moving of his amendment, which was hostile rather to the report of the Committee of the Thames Conservancy. I need not read the amendment, but I have here the division list. The division list shows that for the amendment three voted. These were Mr. Harrison, Mr. Idris, and Mr. Steadman, three of the London County Council members. Those were all who voted for the amendment. Against the amendment 25 voted. I need not read all their names, but they included Mr. Bates, a dock owner, both the Board of Trade representatives, Mr. Cory-Wright (a shipowner), Mr. Cox (a representative of the City), Mr. Alderman Halse (a representative of the City), Sir Reginald Hanson (a representative of the City), Sir Stuart Knill (a representative of the City), Mr. McDougall (a member of the London County Council), Mr. Paul (a shipowner), Mr. Payne (a member of the London County Council), and Mr. Alderman Samuel (a shipowner). So that the opposition included all the three shipowners' representatives, four of the City representatives, and two of the London County Council's representatives.

11813. (*Mr. Ellis.*) To the extent that in Question 7276 Mr. McDougall and Mr. Strong, the representatives of the London County Council, are represented as supporting the second amendment, that was a mistake?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That was an amendment on a different resolution.

(*Mr. Daldy.*) My friend is really giving evidence now, and it may be that importance may be attached to it. If so, it should be put in, otherwise it comes to nothing.

(*Mr. Lyttelton.*) It is a very minute point.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) It was a minute point, but as there was a column of cross-examination on the point I thought it as well to clear it up.

11814. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to put this in?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I must put it in if my friend takes objection.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay handed in an Extract from the Minutes of Proceedings at a meeting of the Conservators of the River Thames on Monday the 22nd Day of June 1896. See Appendix, 31st Day, No. 1*).

With regard to all the members representing the upper part of the river, they are perfectly satisfied with the present position of the Thames Conservancy. There is no question on their part with regard to making any alteration; they would infinitely prefer the present relations between the upper and the lower.

11815. (*Chairman.*) Could you tell me whether the upper river members of the Thames Conservancy agreed to what Sir Dixon-Hartland said before us—whether it was with their approval?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Whatever was said on behalf of the Board as a whole, I should certainly say so. I could not tell with regard to every detail, of course, but with regard to what was put in in statements and evidence on behalf of the Board as a whole, I would say that the witness spoke absolutely on behalf of the Board.

11816. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Let me put this to you in order to prevent misunderstanding on the report of 1896. You do not put it to us that there was the least doubt what the Commission wished to be carried out?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not know whether I should like to express an opinion upon that. Does that quite affect this question?

11817. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I mean so far as regards making a navigable channel of 30ft. up to Gravesend?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I quite understand that in your view the making of a navigable channel of 30ft. up to Gravesend would be very desirable.

11818. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) And Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland said himself that he fully understood that was the wish of the Commission, but that the Commissioners were precluded by the terms of the reference from dealing with the river further than Thorney Creek?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) That is so; I am not complaining at all of the report.

11819. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I only want to prevent any misunderstanding when your speech comes to be read. There was no misunderstanding on the part of the Thames Conservancy or anybody who read the report as to what the Commission desired?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not suppose there was: I do not complain at all of the form of the report. What I say is that the form of it did not help us on a financial question, which was our difficulty.

11820. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) I know that point, but there is no question whatever that the Commission recommended, so far as an expression of opinion went, that the channel should be 30ft. deep up as far as Gravesend?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) If you put it in this form; that they showed that they thought a channel thirty feet deep up to Gravesend was desirable, I agree; but I do not agree that they recommended that

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11821. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) As far as opinion goes—I do not mean to say anything further than that—they expressed a very definite opinion that a channel up to Gravesend thirty feet deep would be a public advantage?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I gather through reading it myself, and I have no doubt they did too, that that was their view.

11822. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) Question 1497 in this inquiry was a question asked by the Chairman, which puts it very well. He refers to the difficulties about restriction of limits, and says: "That, of course, made it difficult for them to recommend it being done; but there is no question about it, if you read it as plain English. They came to the conclusion that the shipowners wanted what is stated in paragraph 35?—(A.) Quite so. We admit that point." That is Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes.

11823. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) The only other question I wanted to ask you is this, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, at Question 1505, said this in answer to a question put by me: "Therefore we may take it in this way, that for any works or matters requiring Parliamentary sanction nothing has been done? (A.) No. It is only the question of funds. We have got powers to do the whole of the other things." As we have had some evidence from riparian owners and some appeal for protection, I wanted to ask you if you have now the powers to excavate a channel 30 feet deep up to Albert Dock if you had the money?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) If we had the money, except in so far as it may be restricted by a saving clause, section 221 of the Act of 1894, which is this: "Except the provisions of this Act relating to pollution, nothing in this Act shall take away, prejudice or affect any of the rights, powers or authorities vested in any Commissioners of Sewers, or the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of West Ham as successors of the Commissioners of Sewers for the Havering and other levels with respect to their works or the regulation of sewers." Whether by dredging we should in any way prejudice or affect any of the rights, powers, or authorities vested in the Commissioners of Sewers I could not tell you at this moment; it is rather, I think, an engineering question.

11824. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) My point is that at the present time the riparian owners are exposed to these dangers of dredging, subject to the protecting clause, which they might be exposed to if the report of this Commission eventuated in an Act of Parliament?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I should think they are.

11825. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) But there would be no new risks created for them that do not exist now?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I know; I did not think there would be. Of course, if you said absolutely "you may dredge to a depth of thirty feet"; if that were put into an Act of Parliament without any such saving clause as this, it might possibly override some right I could not tell without looking at their Acts and seeing what their Acts are.

11826. (*Sir John Wolfe-Barry.*) My point is this. If you have the money you might dredge to 40 feet, subject to not doing damage.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Subject to not doing damage, yes, and also deepen and improve the bed of the channel. We have power under Section 83 to dredge the Thames.

11827. (*Mr. Lyttelton.*) Dredge, cleanse, and scour?

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) Yes. That is even wider than the next paragraph about deepening the channel.

11828. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) I should like to put one point to you in order to hear what you have to say, because I think you have put the point rather higher than Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland himself put it, that the Thames Conservancy have discharged all the public duties. I should like to refer you to Questions 1655, 1656, and 1657, in which, I think, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland admitted that the Thames Conservancy had not done all that they might have done towards removing the deficiencies of the river.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not think there is any difference between him and myself. He may not have made it so public as I have made it now, but I do not see that he admits any failure to perform public duties there. The question is: "Have you taken the opportunity of that annual report to call the attention of Parliament and the public to the deficiencies of the river, and to what is necessary to be done in order to bring it up to date? (A.) I do not remember that we have done so. We have mentioned what we proposed to do, but we have not mentioned what were beyond our powers." I do not think that goes any further than I said, or that I have gone further than that. "(Q.) It might be of advantage, if you have a certain policy to carry out, to state it in public, so as to get the support of public opinion in favour of what you think ought to be done? (A.) I quite agree. (Q.) But you have not taken advantage of your annual report to do that? (A.) We ought to have done so, I quite admit. I think we ought to have done so." That is to say, stimulated public opinion by calling attention to deficiencies which they were wanting powers to make good.

11829. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) But the suggestion is that there is a certain obligation of public spirit on a public body, to do the best they can in the matters entrusted to them; and he admits that there was a certain thing which they might have done, and which they ought to have done, but which, in point of fact, they have not done.

(*Mr. Claude Baggallay.*) I do not think that conflicts at all with what I was referring to, namely, that they had done their duty in regard to executing powers and doing work which they ought to do so far as their money went. This rather goes to show that they perhaps had not exhausted every means of stirring up public opinion to enable them to do more.

Mr. BALFOUR BROWNE, K.C., called to address the Commission.

Mr. Balfour Browne, K.C.

11830. (*Chairman.*) You address us on behalf of the London and India Dock Company?

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) Yes. I will remind your Lordship of what was the Instruction to this Royal Commission, which I will refer to very shortly. It is this: "To inquire into the present administration of the Port of London"—that I will concern myself with—"and the water approaches thereto"—that the Thames Conservancy have to deal with—"the adequacy of the accommodation provided for vessels, and the loading and unloading thereof." I am going to say that up to our means, we have given adequate accommodation for the loading and unloading of vessels; that we are desirous of doing more in that direction, and that in order to do so we must have money to do it with. I do not think that proposition can be denied Then the terms of reference go on: "The system of charge for such accommodation, and the arrangements for warehousing dutiable goods." With regard to that, I do not think I need say a great deal. You have had various attempts made on the part of the Chamber of Commerce to go into questions of individual rates. Even this morning Mr. Scrutton made another attempt to go into that matter, but that was stopped. Therefore, I do not propose to go in any detail into that, but to refer to what this Commission arose out of, that is, the proposal of the London Dock Companies to charge a certain sum on lighters, and a certain sum on goods. Then the terms of reference say the Commission is "to report whether any change or improvement in regard to any of the above matters is necessary for the promotion of the trade of the port, and the public interest." That is the direction to this Commission, under which you have been considering the question of a trust. I will deal with that I hope fully, and I hope to be able to convince you that no advantage will be given to the public by turning these docks over into the hands of a trust. I hope to be able to convince you that private enterprise is able to do everything that is required for this port, and do it better than any public body. What was the proposal of the dock companies that led to this Commission? It was the charge on lighters of 4d. a ton, which was to raise £56,000 per annum; it was also the charge on goods, which at present use the docks and pay nothing, of certain sums which amounted to £177,000 per annum, and the clause in the Bill was

to the effect that nothing was to be charged which is not otherwise chargeable by the company. Now, we have it as a fact proved before you that at the present time 25 per cent. of the goods using and profiting by the London Docks pay the whole of the charges, and that 75 per cent. of the goods pay nothing. If the money is to be raised at all, I will ask this Commission to come to the conclusion that it is equitable that it should be laid on the shoulders of those who do not at present pay, and who do at present profit by the use of the dock; and that it is not equitable that any further charges should be paid by and laid upon those who do contribute large sums for the maintenance of the docks. I pass over all the questions of private rates, which, if necessary, it would have been my duty to deal with. You see they have made very serious mistakes on the other side, and you had before you on the last occasion Mr. Hardy, dealing with three separate matters, which took the greater part of a day to deal with, and I believe in the prophecy made by Mr. Lyttelton, that it would take three years to thresh out that matter. I pass from that because my obect is, if possible, to deal with the broad issues of this matter rather than details. The details you know better than I do. The details are here, and have been spoken to with great clearness. The broad issues I hope I may help you, to some extent, to solve. First of all, the question raised in this inquiry is as to the administration of the dock, and I could understand, not the minute criticisms that have been made, not the trivial complaints that Mr. Scrutton has ventured to hurl at us to-day, but I could understand this Commission being very much impressed if they thought that under the management of the London Dock Companies, the trade was falling off. If the other side could make out that there was a decay in the trade of London, I think that would go far to establish the fact that the management ought to be changed. As a *primâ facie* matter, however, I venture to say that, seeing that the docks are managed by practical business men, whose names are before you, in their own interests and in the interests of the shareholders, I believe this Commission will come to the conclusion that it is managed in the interests of the shareholders. Practical business men know that to manage any concern such as this in the interests of the shareholders, they must serve their customers, the public. I hope that the day of private enterprise is not over. I will point out that in very many directions already, Parliament has gone too far to municipalise—trustise, if there be such a word—very great undertakings, and I will ask you to consider very carefully, before you entrust what is a trade, pure and simple, which is not a matter of public health, such as water supply, to the hands of a trust or public body. But I was going to say that I would even face that difficulty if I saw that this dock company was ruining the trade of London. But is it? It is not. The trade of London is under its management growing and increasing. Let me refer to one table which proves that incontestably. It is in Appendix No. 29 to the 16th day. You will see that in 1890 London had 23 per cent. of the fifteen ports shown on that table. In 1898 it had the same, but in 1899 it had managed to secure 25·5 per cent., and therefore it had increased its trade. You will have to take these percentages from me, but the figures are shown on these tables, and I will refer to one immediately. Let me look upon it in a double aspect. If we compare London and Liverpool, which you will find stated on that table, you will find comparison of private enterprise with a trust. They are always saying that things are better done in Liverpool. Are they? What is the result of that table? I find that London had in 1890, 13,480,767 tons out of 58,187,000, that is to say, as I said before, 23 per cent of the total of the fifteen ports. Liverpool had in the same year 10,941,801 tons, or 19 per cent. Now you get the comparison for the year 1890, 23 per cent. London and 19 per cent. Liverpool. But look at 1898. Look at the decadence in this port of London. London had 16,596,202 out of 70,619,199 total, or 23 per cent. Liverpool had 12,168,802, or 17 per cent. London had held its own absolutely at the same percentage, and Liverpool had fallen off 2 per cent. Is the Port decaying? I admit that we are not able to do all that we want for the trade. I admit distinctly that a great deal more might be done, but at the same time, with all our disadvantages, we have held our own as against Liverpool, and as against the 15 ports on that table, which was put in by Mr. Scott. It is only Board of Trade returns made into a table. Now, again, let us see if there are really any serious complaints as to the management of the dock. If you will look at Mr. Cattarn's evidence at Question 3430, you will see what they amount to. He says that "traders that work to the upper docks have, we some of us think, very fair and liberal arrangements with the dock companies, which enable us to go and work in the upper docks—the St. Katharine's Dock and the London Dock—on a satisfactory basis." Then, again, at Question 3411, he says, "There is no sufficient justification for complaint against the practical management of the docks." Then, again, at Question 5216 Mr. Douglas Owen says that practically the only complaint was as to the impecuniosity—"I see no present advantage in a trust. It will take years to bring the docks up-to-date, and the present experienced managers can do the work better than anybody else. All they want is money." Then Mr. Becket-Hill, at 2284, says "The dock charges are not excessive, and the docks themselves, as regards their entrances and management, from a navigation point of view, leave little to complain about. But they are certainly deficient in facilities for despatch." I admit that, and we are going to remedy it. Now I am going to refer you to what Mr. Scott said in Question 5616. Of course you have gentlemen in the lighterage interest objecting to any imposts being put on them at all, and as one of them admitted, in answer to a question put to him by one of the Commissioners, he did not want to bear any portion of the burden of making these docks satisfactory. It is human nature, but it is very paltry human nature. They want everything done without paying anything for it, and I venture to say that under the circumstances this Commission will not report upon that class of evidence against the proposals that we make. Then Mr. Edward Pembroke had certain complaints which he put before you at Question 8332. He refers to the insufficient length of the berths and the area of the quay space, the shortness of the lock and dry-dock, and the quantities of barges floating about unattended. We also complain of the quantity of barges. Then he says that they want more facilities and much more quay and shed space. All those improvements it must be our object to supply to the public, but how are we to do it? If the Commission can suggest any method by which money can be raised—properly raised, because I venture to say it would be most improper, as I will show you, to pledge either Government funds or the rates of London to raise these sums for the benefit of shipowners in the Port of London—if anybody can suggest any means by which the money can be more properly raised, I wish they would do it. We thought, and think still, that the right persons to put it upon are those who have had exemptions extending over hundreds of years—quite improper exemptions. I do not know how it arose, but I know as a fact that they are enjoying the use of docks which cost millions of money for nothing, and I know the only other case where that took place was in the Port of Hull and the result was absolute bankruptcy. For five years before the Hull Docks were passed over into the hands of the North Eastern Railway Company, they were subsidised out of the pockets of the North Eastern. Then they came to Parliament and said: "We cannot do anything. We have no money," and the North Eastern (who did not care to make the dock pay because they got the traffic on the railway) took over the docks, although, as some of the Commission know, there is a Standing Order which makes the Committee specially report as to the transfer of a dock into a railway company's hands. Our impecuniosity is proved by our dividend. For the last 13 years the London company has earned 2½ per cent., and the India Company 13s. 4d. Under these circumstances it is absolutely impossible for this company to raise the money which is necessary for those various things that we want. What do we do for these lighters and for the goods that have the use of the docks free? We police—and that is done for them as well as for the ships and the other goods—we pay rates and taxes; the cost of dredging, as you have heard already, is enormous; we have the extra pumping because of the water that is taken from our docks, and we help the barges in and out. We do all that, and get absolutely nothing for it. Now, Sir, as a broad principle of equity, I ask this Commission to disregard what was done a hundred years ago: to disregard what was done when we applied to Parliament for a Bill in 1853, when we were not impecunious, when we had the money—and it was upon that ground that it was rejected—and to say that it is proper and equitable that barges and goods should bear some portion of this burden of making

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the docks better and fitter for the Port and trade of London. We have power at the present time, I know, to lay further charges on shipping, but is it fair to lay further charges on shipping? We are not charging up to the hilt. We charge one shilling a ton, including four weeks rent. We could, without doubt, charge 2s., and that would bring in almost precisely the same sum that we are asking to have from the barges, lighters, and from the goods. But again, what we want to do—and remember that we have tried to get it from Parliament, and we have to show both to you and Parliament that we are reasonable—is to distribute the burden equally over all. I confess I listened with considerable astonishment to some people who came and told you that ultimately the consumer did not pay for everything. Sir Marcus Samuel told you that a large amount of burdens were borne by people who were not the consumers of the goods. I still believe that everything will fall on the consumer, and I will ask you to look at one of the most curious pieces of evidence in this case, which is in Appendix No. 40 of the 16th day, which shows the whole history of the ship that bears the ominous name of "Politician." There it was stated at first that it would have been much better treated at Liverpool than at London. As a ship it would have paid £552 13s. 4d. as against the charges in London £1,001 9s. 10d. But that was only half the story. If you will look at the other side you will find the whole of the story, and you will see that the London charge which falls on the shipowner is £1,001 9s. 10d., while the shipowner at Liverpool only pays £552 13s. 4d.; but there is paid by the consignees £794 11s. 4d., making £1,347 4s. 8d., or a difference in favour of London of £346. That is what the consumer has to bear. He has to bear the whole of those burdens, both what is paid on the ship and what is paid by the consignees; and I will ask you to come to the conclusion that that shows that, in comparison with Liverpool, we are a cheap port; and that we can easily lay those burdens on without dislocating the traffic of this particular port or sending it elsewhere. There is one curious fallacy that I ought perhaps to have mentioned, because it has been made a good deal of. That is the statement that the trade may not be falling off in itself, but that the relative proportions are less than they were before. That is an obvious fallacy. If, for instance, there were a new port started to-day and a line of steamers established between London and that new port, the new port would increase by leaps and bounds, while London, seeing that it has an enormous trade, would not increase at all. There was, I believe, in the year 1897 a steamer started between Ostend and Tilbury. The tonnage of that was 41,049 tons for the half year. If you look at that as compared with the small trade of Ostend it shows an enormous increase, but, if you look at it in comparison with the enormous trade of London, it shows nothing at all. That is the fallacy of my friends with regard to the relative improvement theory. I was giving you the figures, of course, from the Board of Trade Returns, which deal with the whole of the Port of London, but if you take the London Dock I have here the figures in 1871. The London and India Dock, then, had 10·2 per cent. of the foreign tonnage. In 1899, these docks had 11·8 per cent. of the foreign tonnage, or an increase of 1·6 between 1871 and 1899. Under those circumstances, I say, we are not a decaying port; but, at the same time, we do fully admit, and we put it before you, we cannot give all the requirements of the port. We have been as candid as we can. Of course, it is to our interest to keep the port well abreast of every other port in this kingdom. What are we going to do? For the money that we get we are going to carry out very, very extensive improvements. You have had a schedule of them before you, and, if the Commission care to have the company pledge itself more fully than it has, it will pledge itself to carry out those whenever it gets the powers; but until we get the money we cannot do it. "In the interest of the public?" is the question you have to consider under your instruction. What interest of the public would be served by merely changing this undertaking from the hands of a dock company into the hands of a trust, *quo ad*, the real matter that is before you—that is the charging of lighters and the charging of goods in the docks. Would not they have to charge them just as we have? They cannot get money any more than we can, unless they have a revenue. What do we hear from the Thames Conservancy, a model trust—a trust that was created long ago, and which has been, with the assistance of my friend, Mr. Baggallay, rehabilitated in the year 1894. But even it cannot do anything without the sinews of war, and they are asking you to put £160,000 more on the ships using the river in order that they may have the improved waterway. The ships that use the waterway and benefit by the waterway, ought to pay for the waterway. I venture to say that the right people to bear these burdens are the people who profit by the expenditure. Who profit by my docks? The lighters. You have heard of the enormous increase in their size and the enormous increase in their numbers; you have it proved before you how they cumber our docks. Without our docks they could not carry on their trade. And the goods ought to bear the burden. I do not want, although I know I have the power, to put further charges on ships, but I venture to say that, if we have no other remedy, we may have to charge ships more in the future than we did in the past; because we must have the money to equip our docks better than they are equipped at the present time, and, of course, provide further and better dock accommodation than we have, up to the present time, been able to do. They say, however, that, if this great impost is to be laid upon the public, there ought to be a change of hands, and that it ought to be in the hands of a public trust. What more a trust could do with regard to this particular matter, I do not know. They would provide the dock accommodation that they say is required, and that we are going to provide. They also say that they would be able—and this is the invariable argument in all those cases whenever a public body wants to get anything—to raise capital at a lower rate. We have to some extent cured that, because we are quite willing to limit the dividend upon all the stock to four per cent. If we could see our way to do it at a lower rate we would accept that from the Commission, but I do not think, having regard to the position of the dock, that we could get the money unless we gave them a 4 per cent. dividend. Now what would they have to do? First they would have to buy out our dock. Some suggestions have been made that they would buy us out cheap, but that I do not think Parliament would allow. They are to buy out our dock, and I venture to suggest to this Commission that that will be a very serious matter indeed for any trust to perform. They all see that the trust, which is merely to have the dock revenue, cannot buy the dock. That is quite obvious. And if it did buy the dock it never could, unless it got money from elsewhere, raise a penny more money, because, after all, there is no magic in it. If they buy my docks for full worth they have got my docks and can do no more with them than I can. But they all want a Government guarantee, which seems to me an absolutely ridiculous thing, and one of the members of your Commission asked why, if there is to be a Government guarantee for London, is not there to be a Government guarantee for Glasgow, Liverpool, and all the other ports? And the answer was, I think, that the Government had something in the Thames, which did not convince me at all. But, my Lord, the thing is ridiculous. I venture to say that any port in this country would have a very serious right to object to London being subsidised out of the public funds because it has not increased relatively to the rest of the ports of the kingdom. That is the whole of the argument. But, if the Government is not to step in, how is it to be done? The suggestion is, first, that the London County Council should guarantee it. What is that? That means that the householders of London are to guarantee the dock, which is simply a trade carried on at the Port of London. I, as a householder in London, protest against that. It is all very well if the docks are booming, but take them as docks which we know very often are not booming, but are failing. What becomes of your 30 millions, if you have paid for the docks, then? We know, of course, that however you subsidise, however you bribe people to go into a dock—because subsidising to go into a dock is really bribing to go into a dock—the centre of trade shifts, and you cannot stereotype it. What has become of the Port of Greenock to-day? Greenock is a trust, and Greenock is bankrupt, because the sugar industry has failed at Greenock, and I venture to say that, if this London dock system were bought by the rates of London, London might some day find itself in this very awkward position; that it had docks which were half full, and had to pay for them out of the rates. Is that a right thing at all? My Lord, I have the greatest respect for municipalities so long as they keep within their own province, but I venture to think that the supplying of a dock, trading in ships, trading in goods in that sense, is not the proper function for a great city like this; and that is a kind of thing that ought not to be guaran-

teed by the rates. You have it as a fact that the Port of Bristol, which is a trust, and a municipal trust, is the dearest port in this country. How was that brought about? In 1848 Bristol got the town docks in the town of Bristol. What took place? A dock was started at Avonmouth by a company to compete with the docks in Bristol, and almost immediately afterwards another dock was started at Portishead on the other side of the mouth of the Avon, a little south, and they did compete, and they reduced the town docks to absolute ruin. This is your trust. Who was to guarantee that? Nobody. What had Bristol to do? They had to come for a Bill in Parliament and say: "They are cutting our rates to pieces. The competition cannot be stood. The town has to pay for it. We must buy up those two docks." And Parliament allowed that. Then what do some of these people in their schemes put before you? They want a trust, but they want a trust and a monopoly. In the scheme of the Chamber of Commerce they say, "new docks." It is an amusing heading when you find that there are to be no new docks. Then they say, "On and after the formation of the trust, no new dock or docks is or are to be formed within the limits of the port save by the trust itself, and for its benefit." If that is their scheme, it is absolutely ridiculous. What has taken place in the case of another trust? Only two years ago certain gentlemen close to Glasgow came to Parliament for a dock called the Renfrew Dock. Sir John Wolfe-Barry will remember something about it. The Clyde Trustees said: "For any sake do not allow our trust to be competed with. We cannot stand that." But we got the Committee of Parliament to believe that the trust should not be competed with, and the Bill was rejected. They came again next year, and by this time the Clyde Trustees saw that they must put their house in order, and they came for a dock close to Renfrew to supply the wants of the public. What happened? The one which was in the hands of the Clyde Trustees was rejected, and the independent dock, in the hands of Mr. Spiers and another gentleman, passed. And with what result? There was competition allowed. Contrary to this suggestion, competition was allowed with a trust—a sacred trust. And only the other day—within the last month—the Clyde Trustees got the chance of buying Mr. Spiers' dock at Renfrew, and had agreed to do so, but the municipal element upon the Clyde Trustees rejected it, and would not have it. And that dock will be made independently. Is that good for trade? You are not to consider what is good for a trust. You have to consider what is good for the trade of the country generally. And I venture to think that, if you have every port a monopoly, you will very soon find one monopoly going against the other. At the present time just let me assume, for instance, that the London Docks are guaranteed by the County Council. We know that the London Docks are in active competition with various ports. We had to complain for the London Docks to the Railway Commissioners of the enormous diversion of traffic that was taking place to Southampton by reason of the London and South Western Railway Company carrying traffic from Southampton to London for next to nothing. They carried it at 5s. a ton from Southampton, while they were carrying from places intermediate at 18s. a ton the same goods, and we got no relief. There is active competition. How are we to prevent that? You would not have merely to say, "There shall be no docks on this river." You have to go further, and say, "There shall be no docks anywhere," if you gave them either a Government guarantee or a County Council guarantee. But have not the County Council enough on their hands? Whenever anything is mentioned, the County Council want to get it into their hands. I have an enormous respect for the County Council. We know that they have been wanting to get the water supply into their own hands. There is some reason for that, because water is an absolute necessity, and there can be no competition in the case of water. But what has happened there? They have not succeeded up to the present time. I believe there is a strong case for the municipalisation of water. But what did Mr. Cripps say the other day with regard to the Tubes Bill. That is being promoted in a Committee and there Mr. Cripps proposed that the promoters should stand aside, and that a great many tubes or underground railways should be made which would not be remunerative; and he said under those circumstances the London County Council would have to guarantee them. Here it is, one mistake after another; first, water: then, tramways; then the tubes; and, last of all, the docks. Now is a dock a proper thing to be connected with a municipality at all? I venture to say, "No." I venture to say that any such guarantee as is suggested here would probably land the ratepayers of this great city in a very bad bargain indeed.

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Now with your Lordship's permission I should like to say just one or two words about the various schemes that have been put before you. There are three separate schemes and I should like to say a word about each of them. The one I will deal with first is that of the Corporation of London. I do not criticise the constitution because you have that before you. You see that in each case the person proposing the trust always remembers himself. In this particular case the Corporation are to have ten representatives upon this trust which is constituted in the way you see. But why is the Corporation to have any representatives? It is not to guarantee anything, as I understand. It looks, for the money that is to be supplied, to the Government. Then why is the City of London to be represented to the extent of ten members of the Board to manage this trust? Would they manage it a bit better than the directors of the company? What is their qualification, especially that they should be entrusted with these large powers? Again, why put two railway companies on the trust, and the Admiralty and the Board of Trade? I venture to think again that it is an utterly anomalous thing, mixing up either the Admiralty or the Board of Trade—Government departments—with a private enterprise. Then there are two representatives of Lloyd's, and then shipowners. Then the Government is to be empowered to contribute, but not necessarily to contribute, as you will see. Then again they propose—but I think that has been sufficiently exploited to-day—to make it a trustees' stock at the very first go off.

(*Chairman.*) We asked about that.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) Yes, and you also elicited the fact that no other dock trust stock in this country was a trustees' stock. Therefore I leave that. But further in their evidence they say that 25 millions will have to be raised; 18 millions for the purchase of the stock (without any valuation); 3 millions for their improvements and extensions; 2 millions for dredging; and 2 millions for jetty and quay space accommodation. Then again, the question of taxing or how to tax barges is to be left to the body when formed. If that is the recommendation to this Commission, I cannot help thinking very little of it. It is merely that your recommendation should be that the Corporation should have ten members on the trust, and that they should determine the taxing power. No taxing power could be given without an Act of Parliament, and they would have to promote a bill just as we have done. Then they say no charge is to be included in the figures for barges, but a licensing fee was suggested. The objections to these schemes are very shortly these. The scheme is full of contradictions. The Corporation want to buy up such bonded warehouses as they think fit. We cross-examined as to that. Elsewhere they say, "as Parliament think fit." In fact I do not think really they ever considered or digested their own scheme. They want unification of authority, but will leave the Port Sanitary Authority separate, obviously because it is one of their own existing privileges. They say the dock company cannot keep pace with the needs of the port by reason of their being unable to charge barges. That you will find at Question 7919, and they speak of leaving the question of charging barges to the new authority. Then they take credit for not including charges on barges in their proposed revenue account. If that is the way that a body like the Corporation of London helps a Commission like this, it seems to me to be of no assistance whatever. They are not helping you to solve the problem you have to solve, which is this; how are these things to be provided which the trade wants? Now, may I read this, which is from the evidence of Sir Marcus Samuel, at Question 7927: "I wish to say that we have dealt with this very broadly indeed. The position we have taken is that your Lordship and your colleagues are a body of such knowledge and experience that beyond giving you as much assistance as we can, we must absolutely leave you to draw your own deductions; we do not presume to say what they should be." Well, I presume to say that any more futile suggestion to a Royal Commission never was put in print.

I do not think I need say more about that proposal of the Corporation, but I should like to examine with you, at some length, the proposal of the London

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Chamber of Commerce. Again I venture to say that there is no solid piece of rock that you can lay hold of in this proposal. I have the draft before me. They begin (see Question 10133) by saying, "The objects of the trust are to acquire the control of the whole of the waters of the port, and having done so, to control them and the traffic thereon so as to promote the trade and commerce of the port for the benefit of, and in the interests of the whole of the inhabitants of London, and not of any section thereof." I do not know what that means. Do they say that the Port of London has been worked not for the benefit of the whole of the inhabitants, but for a section thereof? Then it goes on: "In particular the object of the Trust is to render the waters of the port accessible so far as is reasonably practicable to the vessels of all sizes of all nations." That is a very broad general principle. That is our object and the object of the Thames Conservancy, too, I should have thought. "And to promote their entry, unloading, reloading, and sailing to the best of their ability, levying only such rates, tolls, and charges as may be absolutely necessary for such purposes, or for extensions of the works of the Trust"—again we are entirely at one; that is our object—"and using all surplus revenue (left after paying the expenses of administration, interest on borrowed capital and amortization thereof), in the reduction of such rates, charges, and tolls, with the aim of rendering and keeping the port of London as the chief mercantile mart of the world as well as of the Kingdom." I will not read the "Powers of the Trust," or the "Constitution of the Trust." You are pretty familiar with that, but there are one or two matters with which I will deal. First, as to what I have read with regard to a new dock, they demand a monopoly, and then further they say: "The Trust to have power to take over such property on or near the river as it may think desirable to acquire, the power to be compulsory, subject to due compensation to owners." Again, is not that too vague to be of any use to this Commission? What property are they to acquire? What they think desirable to acquire. Then with regard to the revenues of the Trust they say: "The revenues of the Trust to be those now levied with power to add to, diminish, vary, or extinguish such charges, rates, or tolls as are or may be levied by: (a) The Conservators of the Thames; (b) the Watermen and Lightermen's Company; (c) the Dock Companies or others whose interests have been or may be acquired." And here again instead of telling you what they do they merely ask you to hand to this Trust the whole powers of raising rates on everything. Again I venture to say that this is an absolutely grotesque and unconsidered scheme for the future dealing with this Port of London. Then it says: "The Trust to be empowered also to make such charges as may be reasonably levied on any goods, wares or merchandise whatsoever that may be landed in or on any public or private wharf, warehouse, quay, foreshore, shore, banks, road or path within the jurisdiction of the Trust from any ship, vessel, lighter, barge, tug, boat, raft, or floating receptacle." There again they are proposing the very charges that we seek to authorise, but apparently unlimited. But again they are faced with the difficulty of finance. How do they deal with it? "Should such rates, charges, or tolls as are hereinabove enumerated be insufficient for the maintenance or development of the port, the London County Council, and/or the Corporation, on the request of the Trust, may if it so please, levy a rate of not more than in the pound sterling on the property liable to rates within the jurisdiction of the Council." Again, my Lord, is that any good to you? To leave it to the London County Council or the Corporation if they please to levy a rate. Then their next paragraph determines the question of Trust, because it goes on to say: "As security for a loan or loans to be guaranteed or raised by the Corporation of the City, the London County Council, or by the Trust, with its or their authority for the purposes named in the preceding paragraph, such loan or loans to be for a period for each of not more than years, interest to be duly paid thereon at dates to be fixed; and if interest be not duly paid, the Corporation or the London County Council may enter upon, seize, and become possessed of and enjoy the whole of the property, rights, powers, privileges, tolls, charges, rates, rents or fees of the trust, and administer the trust thereafter in the interests of the inhabitants of London." So away goes the trust. It again means that the London County Council or the Corporation is to become the owner of the whole of the docks of London, if there is any default in payment—without a word of guarantee of the money being raised—after they have, if so pleased, agreed to levy a rate in aid of this grotesque suggestion. Now, my Lord, I do not think there is much more that I need comment upon, except that you find this in the next paragraph of this draft scheme. "Provided nevertheless that, if it be shown to the satisfaction of the Corporation or the County Council that any or certain works are essential to the development or maintenance of the port, and that the rates, charges, tolls, fees, or rents levied, or which may be levied by the trust, are insufficient for the due execution of such works or would only be sufficient at too great a cost for the trade of the port for the time being to bear, then the Council may in its absolute and unfettered discretion, make a grant to the trust of such sum or sums as may be necessary for such works, either by way of a free gift or a loan, seeing only that the trust use such grant or grants for such works and for no other purposes." Well, here is another absolutely new departure in legislation. That any public body should be allowed to give a grant or a free loan to support these docks in London seems to me contrary to the very first principles of trade. What would be the result as compared, for instance, with Liverpool? That the shipowner here and the merchant in London having this free gift and loan given to the docks would be charged less than at the other ports. You would absolutely be subsidising the merchant trading to London out of the public purse, which is absolutely contrary to the first principles of trade. I will not read any more as your Lordship and the Commissioners have the scheme before you. There is only one thing I should like to refer to in sub-paragraph (c) of paragraph 19 of the draft scheme. You will see there again that monopoly is their object. None of these trusts can stand the fair free fight of trade, and that is one of the errors that they all fall into, because they say "So that such property shall not unduly compete with the public and private wharfingers of the port." They are to compete with the public and private wharfingers, and they put in a sop by saying that they shall "not unduly compete." As Mr. McKinnon Wood pointed out, there would be competition of a limited sort. Again, you will remember that all the Chamber of Commerce witnesses that were called in support of this magnificent scheme came and said "My trade cannot bear any more," and they have absolutely asked to repudiate their obligation to contribute anything to the improvement of the port. Now let me say this; if a port cannot pay upon its own trade it should not pay at all, and it should not exist. The only justification for a port is that it pays. If it does not pay I think it ought to cease to exist. That would be the result of guaranteeing this out of the public purse. I have shown you that every other port would come and complain and say "Why is the public purse to subsidise London, and not Leith? Why is the public purse to subsidise London and not Barrow-in-Furness?" and I cannot see the answer to it. On the other hand, what is the real fact that is at the bottom of all trading? It is that the trade supplies a public want. If it does not it is of no use at all. The docks in London do supply a public want. There is no doubt that the trade is going on, but it wants to supply a further public want. How is that to be paid for? It is by the public that uses the accommodation that is given, otherwise I see no end to this system of trust and guarantee. The mere fact, as I said before, that they can raise money at 3 per cent. (we will say it is 3 per cent.) as compared with our 4 per cent. is no reason at all. If so, that might be a reason for co-operative stores being kept by the Government; it might be a reason for taking over all the bakeries in a town, because no doubt the Government can raise money at a cheaper rate, but you must draw the line in municipal trading at simply municipal duty.

The way the duties of a municipality have grown has always been, up to the present time, legitimate. First of all, the first duty of a public authority was to dispose of the refuse of a town, the sewage, and also to keep the public highways in good repair. It was from that that the second duty of a corporation arose, namely, the lighting of the highways. From the lighting of the highways with public light, Parliament did entrust to them the power of supplying gas to private consumers, and for the obvious reason that the pipes being laid in the street it was easy

to supply the public with gas at the same time as lighting the public streets. That was a legitimate extension. Water I have already dealt with, and it seems to me really a proper municipal function. Let me say the way that tramways have got into their hands also seems to me natural. They were running upon the public streets, and they were carrying the traffic, and they were strictly limited to the town in which the ratepayers were supporting the tramways. Latterly, however, Parliament has gone a little further, but only upon special cause shown. They allowed the Corporation of Huddersfield to make tramways outside their own district, but that after a Committee of Parliament, presided over by Mr. Jeffreys, had rejected the bill. The House of Commons again reconsidered it, and on the ground which was then proved before the House, that the places outside could not possibly get their tramways unless Huddersfield supplied them, that was allowed. But Parliament has been very strict not to allow the Corporation to act as traders; it was to bring people into the town by this tramway, Huddersfield being their centre, and its being demonstrated that the outside people could not make it for themselves. Again, here it is a totally new departure. What right have any public authority to carry on what is virtually a trade? I do not see how a dock differs from any other great trade in the country. A railway seems to me precisely the same thing. You can always quote precedents; Parliament has been inconsistent in many cases. It allowed the Hull and Barnsley Railway Company in the first instance to be subsidised to the extent of £100,000 by the Hull Corporation, and that might be quoted as a precedent, but it is clearly wrong, and Parliament has never done it since. But if railways are important, docks are equally important, and I do not see in the least why you should not have trusts for railways if you are to have trusts for docks. I say they are both in exactly the same category. We are receivers into a harbour, a terminal station; they are carriers, and they are precisely on the same basis; so long as they serve the public they ought to be allowed to charge certain rates to remunerate them fairly and fully I will say, because I think there is no benefit to the public in having impecunious lines like the London, Chatham, and Dover; it is against the interests of the public; they ought to have rates that are fully and fairly remunerative, but I deprecate entirely subsidies to derelict railways out of the pocket of the public. It is exactly the same thing with regard to the docks.

11831. (*Sir Robert Giffen.*) We shall have to consider the evidence that has been put before us as to the subsidising of foreign ports with which London is in competition. That may affect our judgment upon certain points, and some of us, at least, would like to hear all you have to say?

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I am quite aware that very likely foreign ports are subsidised; I know that foreign steamboats are to a very large extent, and if you once begin to subsidise the ports, you will have to subsidise the steamboats, too. We know Germany, at the present time, does subsidise a very large number of her steamboats. Are we to do that? I venture to think that after all, the sound old economical rule will pay the country in the end, and if we once begin to enter into competition in sugar bounties with other countries, I think we shall very likely come to grief. Of course, I cannot say whether this country should not, as a stroke of policy (that is a totally different matter, and far beyond my power of arguing), retaliate possibly upon other countries, but in the meantime I have been confining myself entirely to the Port of London. If you subsidise one port you will have to subsidise them all against those foreign countries, it seems to me, otherwise you would find all the trade coming to one particular port, and the rest of the people of this country complaining very much of your action. I find in Appendix No. 13 of the 14th day the result of subsidising. You will find the United Kingdom returns for steam tonnage shown for 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1898. It is Mr. Douglas Owen's table. You will find that in the case of Germany, with its subsidies, there has been an increase. But I find that the increase of the United Kingdom as against Germany, Holland, and Belgium put together has been 5,501,000, as against 1,230,000. We have increased over four and a-half times as much as Germany, Holland, and Belgium. Therefore, apparently, this does not do. I do not say that it is entirely due to that. I have no doubt it is because this is a far greater trading country, and even a subsidy will not divert the trade entirely from it.

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11832. (*Chairman.*) Is that all you have to say on the Chamber of Commerce scheme?

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I think so, my Lord. Then there is the London County Council's scheme to be considered. On this, again, I pass over all the statistics as to the 30 members and the 10 members from the London County Council. Behind this body you find would be the London County Council, who would have the absolute control of the purse-strings as regards the capital and the guarantee of interest. Now they said, "Oh, but we would not control, we would be there, but we would not control." If this was so, it was entirely wrong, because, as I understand, the man who pays the piper ought to call the tune; and it seems to me that the County Council finding the money from the people of London, ought to be the managers of the London port, if that is so. Therefore, I think it is wrong in principle. The Committee are to have the management they say, but no borrowing power or power to pledge the credit of London. Now, what is the good of handing over the management to a body that has no power to say, "This work is necessary, and should be done." Whenever they do say a new dock is necessary, or a new lock-gate is necessary, they have then to go to the County Council and ask their leave, because the money has all to be found by that body. So that, virtually, you are handing it over to the person who holds the purse strings, and this Trust that they pretend to put forward is not a Trust but a catspaw in the hands of the County Council. One of the objections to this scheme is that it is not a scheme in any practical sense at all. There is no attempt whatever to indicate the sources of revenue or the amount. Apparently, it is to be constituted with unlimited charging powers, so far as I understand it, and to exercise any power it pleases at its own pleasure, and when it thinks further revenue desirable. It is not in any sense an alternative to the dock companies' proposal since there is no guarantee that all the charges the dock companies work for would not be put in by this new body. Therefore, in each case where they propose to ask you to recommend the Trust they have not really dealt with the real problem that is before you. Is there a possibility of anybody carrying on these docks without any further charges, and upon whom should these further charges fall? I venture to go back to my former proposition, and say the right person who should pay the charge is the man who gets the benefit of the services. The benefits of the services are got by the lighters and the goods in them. I do not think this Commission can adopt a scheme that gives no indication as to the guarantee, or the source or limits of revenue. I find this at Question 7160. Mr. McKinnon Wood was being examined on the subject of charges, and the question was put to him, "Can you not give us any leading on that point?—(A) No, there might be other ways of course, of raising revenue besides a charge on barges. The whole thing is so complicated that these changes, it seems to me, must be left to the new authority to propose." Therefore, they are asking this Commission to abdicate its duty, and to hand it over to this new authority, of which Mr. McKinnon Wood will be a light and leading member I have no doubt. There is nothing at all to indicate in his mind where the revenue is to come from, and what the rates are to be, and he asks you to hand it over to this new body when it is formed to determine this very matter which is submitted to this Commission. The total income of the Thames Conservancy and the dock companies on the figure for 1899 was £2,411,000, while the expenses were £1,735,000. Putting the capital of the new trust at the least at £25,000,000 (that was put by some of the witnesses), and granting that the whole of that amount is raised at three per cent., there would, upon these figures, be a deficit of £74,000. Of course, if the present dock charges were lowered this would be still larger. Therefore, in order to meet that, they would have to increase the present dock charges. Mr. McKinnon Wood sees no difficulty in a competition between a rate-aided body and a private firm. He merely disregards it on the ground that the scheme would be good for trade all round, and would involve the wharfingers like anyone else. Mr. Gomme, who does not appear to share his views as to private bodies and the competition of a municipal body, put in a large number of tables, but I do not think he explained the matter any more fully. That is all I want to say about that scheme. There is no scheme I think before this Commission which you can act upon at all. First, each of them proposes to sweep away private en-

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terprise in these docks, and hand it over to some public body, which is not to be self-supporting, but which is to be guaranteed by someone. But even that public body could not carry on without the rates that we are asking. You have it distinctly in evidence that if you took away to-day from Liverpool and from Glasgow the charges that we want to put on all barges and goods, both of those great trusts would be bankrupt. That is distinctly proved by Mr. Scott, and I can give the reference to it.

(*Mr. Harper.*) I understand there are no barge charges.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I beg your pardon; I think that is not so. There are barge charges.

(*Mr. Harper.*) Not charges on barges.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) There are charges of an equivalent nature. I do not care how I get it. I have Mr. Scott's evidence that if you took away these amounts from the Liverpool charges and from the Glasgow charges both of those great Trusts would be bankrupt. There is no secret about a Trust. A Trust, like a company, must get money in order to go on. Now under these circumstances where does the public come in? I cannot see any benefit to the public that is to be got by merely transferring this to a trust. I think there would be serious damage to the public by putting in public hands what public hands are not qualified to deal with, namely, a trade concern. But what is the benefit? We would have to be purchased at a large sum of money. If the trade left, what would be the result? The Trust would become bankrupt, but London would have to go on paying. Nobody is able to guarantee for the future that London is to remain the centre of the mercantile world. I gave one illustration in the way that the sugar trade had shifted, but there are enormous shiftings of trade going on all over the country to-day. Take the case of Charles Camel and Company at Darnfield; they had a town round them near Sheffield. What took place? They found they were too far from the sea, and they went to Workington, and Darnfield is a town without any manufacture now. The people have left it. That is only a small illustration, but it shows you cannot fix a trade in any one place. At Sheffield Messrs. Vickers, Maxim and Co. have enormous works covering 44 acres. But what have they done? They have bought 78 acres at Barrow-in-Furness so as to be near the sea. Some day it may be thought that London is too far from the sea. At any rate, there is the risk that London will not be the entrepôt for the world in future as it is to-day, and what would be the result? If you put this huge burden upon the people of London you will do them a serious injury. If, on the other hand, you leave it to private enterprise, private enterprise must look out for itself. But I think and believe that the London Docks have a future before them if this great company that has managed them has only the means of carrying on the docks. You have before you all that we propose to do. You have before you the scheme that we propose to carry out, and all that we require is the money to do it. I do not think really either there is any word to be said against the London companies except that they have not the money. That you can cure by making your representation to the Government who appointed you—that we should have the power of making certain charges. That they are reasonable I do not think anybody can deny, because even putting them on, our charges will then compare favourably with any other ports' of this country. I may say that it is our object of course to compete with other ports. Our whole desire is to get trade into London, and our pockets depend upon it. Somebody said, what will a man not do to save his pocket? I think you will find that these Dock Companies will do a great deal to save their pocket, but they cannot raise capital at the present time in the present state of their finances; and if it is to be raised, how is it to be done? Well, my Lord, I have given our view. Again I repeat that there is no fault found with us except that we have not supplied what we cannot supply for want of money, that is to say our poverty is our fault. It has arisen from the fact of those old Acts of Parliament. You are here to consider the matter, to find out and if you can, advise what is fair in the interests of the public. I say it is fair that people should use our docks and pay some portion of the expenses which we undertook for them. The amount you have had before you, you have had it explained to you how much the burdens are that are put upon us. No Trust is proposed that is not full of inconsistencies and difficulties, and I think the proposal is a very serious new departure in the wrong direction. I think you will find in every case municipalities have been if possible ousted from Trusts connected with docks. At one time the Liverpool Corporation carried on the Liverpool Docks, and it has ceased to do so now. It is an entirely independent trust. But even the Liverpool Trust is in a serious position unless it can keep its trade going. You must remember it is not like a Company with shareholders and debenture holders. It has nothing but debentures, and if their trade might fall off, as it might do (they are doing their best to keep it, and they are spending something like £4,000,000 to-day on the improvement of their docks) they would have the greatest difficulty in raising money; then what would be the result? It would be just the same as you have in the case of the Manchester Ship Canal, which I venture to say was a wrong thing altogether, £5,000,000 of money has to be guaranteed by the ratepayer sof Manchester to-day, and Liverpool would very likely have to subsidise that undertaking. Again, I say that the wrong thing was done in taking it out of the hands of private enterprise in the first instance. You have it in the hands of the Company. Give them money to carry on the work, otherwise if you once create a Trust just as these people proposed, that when they fail to pay their interest it should go into the hands of the London County Council, or as in the case of the Manchester Ship Canal—it has passed practically under the control of the Manchester Corporation, because Manchester had begun by putting its hands to the plough by means of a Company which could not carry on the work. Again, I say the Trust in Liverpool may fail, and in that case the Liverpool rates would have to be called upon. It is because it has been taken out of the hands of private enterprise and put into the hands of public bodies. If you do that I think you will have made a step in the wrong direction. I ask this Commission not to recommend it in this particular case.

(*Mr. Porter.*) My Lord, I thought it better not to interrupt my friend, Mr. Balfour Browne, before, but one statement made contained made a mistake. He said that all the schemes proposed a rate guarantee, and that none were self supporting. He was wrong as regards the scheme of the Corporation of the City of London. The Corporation scheme does not propose a rate guarantee, and it does put forward a scheme which we believe to be self-supporting. I thought I ought to correct that mistake which was no doubt unintentionally made.

(*Mr. Balfour Browne.*) I hardly think it is worth while to go into a discussion on that point. There is only one question that I want to say one word upon before I sit down. I do not want, if I possibly can, to have your report mix the Dock question with the other question of the Thames Conservancy, if you can keep that separate. I do not know the Thames Conservancy case, although I heard what my learned friend said about it. I can quite understand we are entirely on a separate basis. I have not charge of the river; somebody else has. I can improve my docks very greatly even with the existing state of the river. Of course we desire to see the river improved very much, but I will ask your Lordship to report, if you will, separately upon my case. This matter is urgent. The trade wants the improvements that I desire to carry out for their benefit, and as you know we have a Bill pending in Parliament for new works, and we want to carry out the new works as soon as we possibly can, and I believe that some such relief as we are seeking by the other Bill is essential before we can carry out the great improvements in the Port which the people in London and the people trading with that Port desire.

Mr. Lewis Coward, K.C., called to address the Commission.

Mr. L. Coward, K.C.

11833. (*Chairman.*) You desire to address us on behalf of the Millwall Dock Company?

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) Yes, my Lord. I rise on behalf of the Millwall Docks, not for the purpose of making a speech, but simply for the purpose of saying, as I believe my learned friend, Mr. Loehnis, will say also, on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Docks, that I entirely concur in the arguments and the observations that have been made by my learned

friend, Mr. Balfour Browne. I should not have said very much more, but for this fact, that my learned friend, Mr. Scrutton, when he was addressing you suggested that there had been some divergence or conflict of opinion at some time or other between the Dock Company that I represent and the Dock Company that my learned friend, Mr. Balfour Browne, represents, and he suggested that Mr. Trotter was recalled, and that in the interval (that is to say between the time when he had first given his evidence and the time when he was recalled) something underhand went on. I do not understand the observation; nothing underhand has gone on at all. Now let me make it quite clear what the attitude of Mr. Trotter is. At Question 8463 he said, "It has been represented to me that my answer to Question 7109"——

(*Chairman.*) That has already been read to us once to-day.

(*Mr. Lewis Coward.*) If the Commissioners have had it, and it is present to their minds, I am sure I do not want to take up unnecessary time in reading any further in reference to it. I pass on, therefore, to one other matter. There has been, from beginning to end of the evidence that has been given before you, no suggestion whatever against the Millwall Docks, or any charge of mismanagement of any sort or description. In Appendix No. 10 of the 23rd Day a column was put in in which charges were made of delays against two vessels in the Millwall Dock, the "Ernest Albert," where it was alleged it was detained six days, and the "Bethel," detained six days also. Now from beginning to end of the evidence that is the only charge that has been brought against the Millwall Docks. It was met on the next occasion that the Commission sat by this statement which you will find at Question 8921; it is a statement by myself: "Before you begin will your Lordship allow me to correct two statements of fact that were given in evidence at the last sitting of the Commission." Then the details are given. Then Mr. Ellis said, "I was going to say that if evidence is contradicted it must be contradicted by evidence; but I understand the counsel to say he is prepared to prove it," and the matter was never challenged. There is only one other matter that I want to deal with with regard to the Millwall Docks, and that is a statement that was made by Mr. Dunn at Question 11570. That is a statement that I cannot allow to pass unchallenged, though if your Lordship thinks it unnecessary that I should go into the details of the reason that I give for disputing it I will not do so. He is correcting the statement made by Mr. Duckham in reply to Question 1076. He says he "stated that the railway companies have no running powers over the Millwall Extension Railway. This may be the case so far as other companies are concerned, but the North London Company have statutory running powers over that line, and have from time to time suggested putting those powers into force when difficulties have arisen in getting traffic expeditiously carried to or from the Millwall Docks. The powers in question are conferred by the London and Blackwall Railway Lease Act, 28 Victoria, chapter 100, Section 11." Mr. Dunn is in error. There is a later Act of Parliament of 1868, under which, with regard to the line to which he refers, it was enacted that it was to be worked at the cost of the Millwall Canal Company, and that the parts so to be constructed (that was the portion constructed under that Act of 1865, under which they had their running powers) by the Blackwall Company shall be deemed part of their undertaking. I do not think it is necessary for me to go into any detail. I challenge the statement of Mr. Dunn. That is all I have to say on the matter.

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Mr. H. W. LOEHNIS called to address the Commission.

11834. (*Chairman.*) You appear before us on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company?

(*Mr. H. W. Loehnis.*) On behalf of the Surrey Commercial Docks I accept entirely the argument on the general question which has been advanced by my learned friend Mr. Balfour Browne, but there are certain matters arising out of the peculiar position of the Surrey Commercial Docks which are not unworthy of consideration, and which tend to accentuate, I think, the impracticability of the schemes which have been brought before you. Having regard to the late hour, I do not intend to elaborate these, and I am sure that I shall be doing what you desire if I only mention shortly, without going into detail, the points which I ask you to take into your consideration. The Surrey Commercial Docks are in a peculiar position, and their position I submit throws light on two questions. In the first place, it throws light upon the warehousing—as to the possibility of the trust getting on with or without warehouses. Secondly, it throws light upon this; that a private corporation, provided that it has the financial means requisite, can and does serve the port well. Now, in the first place, we are a successful concern. We have spent since 1865 nearly half a million, quite apart from the £600,000 which is now being spent on the Greenland Dock, and the £250,000 which will be spent before the works are completed. What the Surrey Commercial Docks have always attempted to do is to keep in touch with the trade, and to be in advance of the legitimate requirements of the trade. In the second place, the Surrey Commercial Docks are not only docks; they have running through them the Surrey Canal, which runs from the river through the docks down to Peckham. The Surrey Canal brings in a nett revenue of £12,000 a year. It depends for its prosperity entirely on its connection with the river, with the docks, and with the warehouses. If I am to be absorbed into a public Trust, this public Trust, I submit, must also absorb the Surrey Canal. In the third place, the Surrey Commercial Docks have not been, during the twenty-eight or twenty-nine days that evidence has been given before you, seriously attacked by anybody except perhaps by Mr. Farquharson. I will say a few words on that presently if I may. The Surrey Commercial Docks are devoted to two trades, the grain trade and the timber trade. They are managed by a board of directors who are gentlemen experienced in the business, who devote themselves to equipping and maintaining the docks for the benefit of the business. What does the grain trade want? The grain trade says they must have some independent authority between the ship and the receiver. I refer to the evidence of Mr. Coombe at Question 2852, and the evidence of Mr. Roffey at Questions 10019, 10020, and 10037. The Surrey Commercial Docks do that. What does the timber trade want? Mr. Farquharson stated that vessels now arrive in London carrying between 200,000 and 300,000 pieces on between 30 and 40 different bills of lading. The trade must have somebody constituted to disentangle the various cargoes, to sort them, to draw up specifications, to stack them either in shed or in the open air, to warehouse them, and to form a sort of central timber market for London and the surrounding district. That is what the Surrey Commercial Docks do. In all these matters I submit it gives satisfaction. Those being the requirements of the trade, may I ask you to carry your memory back to the time when you visited these docks, and then see what the physical condition of the Surrey Commercial Docks is. It is impossible when you look at it to separate the better part of the warehousing business of the Surrey Commercial Docks from that which has been called the dock business. What the Chamber of Commerce said was they wanted to have the water space up to the quay. I am assuming for the purposes of my argument that you are going to suggest that a port trust of some sort or kind ought to be constituted. Is it desirable that this Port Trust should have control of the warehousing? Practically nobody engaged in the trade has said so. The Chamber of Commerce as a body has come to the conclusion (and their scheme is based upon this) that it is undesirable in their opinion that this Port Trust should do any warehousing at all. They will not touch it. I ask you to say that that is an opinion brought forward by a responsible authority, to which you will attach attention, and attach more attention to it than you will to that which has been suggested by the Corporation, and by the County Council, both of whom are willing to take over the warehousing, not because they desire to do so, but because they find it impossible to make the separation either physically or commercially. Therefore, when you have to consider this case, I submit you are face to face with this; you must either do that which the trade (by the "trade" I mean the Chamber of Commerce as the mouth-piece of the trade) thinks wrong, namely, suggest that the warehousing should be taken over by the trust, or you must do that which I, on behalf of the Surrey Commercial Dock, submit is the right

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course, constitute your public trust for the purpose of having control of the river, and amalgamate within its powers all the various privileges and rights exercised at the present moment by the Thames Conservancy, and those who police the river, and deal with the control of lighters, and such things, but stop short of taking away their property from the various bodies who are carrying on the business of Dock Companies. The opinion of the traders is that the trust should not warehouse; that is an authoritative opinion. I submit that you must come to the conclusion that physically it is impossible to take away the water approaches from the docks, and leave them the warehousing. It is not business. The grain trade and the timber trade (the two trades with which I am concerned) have stated in so many words that it cannot be done. Then the only other alternative is—unless you come to the conclusion that all the Dock Companies have neglected their business in the past in such a way that they ought to be swept away—whether you cannot do that which everybody is agreed is necessary for the Port of London, namely, the deepening of the river and the improving of the approaches without infringing upon our property. There are only two further observations which I hope you will allow me to make. Mr. Scrutton has said: "Why is the Surrey Dock Company here?" Fortunately, I have been able to pay my shareholders a fair return on their money, and at the same time given, as I hope I shall satisfy you in a moment, satisfaction to the trade. But I am here because I take the view of those whose funds have not been so fortunately managed as mine. I think that it is inequitable that the barges and the goods should use property, buildings which I have erected and facilities which I afford at great expense without any payment for them. If I were not here—if the time unfortunately should ever come when I should have to apply for powers—it might be said against me that I had not taken the view in my prosperous days which I had taken in my unfortunate days, that this was a charge which ought not to be allowed.

One word about the evidence which has been given attacking me. The only person who has declaimed against the Surrey Commercial Docks, apart from the congestion, which I am not going to deal with, because that has been explained over and over again, has been Mr. Farquharson; I do make a grievance of it that there has been evidence given by merchants before this Commission which, till it was tested on cross-examination, made a strong case. I am only going to give you as an instance the shortages which were complained of by Mr. Farquharson. He came here and complained of the invariable shortages which occurred in the Surrey Commercial Docks. I do not know whether the Commission is aware that these so-called shortages are mere paper shortages occasioned by the mis-delivery by the ship into barges of goods which ought to have been landed—that the goods which ought to have been delivered into barges were landed, and that in every case where there was that which was called a shortage there was a quantity of goods on the quay landed "for the account of whom it might concern." It was a strong case till those facts were ascertained. Then Mr. Farquharson had to admit that in all these cases there had been large quantities of goods landed "for the account of whom it might concern," which were distributed by the broker amongst the merchants. The shortages were due, if there were any shortages, not to any default of the dock company, but to a default of the ship. That is the class of evidence that has been accumulated here by gentlemen who were acquainted with the facts, and who ought to have come forward and given their evidence in a way so as to lay the whole of the matter before you. Mr. Roffey stated in quite the early part of his evidence that which, I think, applies to the whole of the evidence given by the individual members of the Chamber of Commerce. When he was asked, I think by Lord Revelstoke, "Is this statement of evidence which we have before us written by yourself?" he said, "Yes, and if I had known I was to be cross-examined upon it I should have been more careful." That is a thing which applies to every witness, I think, who has given evidence on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. See 10017.

(*Chairman.*) This concludes the evidence which the Commission will take. Before we part we wish to express our thanks for the valuable help which has been rendered to us by the Dock Companies, by the Corporation of the City of London, by the London County Council, by the Thames Conservancy, the London Chamber of Commerce, and others interested in the Inquiry, and also to the counsel representing the several interests in what, we fear, has been a very lengthy Inquiry.

(*Mr. Porter.*) My Lord, as I am the senior member of the Bar present, my brethren desire me to say that they feel under great obligation to your Lordship for the great patience you have extended to us, and the invariable courtesy with which we have been treated and assisted in every possible way.

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